International
Political
Sociology

International Political Sociology (2011) **5**, 384–407

After the Left–Right (Dis)continuum: Globalization and the Remaking of Europe's Ideological Geography

Albena Azmanova

University of Kent

This article examines the status of globalization as a causal factor in political mobilization and proposes a research agenda for diagnosing the impact of global socio-economic dynamics on ideological orientation in national polities. Focusing on Europe's established democracies, the article outlines recent shifts in Europe's ideological landscape and explores the mechanisms generating a new pattern of political conflict and electoral competition. It advances the hypothesis that the knowledge economy of open borders has brought about a political cleavage intimately linked to citizens' perceptions of the social impact of global economic integration. In this context, the polarization of life chances is determined by institutionally mediated exposure to both the economic opportunities and the hazards of globalization. Fostered by the increasing relevance of the international for state-bound publics, new fault-lines of social conflict are emerging, giving shape to a new, ''opportunity-risk,'' axis of political competition. As the novel political cleavage challenges the conventional left–right divide, it is likely to radically alter Europe's ideological geography.

Left, Right, or Wrong: Political Vectors in Post-Industrial Societies

That globalization is wreaking havoc in national politics, and that the traditional left-versus-right ideological distinction has become ambiguous, are by now platitudes. Yet, is there an integral link between these two diagnoses? How is globalization redrawing Europe's ideological map? How is the knowledge economy of open borders altering the parameters of ideological orientation and political competition at the turn of the new century? While globalization's impact on policymaking in national polities has been widely explored and advertised, little attention, has been given to the way public perceptions of the social impact of globalization are affecting citizens' ideological orientation and political choice.

This analysis will explore the hypothesis that by altering the structure of the political economy of post-industrial democracies, globalization[1] is not simply disrupting, but even transforming the logic of ideological conflict and political competition in Europe, ultimately replacing the standard left–right dichotomy with a new macro-constellation.

[1]In this analysis, I will refer to globalization in terms of the most recent stage in global integration (since the late 1980s) resulting from the spread of information technology and open-border policies. For a comprehensive review of the debate over the substance and periodization of globalization, see Held and McGrew (2001).

Azmanova, Albena. (2011) After the Left–Right (Dis)continuum: Globalization and the Remaking of Europe's Ideological Geography. *International Political Sociology*, doi:10.1111/j.1749-5687.2011.00141.x

Since the late eighteenth century, when the terms ''left'' and ''right'' entered the vocabulary of politics and began to structure the ideological landscape of Europe, the nature of the left–right cleavage has altered a number of times. By the 1980s, it seemed that, after continuous changes within the political cultures of the Left and the Right, the only stable core element of the left–right contrast was, in the words of Jean Laponce (1981), the ''powers that be'' (on the right) and ''the weak'' (on the left), with ''left'' and ''right'' becoming equivalent to ''up'' and ''down'' in the hierarchical distribution of political power. More recently, the shifting basis of political affinities has been imputed to the socio-structural transformation shaping post-industrial democracies. As Anthony Giddens (1994) has contended, these social revolutions have rendered the old debates between the Left and the Right obsolete; in his account, this is equally a statement of empirical observation and a normative appeal for transcending the ''tired dichotomy.''[2] In a context of increased social mobility and heterogeneity, ''meanings are no longer shared and the implications of political stances on the left or on the right become almost unreadable'' (Mair 2007b:24).[3] The current sorry state of partisan politics in contemporary liberal democracies has much to do with this waning of the left–right divide (*ibid.*).

On a more salutary note, Robert Corfe (2010) has welcomed the demise of the left–right confrontational system as he sees both the ideologies attached to it, and the outdated party-political system that embodies it, as a hindrance to progressive politics in the twenty-first century. Even dissenting voices defending the durability of the left–right ideological dichotomy in the late twentieth century note a persistent tendency toward a clustering of policy positions in the center, which is weakening the *political relevance* of the left–right ideological conflicts (Bobbio 1996).[4] Indeed, many of the most significant shifts in electoral politics at the turn of the century have been driven by the conviction that, as Blair and Schröder (1999) have put it, ''most people have long … abandoned the worldview represented by the dogmas of left and right.''

Whatever the verdict on the exact causality driving these changes, as well as on their normative implications, it seems beyond dispute that politics in the early twenty-first century can no longer comfortably fit into the conventional left/right political grid. More importantly, the left–right divide is not being simply eroded but, allegedly, it is not being replaced by an alternative paradigm (Mair 2007b:25). As Esping-Andersen (1999:294) notes, even when able to discern sweeping political dealignments, we are unsure of their significance, as they ''reflect perhaps the demise of the old class order without giving a clear picture of a new, stable political order.'' Thus, recently emerging group preferences, such as those expressed by Third Way economically liberal socialism, or by demands for both economic and cultural protectionism expressed recently by formations of the far Right, seem to be ideologically unstructured and politically precarious.

Defying diagnoses of the apparently irreversible fragmentation of Europe's ideological map and crumbling landscape of political competition, I will outline the contours of an emergent overarching paradigm of ideological orientation and political conflict. This new paradigm comes into view when, in the analysis of political mobilization, citizens' perceptions of the social impact of globalization are considered as a variable intervening between social stratification and ideological orientation. The hypothesis I explore here is that a new political

[2]More recently, David McKnight (2005) has re-articulated the thesis of ideological convergence, cross-class voting and the rise of ''catch-all'' parties in the late twentieth century.

[3]For a recent overview of the evolution of the left–right political divide, see Mair (2007a). For the French case in particular, see Perrineau (2002).

[4]This tendency, in Norberto Bobbio's judgment, is perilous for the public welfare as centrist parties who deem to be standing beyond the ideological battles between the Left and the Right are liable to be opportunistic and to deprive politics of its moral and ideational dimensions.

cleavage, generated by the social impact of global economic integration has emerged over the past two decades in Europe, challenging the capital-labor dynamics of conflict and related to it left–right ideological division.[5] Intensified economic integration, including the one resulting from the geo-political opening that issued with the end of the Cold War, has made transnational integration, with its social consequences, a salient factor in the formation of ideological attitudes and political choices in Europe. With this, new fault-lines in the articulation of political conflict are being formed around the patterned distribution of the opportunities and risks related to globalization. Thus, I will contend, a reconfiguration of Europe's political landscape is taking place around a new axis of political competition—one stretching between what I name as poles of ''opportunity'' and ''risk.'' Although considerations of social opportunity and risk have affected the formation of the standard left–right ideological division, I stress here the novel relevance of globalization-related opportunities and risks. This emergent structural cleavage is cutting across the left–right ideological divide that had shaped Europe's ideological landscape over the twentieth century. With this, it is likely to incur a significant and durable alteration of the ideological geography of Europe: its basic ideational boundaries, spaces of ideological identification, and fault-lines of political conflict and cooperation.

In what follows, I will sketch the new overarching paradigm of political meaning-formation and competition in Europe. The first section of this analysis will lay out the structure of the ideological space within which political mobilization took place in Europe over the twentieth century in order to examine, in the subsequent analysis, changes in the political landscape of Europe brought about by globalization. The second section will address methodological issues concerning the treatment of globalization as a variable in the analysis of political mobilization. It will then highlight politically salient structural changes underlying the current transformation of Europe's political landscape, and finally enunciate a new axial principle of social divisions in terms of institutionally mediated exposure to the opportunities and hazards of the knowledge economy of open borders. After addressing changes in the public agenda linked to perceptions of the social impact of globalization, the third section will outline the emergent map of ideological orientation and political competition in Europe. I will focus on Europe's mature democracies, especially the old members of the European Union. Although similar tendencies are at work in the post-communist new member-states, the idiosyncrasies of the socio-economic transition in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 do not allow the analysis, in this form, to be extended beyond Western Europe.[6]

The account I offer of the emergent novel political constellation is by no means normative and prescriptive; this is a positive review of tendencies, intentionally void of programmatic appeals for supplanting ''the tired dichotomy,'' or regrets over its untimely demise. Although I will illustrate my argument with some empirical evidence, it is beyond the scope of this project to provide a comprehensive comparative analysis of relevant developments in EU member-states. Rather, my purpose is to articulate general tendencies of transformation, thereby opening a new research agenda.

Left and Right in Europe's Ideological Landscape: the Twentieth Century Diagnosis

Vectors of Ideological Orientation and Axes of Political Competition

Before offering an account of the dynamics of political contestation in twentieth-century Europe, let me say a few words on the way the structure of

[5]This investigation builds on my analysis of the post-neoliberal transformation of capitalism in Azmanova (2010).

[6]For an account of these changes, see Azmanova 2009.

political contestation (that is, the drawing of ideological distinctions and boundaries) affects the nature of political mobilization. The map of ideological competition within liberal democracies is typically structured along (at least) two axes—an economic one, extending between a free market (capitalist) and a regulated market (socialist) poles; and a cultural one, opposing libertarian to authoritarian values (Kitschelt 1993).

While ideological positions are usually formed around these two dimensions, political competition tends to take place along a single, usually left–right, dimension.[7] It is the nature of political competition in parliamentary democracies that determines its uni-dimensional structure. Electoral competition presupposes the articulation of interests, their aggregation and finally, their expression as distinct policy alternatives. As competing for votes targets citizens' final choice, alternatives are best presented as binary oppositions along a left–right dimension (Sartori 1976:282–293, 336–339). An additional factor for the unidimensional structure of choice, especially in multi-party systems, is the need for coalition formation—the building of political alliances to form governments makes it necessary that ideological divergence along some lines be ignored (Schattschneider 1948).

Thus, while the various vectors of ideological orientation serve to articulate diverse worldviews into politically meaningful positions (views on the economy, the role of government, the place of religion in public life, etc.), political dynamics are structured along a one-dimensional axis. In terms of ''political demand'' (by citizens), this axis aggregates the various *ideological positions* into contrasting *policy stances* (that is, pro- or anti- abortion; pro- or anti- state regulation of financial markets). In terms of ''political supply'' (of policy ideas advanced by political actors), this axis directs the articulation of eligible *policy options*. The axis of aggregation of political demand and that of aggregation of political supply are, in principle, different axes of alignment. However, as J. A. Thomassen (1994) has pointed out, their convergence is a feature of representative democracy; a key condition for party government is that both the programs of parties and the policy preferences of the voters be articulated along (and constrained by) a single dimension.

It is along this single axis that political mobilization for a particular direction of policymaking takes place, beyond class interest. In the course of interaction along these lines, diverse positions aggregate and converge into a broader societal consensus over what are perceived as relevant policy choices (for instance, if the politically relevant scope of choice is between free-versus-regulated markets or, instead, open-versus-closed economies). In this sense, this dimension in the structure of the ideological geography delineates the contours of those alliances of socially diverse forces that had enabled what Antonio Gramsci (1992[1929–1935]:233–238) conceptualized as broad societal consensus behind the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie—a consensus that underpins nominal political disagreement.

While the charting of ideological preferences within a two-dimensional space is relevant to political practice and analytically useful, the equation of the left–right dichotomy with the socialist-capitalist economic axis (as in the Downsian typology,[8] or in that of Norberto Bobbio (1996) reflecting attitudes to social equality[9]) is somewhat misleading. As Herbert Kitschelt (2004) has noted, the left–right dimension has also a cultural component.[10] Therefore, for the sake of parsimony, I will uphold in this analysis a distinction between a two-dimensional space of

[7]On this, see Sani and Sartori 1983; Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Thomassen 1994; Oppenhuis 1995.

[8]Anthony Downs (1957) presented the left–right division as a matter of the degree of government intervention in the economy, a position that subsequently found broad acceptance in writings on electoral politics.

[9]In Bobbio's account, although both the equality/inequality and liberty/authority axes affect the definition of political positions, only the former is intrinsic to the left/right distinction.

[10]The cultural dimension in the left/right distinction is also acknowledged in Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie (2005) and Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier, and Frey (2006).

ideological orientation (with an economic and a cultural vector), and a one-dimensional (left–right) axis of *alignment* along which group preferences cluster and political competition between parties takes place. Within this taxonomy, ''left'' and ''right'' are concepts of political positioning and affiliation, not notions of generic ideological preferences (such as partiality for free economic enterprise or social equality). ''Left'' and ''right'' thus refer only to the dimension of political competition—bringing them back to their original use (the seating arrangements in the French Legislative Assembly of 1791) as concepts expressing the aggregation of various interests into competing political positions within the multi-dimensional space of ideological orientation.

The main distribution of voter preferences and party positions in the late twentieth century in Europe has followed a left–right axis, running between the Northwest (socialist-libertarian) and Southeast (capitalist-authoritarian) corners of the ideological map (see Chart 1). The use of the conceptually more open ''geographic'' terminology will allow me to review subsequent changes in the thematic substance of the ideological vectors.

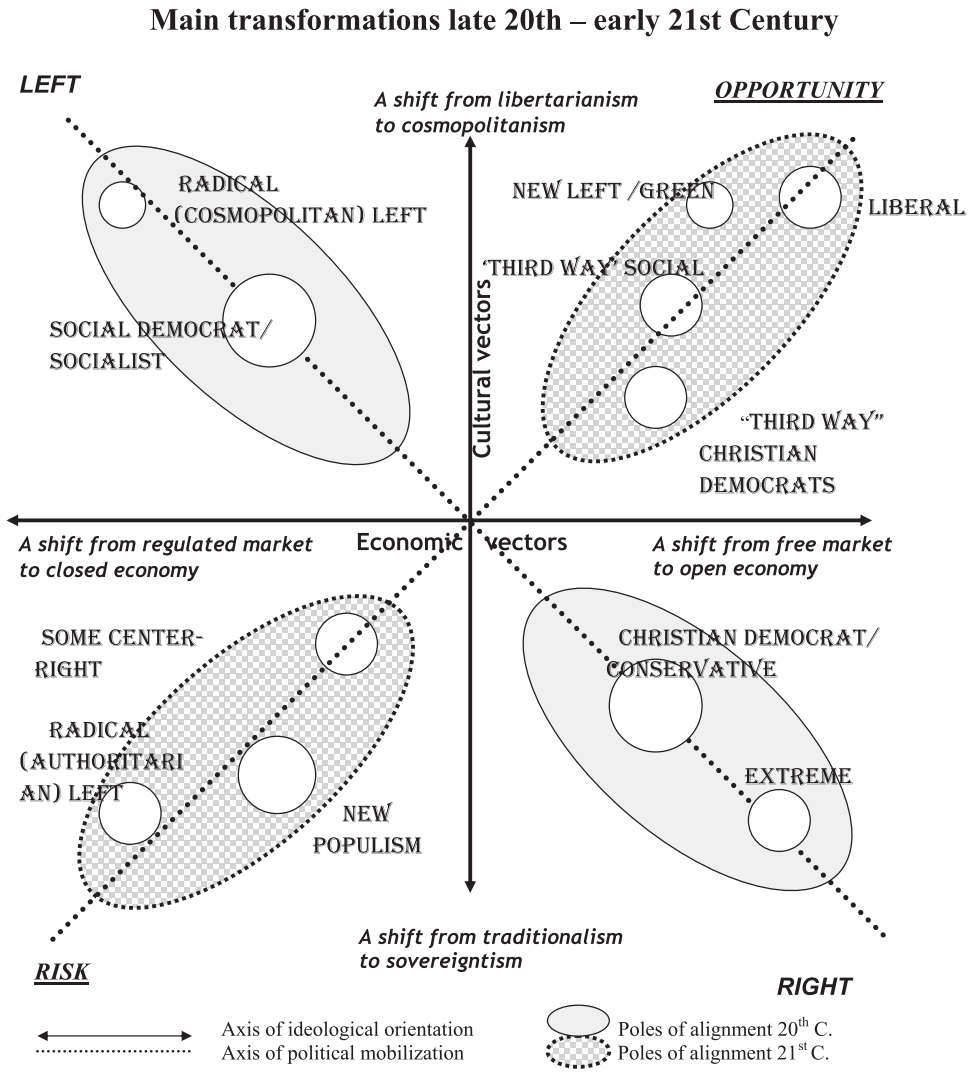

CHART 1. Main transformations late 20th–early 21st centuries

Here, a peculiarity of twentieth-century political landscape in Europe comes to light—namely, the political marginalization of ideological preferences for economic liberalism. The policy consensus on curbing economic liberalism with state-managed redistributive policies that gave rise to the (various forms of) welfare state in Europe was not an exclusive victory of Social Democracy as a political force. Already Karl Polanyi (1957[1944]) noted that the counter-movement to the self-regulating market system (and to the policies of economic liberalism that enabled it) had been enabled by a broad coalition of forces, including European Conservatism and the Christian church.[11] In contrast to the United States, the conservative Right in Europe, whose aristocratic pedigree did not allow it a full allegiance to the free market, was not alien to the idea of the social responsibility of central public authority.[12] Thus, the overlapping consensus between European Conservatism and Social Democracy on the social vocation of the state entailed the marginalization of economic liberalism in the political landscape of Europe, submitting it to the growth-and-redistribution domestic policy logic of Keynesianism, on the one hand, and, on the other, exporting it into the international normative order of the Bretton Woods institutions.[13] As a result, the post-Wold War II political scene came to be dominated by Socialist/Labor) or Conservative/Christian Democratic parties, while Liberal parties[14]—ones for whom economic liberalism is a cornerstone of political identity, came to be politically insignificant. This accounts for the marginal positioning of both liberal and extreme-right parties within the overall structure of political competition: although often nominally identified as parties within the ideological family of the Right (on account of their economic liberalism), they stood outside the main axis of left–right partisan alignment.[15] This situation changed only with the sudden rise of electoral support to Liberal parties at the turn of the century. The 2004 European Elections gave the Liberals (the parliamentary group of the European Liberal Democrats) by far the highest increase in electoral gains; this group preserved its improved position (in relative terms of increase in percentage points) at the June 2009 elections. As national issues are usually the main considerations for voters in European elections, these developments indicated imminent shifts in voter preferences in EU member-states. The key change consists in activation of electoral mobilization not along the left–right axis that runs in a northwest (Left)—southeast (Right) direction, but along a new axis positioned

[11]As the ''Industrial Revolution was causing a social dislocation of stupendous proportions'' (Polanyi 1944:129), the self-protection of society became a general concern, and triggered a broad societal counter-movement to market expansion, ''aiming at the conservation of man and nature as well as productive organization'' (*ibid.*:132). Polanyi noted that a ''collectivist trend'' in English public opinion and ''spontaneous'' legislative action against a self-regulating market emerged in the 1870s and 1880s (*ibid.*:141). ''The great variety of forms in which the 'collectivist' countermovement appeared was not due to any preference for socialism or nationalism on the part of concerted interests, but exclusively to the broader range of the vital social interests affected by the expanding market mechanism'' (*ibid.*:145).

[12]It should be noted that in many continental European countries, Christian Democratic parties have a strong labor wing. The engagement of European Conservatism with labor protection can be traced back to the papal encyclical *De Rerum Novarum* (*1898*) that aimed to give the working class a voice in Catholic (later Christian Democratic) parties. This heritage is now carried by the various Christian or non-denominational trade unions.

[13]In contrast to the ethos of public management of the economy that dominated domestic economic policy, the Bretton Woods system gave institutionalization to a *liberal* international economic order with the aim of facilitating international trade. Thus, the liberal economics that guided the Bretton Woods system were meant to offset the protectionist elements inherent in increased government intervention in domestic economy. It is in this sense that economic liberalism was purged from national economics and exported into the international order.

[14]In the European sense, denoting laissez-faire economic policy, in distinction to both conservatism (to the right) and socialism (to the left)—e.g., the *Liberal Party* in Britain and the *Freie Demokratische Partei* in Germany.

[15]The exclusion of far Right parties from the main political coalitions at the time was due to their self-placement in radical opposition to the state-centric consensus of the welfare state—thus, their espousal of minimal government and laissez-faire economics. Their positioning along the cultural axis of the ideological spectrum is uncertain as they often combined appeals to cultural conservatism and ethno-nationalism with radical rejection of the normative order of democratic politics.

along a northeast—southwest direction. I will address this phenomenon in detail in the next section.

The Evolution of the Political Landscape in the Twentieth Century

Let us return to the map of ideological orientation and political mobilization. Configured around the economic and cultural axes of alignment (free-versus-regulated markets, and liberal-versus-autocratic values), this map has undergone two big shifts in the course of the twentieth century.

During the first decades of the Cold War, the capital-labor dynamics of social conflict continued to spawn the key parameters of ideological orientation. However, a first shift was triggered by the rise of the New Left in the 1970s. As a result, the trans-European consensus on the welfare state, which had centered on economic growth, market regulation and social transfer systems, became enriched by the themes of identity politics and global ecological concerns. However, the New Left only added new elements to the old political spectrum, without disturbing the left–right axis of political competition, as the new formations commonly aligned with the ''old'' Left in reference to social policy. However, the left–right axis pivoted diagonally under the pull of the cultural agenda. Ideological positions began to be clustered in ''left libertarian'' and ''right authoritarian'' corners (in a northwest-southeast orientation). Herbert Kitschelt (2004) has noted that, at the turn of the century, the main distribution of preferences has pivoted further, aligning almost completely with the vertical axis opposing ''libertarian'' and ''authoritarian'' socio-cultural positions, that is, in a North–South orientation.

The second shift concerns the collapse of the left–right divide altogether, resulting from the socio-structural transformation besetting post-industrial democracies.[16] Within the loose consensus on the novel nature of these developments, key transformative dynamics emerge along three trajectories (i) the diminishing political relevance of social class; (ii) the growing saliency of the non-economic agenda of postmaterial values and risks and the ensuing shift from a class-based to a value-based system of political preferences; and (iii) growing individualization in the context of advanced modernity. Let me briefly review these three trajectories of change.

First, socio-economic transformation in the late twentieth century has, reportedly, enlarged the middle class, generating what Robert Corfe (2010) has described as the ''middle-middle 90%+ majority,'' thus diminishing the relevance of the conflict between wage-labor and capital that had previously underpinned the left–right divide.

The second trajectory of change is the growth of what Ronald Inglehart has conceptualized as a turn to post-materialism.[17] The post-industrial revolution has, allegedly, brought about the transition from the ''old politics'' of bread-and-butter concerns (such as income and housing) to ''new politics'' centered on lifestyle, self-expression, citizen democracy, identity rights and concerns with the environment, and the related to this birth of the so-called New Political Culture.[18] Even when scholars disagreed on the ''death of class'' thesis, they have still underscored the transition to the ''new politics'' of a post-material life-world where cultural factors increasingly trump economic ones. Thus, Peter Achterberg (2006) has demonstrated that, although class issues have neither

[16]Among the vast research on this, see Offe (1985); Inglehart and Rabier (1986); Giddens (1994); Knutsen (1995); Evans, Heath, and Lalljee (1996); Inglehart (1997); Kitschelt (1997, 2004); Kriesi (1998); Corfe (2010).

[17]For over four decades, Inglehart (1977) has been tracing this socio-cultural development and its political expression. For the most recent restatement, see Inglehart (2008).

[18]For the debate on the rise of the ''New Political Culture,'' based on post-material concerns with lifestyle and self-expression, see the contributions in Clark and Hoffmann-Martinot (1998).

decreased nor increased in importance, the rise of new issues does contribute to growing dealignment.[19] Similarly, Van der Waal and Houtman (2007) have attributed the decline of traditional class-party alignment since WWII to cross-cutting cultural voting rooted in educational differences, rather than to a genuine decline in class voting.[20] Even when challenging Inglehart's position, by observing that education, rather than socialization within conditions of economic affluence, has been the primary engine behind the rise of postmaterialism, Dutch and Taylor (1993) confirm the theory's ultimate claim that a shift has occurred from material to post-material values and from class-based to quality-of-life politics in the late twentieth century in Western democracies. This shift away from the standard capital-labor dynamics of conflict has, allegedly, made the left–right ideological dichotomy politically irrelevant in the late twentieth century.[21]

The third trajectory along which the erosion of the left–right divide, or at least of its political relevance, occurs, is increased individualization in what Zygmunt Bauman has called ''liquid modernity.''[22] Specifically, the flexibilization of employment has entailed social fragmentation, as individuals engage in multiple, and often interrupted, carrier trajectories (Gray 1998:71–72). Although inequality in Western societies has increased, it is, allegedly, also individualized rather than embedded in class positions—flexibilization and diversification of employment has undermined the connection between one's position in the economy and large-scale group categories. This disables the causal projection from one's position within the economy onto life chances, which had previously stabilized political orientation. As Esping-Andersen (1999:294) has noted, if classes are always full of different people, and therefore avoid social closure, they have no political meaning. Thus, the individualization of social inequality seems to implode notions of collective social and political identities and their institutional expression in parties. In the context of such fragmented modernity, citizen concerns become a ''hotchpot of unrelated issues'' (Hardin 2000:42), rather than stable, well-articulated, ideologically structured sets of demands. Thus, in the contemporary context, individualization (rather than a shift toward post-material values) appears to be the strongest catalyst to the death of the left–right dichotomy in politics, making the emergence of new stable fault-lines also highly unlikely.

Politics in the New Economy

That we live in ''capitalism without classes'' (Beck 1992:88) in which social class as logic of stratification has allegedly disappeared might be a valid diagnosis of our times. Or it might not.[23] The death-of-class debate is not of immediate

[19]The dealignment thesis refers to the erosion of the traditional alignment of the working class with the Left and the middle class with the Right.

[20]The academic disagreement over the dealignment thesis is well illustrated by two recent studies reaching conflicting conclusions. Oddbjørn Knutsen's study (2006) gives robust evidence for significant decline in both absolute and relative class voting in Western Europe since the 1970s. Yet, Martin Elff's (2007) recent research establishes that traditional cleavages remain relevant to voting behavior: over the past decade, workers have been still more likely than the middle class to vote for left of center parties and secular voters are more unlikely than churchgoers to support religious parties.

[21]The consensus on the new social processes, and related political and economic challenges, shaping post-industrial capitalist democracies in the late twentieth century does not contain an agreement on a uniform *pattern* of transformation. The diversity within the political economies of these societies has been discussed in Kitschelt, Lange, Marks, and Stephens (1999).

[22]For various versions of this thesis, see Giddens (1991, 1994); Beck, Giddens, and Lash (1994); Gray (1998); Bauman (2000, 2001); Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002); Inglehart and Welzel (2005).

[23]It is beyond the purposes of this study to review the varied positions, and their aporias, within the debate on class in advanced modernity. For an overview of the debate, see, for example, the special issue of *Sociology* 39 (5) dedicated to class, culture, and identity. A useful discussion of current trends in sociological analysis of class can be found in Brannen and Nilsen (2005).

relevance to the analysis of political mobilization. The claim that the diffusion of class precludes the formation of politically meaningful group identities implies an unjustified reductionism in that predicates political mobilization on social stratification. The same holds for the mirror thesis that globalization, by creating new classes, is generating a new pattern of political conflict. Political conflict is rarely, if ever, a direct expression of class conflict. As we know at least since the work of E. P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm on the English working class, political mobilization and class formation are coterminous; the former shapes the latter, and the particular institutionalization of political conflict affects both.[24] Thus, even the radical view of individualization does not, in principle, invalidate a hypothesis about *politically significant* divisions within the plural post-industrial societies, divisions that guide the articulation of conflict in advanced modernity. In a similar vein, it would not be sufficient to demonstrate that globalization is producing new social divisions (as in the common accounts of ''winners'' and ''losers'' of globalization) in order to assert that globalization is changing the pattern of political conflict.

Social stratification and political mobilization are linked through the mediating cognitive structure of perceptions (in the case at hand—perceptions of the anticipated social effect of globalization), which inform individuals' ideological orientation and motivate their political engagement. Therefore, rather than concerning itself with social class formation, an account of the emerging, globalization-driven, pattern of political mobilization needs to address two points: (i) the development of *politically significant* social divisions; (ii) the framework of ideological orientation that actuates this political signification of social concerns. This would mean answering two questions: How is globalization aggregating the diverse preferences along novel fault-lines of political conflict? And how is it changing the cognitive framework of reference—the public agenda within which conflicting positions are articulated as politically meaningful alternatives? Let me address each of these questions in turn.

The Causal Status of Globalization: From Individualization to Conflict Aggregation

First, we need to specify the status of globalization as a new causal variable in the restructuring of the ideological space, as this will be the grounding hypothesis from which the sub-hypotheses about changes in ideological orientation and partisan mobilization will ensue. Globalization is an essentially contested concept in social science; being both thematically complex and insufficiently specified, no direct causal status can plausibly be attributed to it. However, there are attributes of globalization that do create a generative cause—such as information technology, which increases the speed and volume of cross-border transactions; as well as the policy choices for open borders and diminished intervention of the state in the economy, which together facilitate the movement of goods, money, and ideas, thus speeding profit creation. Thus, globalization's causal impact runs along two trajectories: a quantitative one, related to economic integration via politics of open borders; and a qualitative one, related to advanced information technology. Due to these attributes, globalization can be seen as a factor contributing to changes in the political economy of advanced capitalism. What particularly concerns us here (in view of the changing structure

[24]E. P. Thomson attributes the development of a working class consciousness to the practice of conflict between workers and incumbent between the 1790s to the Great Reform Bill (Thompson 1963). In ''The Peculiarities of the English,'' he makes a compelling case against the reification of concepts such as the ''bourgeoisie'' and ''the working class,'' which have acquired meaning only in the course of political contestation (Thompson 1965). Eric Hobsbawm has emphasized the structuring role of institutions, such as religious bodies, on the development of working class radicalism (Hobsbawm 1964).

of political competition) is not so much the nature of this transition, as its implications for social and political agency.

In what sense might globalization be working against individualization, generating new social divisions and thus—producing constituencies (rather than dispersed individual identities) with potentially shared ideological outlook and related to its political choices?

Many recent studies have demonstrated the emergence, since the 1980s, of ''losers'' and ''winners'' from globalization in advanced industrial societies. The groups of winners and losers are often cast in terms of the growing income gap between low-skilled and highly skilled workers in industries exposed to globalization (Kapstein 2000; Geishecker and Görg 2007[25]). The formation of these large groups is usually either openly attributed to globalization in terms of exposure to international competition/global trade (Burgoon 2001; Alderson and Nielsen 2002; Kriesi et al. 2006), or to the effect of globalization-prompted policy drive toward domestic deregulation and external liberalization (Smeeding 2002; Cornia 2003; Scheve and Slaughter 2004). Alternatively, however, some authors view technological change and atomization, rather than economic globalization, as culprits for job losses and low wages for workers in advanced economies (Rodrik 1997; Richardson 2005).

Exposure to globalization-generated risk and opportunity is stratified along both the qualitative and the quantitative vectors of globalization (economic integration and information technology). Within the qualitative dimension, skills-based technological change of the last decade has indeed led to an increased demand for highly skilled labor, especially in industries making extensive use of high technology. The employment and earnings prospects of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the manufacturing, service, and agricultural sectors of the old economy have been especially hard hit under the impact of the quantitative dimension of the new economy–market openness. Market openness has become a source of social hazard for employees here for two reasons. First, competition from developing economies creates employment uncertainty and exposes workers to involuntary job flexibility (under the threat of outsourcing). Second, market openness diminishes relative economic gains for workers: when businesses are exposed to competition (that is, when product markets are competitive), there is little rent for managers to share with labor. Here, a new pracariat emerges which combines a minimal exposure to earning opportunity and maximum exposure to risk (especially people on temporary employment in the low-tech service industry).

The uneven distribution of the opportunities and hazards of globalization also affects capital. Industries linked to the old economy have seen their gains decrease. An important distinction here is the size of business—small and medium enterprises have proven to be more vulnerable to global financial uncertainties (due to limited ability to diversify risk) as well as more vulnerable to fluctuations in labor demand. For large enterprises, globalization presents opportunities in terms of scale of return on investment, diversification of risk, and flexibility in response to labor-market fluctuation. The most considerable increase in wealth within the past two decades, however, has not been based on ownership of productive capital, but instead on the mastery of new technology in economies of scale which globalization, in the concurrence of its qualitative and quantitative dimensions, offers—such as *managers* (rather than owners) of financial capital. We have witnessed how financial capital, on account of its systemic importance for the global economy, has maximized both opportunity and

[25]Kapstein presents here a comprehensive review of economic scholarship that has attributed the creation of a new pattern of winners (high degree of skills and education) and losers (least skilled and educated) to the fact that free trade is altering the returns to the factors of production.

security, (that is, through the massive and speedy bailout of investment banks in the crisis of 2008–2010). It is, thus, the occupational location in the axis new-old economy that sets the logic of social stratification beyond a simple dichotomy of skilled and unskilled labor.

As a result of the cumulative effect of the two vectors of globalization—open borders and high technologies—new sets of winners and losers emerge. The distribution of life chances in this context cuts across capital and labor in a *structured* (rather than random) way: both capital and labor linked to the old economy have become more exposed to risk—either resulting from higher exposure to competition (the effect of open border policies) or from the incapacity to link factors of production to information technology and thus lose the competition game.

Whatever the particular generative mechanisms of the division between winners and losers of globalization, it seems that a new axial principle of social stratification is emerging in post-industrial societies—one related to the social impact of the new economy of technological innovation and open borders.

From Social Conflict to Political Contestation

What is the impact of these dynamics of stratification on political mobilization? Earlier in this analysis, I dismissed the thesis of an unmediated translation of social stratification into political mobilization. What is, then, the mediating mechanism through which the patterning of large, socially composite, groups (winners and losers from globalization) becomes politically meaningful and grounds political conflict? In other words, how does an individual's position within the structure of the economy become projected onto a general stable political orientation?

The mechanism of interest aggregation and collective mobilization concerns the *institutional* mediation of exposure to risk and opportunity. The generative logic of social divisions I described earlier is economic in nature—it is rooted in an agent's positioning vis-à-vis the new economy. However, an individual's exposure to risk is affected by institutional factors in two ways. On the one hand, access to earning opportunities and sources of income is strongly determined by cultural capital (that is, education)—significantly, by *type* of education (such as skills in information technology and its management), rather than *level* of education. On the other hand, particular policies of securitization (for example, level and type of social security provision, limitation or flexibilization of weekly working hours) determine whether risk exposure translates into an opportunity or a hazard. For instance, the scale of social charges (employers' contributions to social security) may increase risk exposure for employers, especially in small companies, and limit the chances for market entry of the unemployed. However, social security provision reduces the risk exposure for workers on temporary employment and may translate involuntary into voluntary job flexibility—and thus, an opportunity. This indicates a transition from the politics of what Ulrich Beck has described as *institutionalized individualization* to politics of *institutional provision of security and opportunity*. Let me address this in fuller detail.

In his diagnosis of advanced modernization, Beck identifies the institutions and policies of the reformed (or ''active'') welfare state of the late twentieth century to be the generator of individualization, as these policies introduced individual-based style of regulation (Beck 1997:95), thus ''turning collective requirements into individual opportunities for choice'' (Beck 2007:684). However, with the rise of economic insecurity at the turn of the century (from prospects for job outsourcing to the systemic financial risk endemic to complex financial engineering), a counter-movement to institutional

individualization emerges as citizens begin to address the state with demands for institutionally generated provisions of security.

Thus, a novel mechanism for social differentiation has emerged in the early twenty-first century. The polarization of life chances is no longer determined by class (labor versus capital), nor is it being as strongly affected by psychological or cultural factors (that is, levels of education, family upbringing), as it had been in the late twentieth century (within the New Political Culture diagnosis). Rather, it is a matter of the *institutionalized exposure* to the opportunities and hazards of the new economy of open borders and technological innovation. As a result, new fault-lines of political conflict are emerging around institutionalized exposure to risk and opportunity.

The particular mechanism of interest aggregation and political mobilization consists of two stages. The first stage concerns the projection of one's position within the economy into longer-term life chances, together with the normative valorization of this projection. Thus, employment flexibility (which has been introduced by governments across Europe on account of the pressures of global economic competition) can be valorized either as increased opportunity, or derided as a threat to livelihood. What plays at this stage of the formation of ideological outlook is not so much the particular individual *experience* of risk (for example, job loss), but its *anticipation.* To illustrate the rising saliency of such perceptions, let me resort to an example from the referenda on the European Constitution in 2005, which I will discuss in detail in the next section of this analysis. Surveys showed that the rejection of the treaty was motivated predominantly by perceptions that the European Union is facilitating exposure to the competitive pressures of the global economy. Significantly, 23% of those who rejected the treaty in Luxembourg explain their vote with the poor economic and job situation in Luxembourg (the country with the lowest unemployment rate in the Union), and with their fear that the Constitution will only make this problem worse (FLEB 173 2005:13). This anticipation, and related to it valorization, of the social effects of globalization gives strong salience to new opportunity-risk vectors of ideological orientation, as for some the open knowledge economy acquires a positive, and for others, a negative, connotation. As I will explain in greater detail in the next part of this analysis, the opportunity-risk dichotomy emerges along both the economic and the cultural vectors of ideological orientation.

The second stage of conflict aggregation consists in particular acts of political mobilization, as citizens address political society (parties, government) with demands for institutional provision of security and opportunity. While ideological orientation concern the *anticipated impact* of globalization, and the way it is valorized in debates on social justice (first step in conflict aggregation), particular political mobilization takes place in terms of patterned *demands* for institutional provision of security and opportunity.

The aggregate effect (translation of a personal life situation into a collective social and political identity) is achieved in the very process of political, including electoral, mobilization—as constituencies address political society (government, parties) with demands for particular types of institutional provision of security and opportunity. In contrast to the context of the welfare state, collective action of this type is no longer the reserved domain of the typical social constituencies of the Left—the unionized working classes. Illustrative of the change were, for instance, the massive protests of truck drivers and agricultural workers in Britain (typical constituencies of the political Right here) in September 2000, who addressed the government with requests for securitization against losses incurred by the global rise in fuel prices—a problem originating in the global economy.

After reviewing the process of translating socio-economic dynamics related to globalization into political action, I will next address some evidence of the emergent novel fault-lines of ideological orientation and political mobilization.

The Twenty-First Century Prognosis

The Political Saliency of Globalization

Observers of electoral politics have begun to take note of the fact that globalization is becoming a highly salient factor in citizens' ideological orientation.[26] This salience reaches beyond electoral politics. As Donatella della Porta (2006) has observed, globalization has been at the root of the resurgence of protest in the second half of the 1990s, when movements mobilized to protest the weakening of employment protections and the growth of social exclusion—the most immediate social consequences of global economic integration.[27] The novel saliency of globalization for political mobilization has been attributed either directly to the material impact of globalization (Kriesi et al. 2006) or to attitudes to the anticipated distribution of globalization's opportunities and risks (Azmanova 2004).

The referenda on the European Constitution, held in 2005 (namely in the Netherlands, France, Spain, and Luxemburg) offered particularly rich evidence that globalization has become not just a politically significant issue, but also a distinct factor in political orientation. EU enlargement to the east has been systematically inscribed in the agenda of ''open borders'' that 1989 established with urgency. Absorbed in the perspective of globalization, the accession of the former communist countries has been interpreted in the language of risks and opportunities. I will address the evidence from these referenda, before turning to similar symptoms at national elections across Europe.

Two peculiarities emerge from exit-poll surveys. First, the negative vote was predominately motivated by fears of negative consequences for employment, especially with the risk of companies moving their operations abroad, fear of excessive economic liberalization, and fear of immigration (FLEB 171 2005; FLEB 172 2005; FLEB 173 2005).[28] The widespread fears of job outsourcing were expressed in the rhetoric against the ''Polish plumber'' (allegedly threatening to take manual jobs from workers in the old member-states).[29] EU enlargement to the east has put downward pressure on employment standards (both in terms of level of social protection and wage rates), creating a race to the bottom codified in rulings of the European Court of Justice and in recently adopted EU legislation.[30] Thus, publics in the old member-states have started to see the inflow of labor from the new member-states as a threat of social dumping.

A more recent study by the Princeton Center for Deliberative Democracy established that, when issues of social policy and EU enlargement are discussed

[26]The impact of globalization on the electoral success of the far-Right has been analyzed in Swank and Betz (2003). For the impact of globalization on the Left, see Azmanova (2004).

[27]The Euromarches started in Amsterdam in 1997; the European Social Forum was first held in 2002.

[28]The Eurobarometer post-referendum survey in Spain does not address this issue. The turnout in Spain was so low that the referendum does not provide reliable data for analysis of the tendencies in question (See FLEB 168 2005).

[29]The Freedom of Services Directive of the EU (Directive 2006/123/EC) makes it possible for a Polish plumber to work in France under Polish labor laws.

[30]The ''Directive on Services in the Internal Market'' (Directive 2006/123/EC) was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on December 12, 2006. It opened the possibility for companies to relocate all or some production to the low-cost and less regulated economies of eastern Europe, thus creating the threat of social dumping the use of foreign labor to undercut wages (the ''Polish plumber'' threat). The European Court of Justice has treated the issue in the Viking (EU06050291) and Laval (SE07060291) cases, legalizing the minimum standards (*Official Journal of the European Union*, 23.2.2008). In the Laval judgment, the Court transformed the principle of *equal pay for equal work* into *minimum pay for equal work* (*ibid.*:10).

together, negative attitudes to enlargement significantly increase (Luskin, Fishkin, Boucher, and Monceau 2008). Thus, the negative vote on the European Constitution in 2005 seemed to be expressing a quest for social, cultural, and economic protection. Symptomatic for this new type of political orientation is the combination between social and cultural protectionism, often expressed in anti-immigrant sentiment on economic grounds (for the sake of job protection). In contrast to the pure sovereigntist position against EU integration that had systematically marked the stance of right-wing parties in earlier years, the rhetoric against enlargement recently has been systematically linked to loss of jobs and social standards as a result of increased competition. Both positions—that of social and that of national protection—are expressions of a very similar reaction against the ''open borders'' policies linked to economic globalization in the abstract and to the more tangible opening of the EU to the post-communist newcomers from the east.

The second peculiarity of the vote is that the anticipated social impact of globalization emerged as an issue splitting both publics and parties *within* (rather than *between*) the political families of the Left and the Right and their supporters. Fears of job outsourcing are becoming shared by the working and the middle classes.[31] On this ground, the traditional constituency of the Left (working class) is abandoning international worker solidarity in the name of national social solidarity, while the traditional constituency of the Right (middle classes) is reducing support for economic liberalism. On the right, fear of globalization was primarily expressed as opposition to Turkey's entry into the Union, but invariably linked to appeals for social protection. Thus, Charles Pasqua, the Gaullist senator and former Interior Minister, argued, ''Federal, ultra-liberal, Atlanticist—such is the Europe in which we have been living since Maastricht (The EU treaty that paved the way for the Euro in 1992) and such is the Europe that is being celebrated in this constitution.''[32] This openly anti-market stance is new for the Right and has been registered only since the late 1990s.

The convergence of social and cultural protectionism delineates a position located in the Southwest sector of the standard ideological map—a position outside the usual (left–right) axis of political alignment. Yet, are such emerging positions random and unstructured? Interpreted within the standard, for the twentieth century, conceptual map of political competition, these positions indeed appear as anomalies, at best—as protest votes. However, if interpreted with a new conceptual map, structured by attitudes to the social impact of globalization, they come into view as predictable, structured, and durable phenomena. How is globalization transforming, rather than simply disturbing, the map of ideological orientation, on the one hand, and the axis of political competition, on the other?

Let us now turn to the particular pattern of political mobilization, emerging in the early twenty-first century. Before describing changes along the vectors of ideological orientation and the axis of political competition in Europe, we need to account for broader changes within the thematic framework of political interaction. Collective perceptions of what issues count as politically salient ones form the cognitive framework of reference within which public debates are articulated. In other words, the formulation of conflicting positions (for example, disagreements over the production and distribution of goods) is enabled by a basic overlapping agreement on what counts as politically significant social issues.

[31]Surveys in France indicated that 79% of blue collar workers, 67% and 53% of middle class professionals voted against the Treaty on grounds that the EU does not do enough to protect wages in a globalized world (Chriqui and Christian 2005).

[32]Quoted in Thornhill (2005).

These issues emerge, in public debates, as salient themes of governance around which political contestation takes place. This framework of reference mediates between social stratification and political action.

The New Public Agenda and the Eclipse of Postmaterialism

The new stratification logic emerging in the context of globalization (as discussed in the second section of this analysis) is altering the framework of reference for political mobilization and policymaking. This new framework of reference is reflected, for instance, in the changed public agenda. Since the 1990s, the agenda of political debate throughout Europe has evolved (both in terms of public sensitivities and official political discourse), moving beyond the divide over economic policies along the poles of free enterprise and redistribution. The policy rhetoric of the welfare state, evolving around economic growth, market regulation and social transfer systems is being now recast around the cultural, political and economic challenges of globalization. Since the launching of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, when European political leaders pledged to make the EU ''the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world … by 2010,''[33] globalization has been explicitly placed at the core of the economic policy debate in Europe, merging with the one on enlargement.[34] Despite pledges to sustainable development and social equity, this policy document expressed a new trans-European consensus on increasing competitiveness through further market liberalization, including that of labor markets. The strategy was revised in 2004 to sharpen the prioritization of economic liberalization over previous commitments to sustainable development and social equity. The new focus on globalization has triggered a shift from the traditional discourse of *growth* to that of *competitiveness*. In turn, the new focus on competitiveness makes productivity (rather than growth and employment), a policy priority—a reversal from the Keynesian economic philosophy that defined the European welfare state. This reversal has not been overcome even by the brief return to Keynesianism during the recent global financial meltdown, as governments in Europe, irrespective of their ideological pedigree, are imposing austerity measures in order to balance budgets.

A second trajectory of change in the public debate, produced by the centrality of globalization, is the new discourse about risk. Rather than on taxation and redistribution, recent electoral campaigns have been centered on insecurity, as concerns with risk have become central political issues. The emergence of this new public agenda centered on material (economic and political) risk linked to insecurity of income and lack of physical safety, is one of the most significant signs of the transformation of Europe's ideological space. Indicative of this shift, for example, is the way in which the issue of unemployment has began to appear in political discourse. While the old paradigm is concerned with employment in terms of overall economic growth and efficiency, the new one addresses unemployment in the terms of fear, loss, and marginalization.[35]

The new *order-and-safety* agenda has four elements: physical security (mostly as a reaction to terrorist attacks, such as the Madrid train bombings on March 11, 2004 or the London bombing on July 7, 2005—the first suicide bombings in Western Europe), political order (expressed in increased intolerance to corrup-

[33]This is an action plan adopted by the European Council in Lisbon, March 2000.

[34]It should be noted that the so-called ''Copenhagen criteria'' for EU membership stipulate the candidate country's ''capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union'' (European Council 1993).

[35]I am grateful to Claus Offe for helping me articulate this point, which I address more extensively in Azmanova (2004).

tion and mismanagement), cultural estrangement (and related anti-immigrant sentiment), and income insecurity.[36]

After addressing changes in the broad public agenda, related to new socio-economic concerns, let me now address some symptoms of changes in the content of political competition.

The Content and Structure of Political Competition

Within the general conceptual framework of the order-and-safety public agenda, centered on economic and physical risk, four large thematic shifts concerning the content of political competition have taken place since the turn of the century.

Stress on Quality of Governance

A shared, trans-partisan concern with the quality of governance has emerged as reaction to globalization. This has found expression in rising demands for more and better public sector services—in reference to political safety, better education, more efficient healthcare, affordable housing. It is exactly the provision of public services (which compensates for the risks of globalization) that is the institutional answer to the securitization of public expectations. The thematic focus of political competition, therefore, has started to shift from issues of social justice to issues of governance competency. In line with the growing political salience of political competency and accountability, some analysts have registered an overall shift in recent years from ''partisan'' to ''governance'' type of electoral mobilization (Mair 2007b).

Mainstreaming of the Extreme-Right Agenda

Although right-wing populism is currently receding in some countries,[37] public preferences for order and stability have not faltered. In fact, it is the incorporation of the safety discourse into the political rhetoric of mainstream left- and right-wing parties, and not the diminished relevance of the security-and-order agenda, that explains the withdrawal of support for right-wing populism. (Note, for instance, the explicit anti-immigration rhetoric of the leaders of the Labour Party and the Conservative Party in the run-up to the general elections in Britain in 2010).

Mainstreaming of the New Left and Green Agendas

Identity politics has been increasingly embraced by the Right, as policies targeting gender, racial, and ethnic equality are entering the political mainstream. Additionally, the conservative Right is embracing these issues as a matter of recognition of sub-national group identities, or is incorporating them (by reference to the European heritage of cultural liberalism) into discourses on European exceptionality and closure. Within this third shift is also the mainstreaming of the global ecological agenda, which has been emphatically embraced by conservative parties in Europe.

Mainstreaming of Economic Liberalism

In contrast to the marginalization of economic liberalism as a policy platform under the welfare state consensus, the turn to economic liberalism during the

[36]I have first noted the emergence of this agenda in Azmanova (2004:284).

[37]Note, for instance, that electoral support for the *Front national* in France dropped sharply between the 2002 and 2004 general elections.

last two decades of the twentieth century has been a novelty for both the center-Left and the center-Right in Europe. As Donald Sassoon has observed in the case of the Left, the political revisionism of the late 1980s on the terms set by neo-liberalism, marked the second historical reconciliation between socialism and capitalism, the first being the one established on social-democratic terms after 1945 (Sassoon 1996). On the right, traditional conservatives also embraced economic liberalism—under José María Aznar in Spain, under Angela Merkel in Germany, under Jacques Chirac in France. In the contemporary context, economic liberalism has entered in the ideological mainstream of the center-Left and center-Right, and electoral support for Liberal parties is rising.

Emergence of Economic Xenophobia

The development of new anti-foreigner sentiment on economic (rather than purely cultural or political) grounds has fostered a synergy between social and cultural protectionism, both within the Left and the Right. I have already addressed instances of such discourses at the European referenda in 2005. Illustrative of the new anti-immigrant sentiment on the Left, for instance, is the slogan ''British jobs for British workers'' that Prime Minister Gordon Brown launched at Labour's annual conference in 2007. Symptomatic of this phenomenon is also the split within the Italian Left at the 2008 general elections, caused by the espousal of an anti-foreigner position on ownership and employment by Fausto Bertinotti, leader of Communist Refoundation. He supported Silvio Berlusconi's opposition against the take-over of Alitalia by Air France-KLM, implying that foreign competition is a greater enemy to Italy's workers than their bosses—dovetailing an argument made by the leader of the extreme-right Northern League, Umberto Bossi (Dinmore 2008a).

These five shifts in the content of political competition are altering substantially the political geography of Europe, as they are triggering changes along the cultural and economic vectors of ideological orientation, and ultimately generating a new axis of political competition. I turn next to these developments.

Let us recall that in the context of the second half of the twentieth century, the ideological contention between the Right and the Left was structured around two dichotomies: (i) liberal versus traditional values, and (ii) free versus regulated economy. As I noted, the policy stress on competitiveness in the global economy has entailed the absorption (or mainstreaming) of economic liberalism, eventually taking it out of the key ideological debates. In this sense note, for instance, that not only center-Left parties have accepted economic liberalism in Third-Way style revisionism. Some radical Left parties have also made that shift, in an argument for promoting ''protected national economy organized along capitalist lines.''[38] Consequently, the ''free-versus-regulated market'' policy contention of the late twentieth century is currently being recast as market openness (opportunity pole) versus externally closed domestic markets (risk pole).

The stress on physical safety and public order has, in turn, altered the content of the cultural vectors of political competition. Currently, ideological differences of cultural nature are structured by a cosmopolitanism-versus-sovereigntism dichotomy, fostered by contrasting normative evaluations of the permeability of national borders in the context of globalization.

Within this new map of ideological orientation, political contestation and electoral competition are not structured along the standard left–right axis. Increasingly, political mobilization takes place along an axis running in southwest–northeast direction, and cutting across the standard left–right axis

[38]As argued by Bernard Cassen, founder of the protest party Attac (quoted in Harman 2007).

located along a southeast–northwest direction. It should be noted, for instance, that the biggest relative increase in voter support at recent elections has been, on the one hand, for new populist formations, on the other—for Liberal parties; both are formations that had held a marginal place within the old political landscape. The new axis of electoral mobilization is a corollary to the emergent axis of social conflict (in terms of institutionalized exposure to globalization-incurred risks and opportunities), which I addressed earlier. As a result, what I term ''an opportunity-risk cleavage'' in political mobilization is emerging, shaped by attitudes to globalization and EU enlargement to the east. On the one side of the spectrum are parties and their constituencies that embrace opportunities resulting from increased competition and technological innovation and who extol globalization for generating global growth and serving the global justice agenda. Typically, here we find policy positions combining economic and cultural liberalism. At the opposite side cluster parties and their constituencies for which globalization is perceived to be incurring losses—for example, threats of job loss, lower and/or uncertain remuneration, longer working lives, and reduced social security.

Matching Public Demand and Political Supply

In our introductory review of the map of ideological orientation in West European democracies, we noted that political competition runs along a single axis, along which public demand and political supply are matched (as a rule of democratic politics). However, as a result of the socio-economic transformation I discussed earlier, a divergence has appeared in recent years between the axis of political supply (still stretching between a Left and a Right pole in a Northwest–Southeast location) and that of public demand—positioned in Northeast–Southwest orientation and thus cutting across the axis of political supply. This discrepancy between political supply and demand came to light at the referenda on the European Constitution in 2005, when big groups of voters went against the declared positions of parties they nominally support.[39] Thus, surveys in France indicated that, while the socialist leadership openly declares itself hostile to an alliance with the centrist Democratic Movement (Mouvement Démocrate),[40] thus maintaining a left–right axis of partisan identification, 65% of the sympathizers of the socialists declare themselves in favor of such an alliance, defying the standard left–right divide.[41] While public preferences (the demand-side of political mobilization) have shifted its orientation since the turn of the century, the supply side of politics (parties' responses) have not fully aligned with the new axial orientation of public preferences. Thus, the first decade of our century has been marked by tensions between the demand and supply sides of political mobilization. Phenomena considered to be emblematic for the turn of the century—such as declining partisanship, decreasing electoral turnout (and seeming electoral disengagement), fragmentation of two-party systems, and emergence of unorthodox political parties—could be traced to this discrepancy between the demand and the supply sides of political mobilization.

[39]For Instance, in Spain, in defiance of the political groups they usually support, a third of the supporters of the Communist Coalition voted ''Yes,'' and 20% of the supporters of the PP voted ''No'' (FLEB 168 2005:18). In France and the Netherlands, while the main parties of the Left and the Right supported the treaty, the popular vote rejected it.

[40]The ''Mouvement démocrate'' (MoDem) is a centrist party of culturally and economically liberal vocation. It was created by François Bayrou (currently its president) in 2007.

[41]In a Viavoice survey, published in *Libération* on April 27, 2004 Martine Aubry, Socialist Party's First Secretary, declared that the Socialists' strategy is to unify the Left; therefore, she stated, ''[We]refuse all alliance with MoDem, as it advocates economic and social policy that is in radical opposition (*aux antipodes*) to our orientation. (Quoted in Noblecourt 2009, my translation).

The failure of established parties to respond to the new public demands has led to displacing societal pressure, politicizing it, and radicalizing it—a process that can go a long way in explaining the rise of new types of populism linked to economic, social, and cultural protection which defy a left–right political taxonomy.

As the new fault-lines of conflict-aggregation within society run not along the established vectors of left–right ideological alignment, but across them, it has set off a crisis in the ideological families of the Left and the Right. The new patterning of public preferences (around a Southwest–Northeast axis) and the changed thematic framework of political competition are creating pressures for re-configuration within national party systems, to which parties react according to idiosyncratic local opportunity structures. Overall, the trajectories of reconfiguration are of three types.

The first trajectory consists in internal splitting within the Left and the Right. Some preliminary evidence already suggests that while programmatic differences between the families of the Left and the Right are diminishing as a result of policy convergence, the intra-party and intra-family differences are growing (Mair 2007b).

Second, parties may undergo an ideological overhaul along the new vectors of ideological orientation. Thus, Socialist and Conservative reformism in the direction of the Third Way alternative (such as British Labour and the German Christian Democrats) places these parties in the Northeast sector of the ideological map—around an ''opportunity'' pole. The turn against open markets and the rejection of laissez-faire economics has shifted some extreme Right parties to the Southwest sector (for example, the French National Front and the Dutch Party for Freedom[42]). Similarly, traditional left parties have moved to the right on account of what I have described as ''economic xenophobia.''

A third form of adjustment of the axis of political supply to that of political demand is the formation of new parties (often resulting from splitting or mergers) whose identity is freshly formed along the new ideological vectors (for example, Walter Veltroni's ''Democratic Party'' in Italy; Oskar Lafontaine's ''Alternative Labour and Social Justice'' in Germany; François Bayrou's ''Democratic Movement'' in France).[43] Within this third type of adjustment, special attention deserves the phenomenon of new populist parties (for example, the ''Party of Freedom'' in the Netherlands, established in 2004; the ''Alliance for the Future of Austria,'' established in 2005; Italy's ''League North,'' established in 1989) which, due to combining homophobia with anti-corruption rhetoric and appeals for social protection, defy classification in the standard terms of right-wing or left-wing extremism.[44]

[42]Founded in 2004 on a classical for the extreme right platform combining anti-foreigner sentiment with free-market economic positions, the Party of Freedom began to oppose some of the landmark neo-liberal policies, such as raising the retirement age. It aligned with the Socialist Party and with the Netherlands' largest trade union federation (FNV) when in 2009 it opposed the extension of the retirement age from 65 to 67. After the June 2010 elections, however, the Freedom Party, hoping to form a right-wing government with the Liberals and the conservative CDA, has dropped its opposition to the idea.

[43]The Italian Democratic party (*Partito Democratico*) arose in 2007 out of the merger of Margherita and the Democrats of the Left. It espouses social cohesion, fiscal conservatism, and green issues, and combines a concern for order and safety with cultural liberalism. A similar set of policies is advocated by Bayrou's ''Democratic Movement'' (*Mouvement démocrate*), placing it in the Northeast sector of the ideological map (and along the ''opportunity'' pole of alignment). Lafontaine's party (*Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit—Die Wahlalternative*) was founded in 2005 in opposition to the neoliberal consensus embraced by the Social Democratic-Green government. Its platform combines a high tax/social benefits policy positions with anti-immigration (linked to job protection) discourse, placing the party in the Southwest sector, around a ''risk'' pole of political competition. In 2007, it merged with the East German PDS to form the new party, The Left (*Die Linke*).

[44]In east and central Europe, this category would include the Hungarian ''Jobbik,'' the Slovenian ''National Party,'' the Lithuanian ''National Revival'' and ''Order and Justice'' parties, the Estonian ''Centre Party,'' the Czech ''Civic Democratic Party,'' the Slovak ''National Party'' as well as the ''Movement for Democratic Slovakia,'' ''National Union Attack'' in Bulgaria, and the Polish ''Self-Defense,'' ''League of Polish Families,'' and ''Law and Justice.''

The new populist parties have raised appeals to state intervention in the economy (especially closed borders) for the sake of job protection. The appeal to social protectionism has become notable, for instance, in the discourse of the ''National Front'' in France (Bastow 1997), as well as in that of the ''League North'' in Italy, where large numbers of workers were mobilized in the 2008 general elections by the strongly protectionist discourse of Umberto Bossi, the party's leader (Dinmore 2008b). This shift from economic liberalism to protectionism in the economic policy position of extreme Right parties is a recent, but spreading phenomenon.

An important new feature of this emergent populism is the anti-corruption, rather than simply anti-establishment rhetoric. It should be noted that new populist parties started to emerge during the economic prosperity of the 1990s, when mismanagement and corruption scandals across Europe signaled an increased public intolerance to the malfunctioning of governments. As a result, right-wing populism surged, appealing not only to stop new immigration and fight crime (standard points for the far Right) but also to rebuild neglected public services.[45] On account of their demands for good governance, Ivan Krastev (2006) has named these political formations ''respectable populism.'' While in the old paradigm these formations would appear as political pathologies which would be placed outside the main axis of political competition, in the current context they express mainstream positions, well inscribed in the political logic charted by the novel ''opportunity-risk'' axis of political contestation.

The recent shifts within political demand (by electorates) and political supply (by parties) in Europe, as reviewed above, suggests that the *left–right* axis of political mobilization, typical of the twentieth century, is being challenged by an *opportunity-adversity* axis that is likely to structure conflicts in the twenty-first century. These tendencies are at work in most European states, but the relative autonomy of partisan politics from societal preferences has created a gap between electoral demand and political supply, making the new public preferences for economic, cultural and physical safety (expressed by the new forms of populism) still politically marginal. These positions are more clearly expressed in electoral mobilization than translated in the formation of governments (where populist parties tend to be excluded irrespective of their robust electoral gains).[46] Among European democracies, Switzerland is the country where these tendencies have become most explicit, as here the practice of direct democracy (that is, referenda) has made political parties better attuned to changes in societal preferences—thus, the faster adjustment of political supply to public demand. Not surprisingly, in line with the rule of adjustment of political supply to public demand in democracies (as discussed in the first section of this analysis), the Swiss far-right People's Party has become the country's biggest political group over the past decade, mobilizing support around a ''risk'' pole.

Even if the recent policy shifts and electoral dynamics have not yet crystallized into a well-articulated new constellation (institutionalization delays the adjustment of political supply to political demand), there is enough evidence to suggest that, at the turn of the century, Europe's political landscape is being altered under the influence of a powerful new axis of political competition.

[45]Thus, the Dutch Social Democrats (PvdA) lost nearly half its seats in parliament to Fortuyn's populist party in 2002, which appealed for respect for the law and an end to fraudulent business and political practices.

[46]A case at hand is the exclusion from government of the two right-wing populist parties in Austria, whose combined vote (at 28%) represents a considerable, and growing, electoral constituency. Their vote increased by 13% points since the 2006 elections. (Parties and Elections in Europe, Austria: http://www.parties-and-elections.de/austria.html; accessed on April 5, 2009).

Conclusion: Politics in the Dusk of "New Politics"

I argued that the socioeconomic complexity and ideological fragmentation in the late twentieth century has recently given way to new dynamics of stratification, ideological orientation and political mobilization. Thus, the void left by the dissolution of the capital-labor cleavage in the late twentieth century is being filled by a new ''overarching paradigm'' (*pace* Mair), one shaped by perceptions of the social impact of globalization and, for Europeans, its most tangible epiphenomenon—the geopolitical opening in 1989 and subsequent European unification. This is changing the content of the economic and cultural vectors of ideological orientation and, ultimately, altering the structure of political contestation, as the new public preferences are located along an atypical axis (what I described as ''opportunity-risk'' axis) running along the Northeast–Southwest diagonal of Europe's ideological map. These shifts (as summarized in the Chart) are challenging the left–right dichotomy that gave sense and shape to Europe's political landscape throughout the twentieth century.

Although these tendencies germinated in the course of the affluent 1990s, and took shape during the first decade of the current century, they have not been altered by the global financial meltdown of 2008–2010. On the contrary, as the short-lived return to Keynesianism during the crisis is being replaced by austerity measures justified as consequences from the global economic crisis (that is, cuts to public spending, especially to salaries, unemployment benefits, and pensions) mobilization around the risk pole is likely to intensify. We have witnessed the rise of politics of fear, already antecedent to the global economic crisis: demands for increased order and safety, as well as hostility to religious and cultural difference. This is not a matter of resurgent mobilization within the old ideological space of the extreme Right. The rise of economic xenophobia (hostility to outsiders based on insiders' fears of loss of livelihood) is the embodiment of the shift from the old ''postmaterial'' politics in which cultural traditionalism and political sovereignty (on the right) was pitted against cultural liberalism and cosmopolitanism (on the left), to a new paradigm in which national social and cultural solidarity enters into a zero-sum game with transnational social solidarity.

Political culture, social history, and party systems will all affect the extent to which the tendencies I reviewed here will play out in the various European polities. Yet, despite national idiosyncrasies, if these tendencies endure, it is likely that the new opportunity-risk axis will structure conflicts in the twenty-first century, in the place of the left–right axis that marked the twentieth century.

Political choices structured by opportunity-risk perceptions of the impact of globalization are driven almost exclusively by strategic, rather than ideational or ideological considerations. In such a political landscape, there is no place for utopia—neither for the nostalgic idealization of the past that had nourished European Conservatism nor for the future-oriented egalitarian utopias that had inspired European Socialism. This has regrettable consequences for democratic politics, beyond the rise of the politics of fear I discussed earlier. When political activism is deprived of ideational motives, it further strengthens the instrumental rationality of the system—of the ''iron cage'' of efficiency, rational calculation, and administrative control. This is equally true in terms of deepening the productivist logic of economic action (that is, the increased time people spend in gainful employment for the sake of economic security) and in terms of deepening the bureaucratic logic of political control (from increased political intervention for improving physical safety to regulatory taming of the global financial markets). Somewhere, both Weber and Marx are saying, ''I told you so''; one of them—with a smirk.

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