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# **The Danish People's Party and new cleavages in Danish politics**

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When the Danish People's Party (DF) gained 12.0 per cent of the votes in the Danish 2001 election, it was brought from the margins to the mainstream of Danish politics. Until the time of writing it has functioned (2001-03) not only as the parliamentary basis for the new Liberal-Conservative government that was formed after the election, but also as the government's main coalition partner in day-to-day politics. This includes large reforms such as the reform package in 2002 that led to an unprecedented tightening of the conditions of immigrants and immigration. Somewhat reluctantly, even the unions have from time to time practised regular contacts with the party, for instance in order to avoid government regulation against closed shop arrangements. This development since the 2001 election completes a transformation of the new right in Denmark from neoliberal populism to a more centrist and - intentionally - less populist battle against immigration and for other values.

This article describes the changing policy positions and analyse the electoral basis of the new right alongside the transformation of the Danish cleavage structure. The first section gives a short description of the history and election results of the Danish People's Party and its predecessor, the Progress Party. The next section presents an analytical model of cleavage change and cleavage mobilisation underlying the analysis and discusses its relationship to alternative theoretical frameworks for the analysis of new right parties. The third section focus on the changing political agenda in Denmark in the 1990s, whereas the two following sections analyse the changing electoral bases of the party and the policy position of its current adherents. The penultimate section discusses the relationship between this analysis and competing interpretations in terms of marginalisation. Finally, the concluding section also discusses possible futures of the party.

To present the main thesis briefly, it is argued that the 'mainstreaming' of the Danish People's Party reflects deep underlying changes in the cleavage structure which are rooted in the process of globalisation and in the transformation from industrial society to postindustrialism, but mobilised through the logic of party competition (see also Andersen & Bjørklund, 1990; Bjørklund & Andersen, 2002). This also means that, as a point of departure, support for DF should be analysed from the same perspective as any other party. This is also one of the main reasons for choosing the neutral term "new right" rather than "extreme right", "radical right" or "populist right" as umbrella concept for the Danish People's Party and its predecessor, the Progress Party.

## **1. The premature birth and the metamorphosis of the new right in Denmark**

The Danish new right was born in 1972 when the hitherto unknown tax lawyer Mogens Glistrup launched his anti-tax Progress Party. Within a few months, the newly formed party was elevated to more than 20 per cent support in opinion surveys, and in the December 1973 election, it won a landslide victory with 15.9 per cent of the votes (see table 1).

[ table 1 goes here ]

The party originally represented a neoliberal populism (Andersen, 1992; Glans, 1975), with abolition of all income tax as the main issue. Its ideology was almost anarcho-liberal as it promised to abandon public regulation and welfare of all sorts. But it was a neoliberalism of the lower strata as it would start by abolishing income taxes for the low incomes, and as it promised higher budgets for old-age pensions and health care. Its style was populist in the sense that it mobilised the people against the (corrupt) elites and claimed the will of the people as “supreme over every other standard” (Shils, 1956), including legal standards (Andersen, 1992). Counter-elitism was also manifest in the party’s demand for more referenda.

From the beginning, the populist style of the party was at that time rather unique: The party did not adhere to any nationalist or passionate style; rather, it successfully applied the weapon of humour in getting attention, e.g. by Mogens Glistrup’s proposals to sell off Greenland and the Faroe Islands to the highest bidder, and to abolish the Danish defence in favour of an automatic telephone replier saying: We surrender. Within a few years, however, a conflict developed between “tighteners” and “slackeners”, the latter adhering to a more conventional style and seeking cooperation with other bourgeois parties. The “slackeners” never managed to capture full control over the party, but proposals like the above-mentioned disappeared, and the party increasingly took conventional bourgeois policy positions on many issues.

The Progress Party maintained an electoral support well above 10 per cent in four subsequent elections throughout the 1970's, but when the Conservatives and the Liberals formulated a more radical and offensive bourgeois alternative, electoral support for the Progress Party declined rapidly. To 8.9 per cent in the 1981 election and more dramatically to 3.6 per cent in 1984 - increasingly concentrated among die-hard neoliberals (Glans, 1984). At the same time, Glistrup was imprisoned for tax fraud, and according to opinion polls, support for the party reached the critical two per cent threshold of representation in early 1985. With a convincing bourgeois alternative, inspired by the bourgeois revolutions of Reagan and Thatcher, there seemed to be little space left for the Progress Party (Glans, 1984). It was desperately in need for new issues and new leadership. But the first transformation of the party was immediately to follow.

The opportunity for new leadership came when Glistrup was imprisoned and declared unworthy to maintain his seat in parliament. Pia Kjaersgaard was called in to replace

him in 1984, and before Glistrup was re-elected in 1987, she had managed to establish herself as de facto leader of the party, certainly without any intention to give up this position. Unlike Glistrup, Kjaersgaard wanted to make the party a “respectable” and reliable cooperation partner for bourgeois parties. But at the same time, she became the exponent of the first transformation of the party’s agenda from traditional left-right politics (taxes) to a new conflict dimension, with immigration as rallying issue.

In fact, it was Glistrup who first sensed the possibility to mobilise on new issues. Already towards the end of the 1970's, Glistrup had begun fraternising with xenophobic groups inside and outside the party. But at that time it only served to generate internal unrest and to alienate better-educated voters from the party. By 1979, the party’s voters still did not deviate from other voters in attitudes towards immigrants (Bjørklund & Andersen, 2002), and until the mid-1980's, emphasis on tax relief remained the distinguishing issue among the party’s voters (Glans, 1984).

However, when the number of asylum-seekers exploded from 800 in 1983 to 4.300 in 1984 and 8.700 in 1985 (Andersen & Bjørklund, 2000: 200), the time was ripe. On the very day of his relief from prison, Glistrup made highly provocative statements about immigrants which received considerable media coverage as they resembled statements by a local representative of the party who had previously been sentenced for racism. In the following years, Glistrup and Kjaersgaard had an odd cooperation in forming an “issue ownership” for the party on the issue of immigration. Glistrup made one provocative statement after another, gaining media attention, while Kjaersgaard softened the statements to make them more socially acceptable. Although the party maintained its strong neoliberal ideas, immigration replaced tax relief as the main rallying issue for the party. And as far as political style is concerned, the spectacular statements and proposals of Mogens Glistrup was partly replaced by the skillful application of “common sense” by Pia Kjaersgaard.

Alongside mobilisation on increasing disappointment with the bourgeois government, this rescued the party from extinction: The party gained 4.8 per cent in the 1987 election and 9.0 per cent in 1988. In the autumn of 1988, the party’s support even sky-rocketed to some 17-18 per cent in opinion polls. But the party was ridden by increasing internal conflicts culminating with the exit of Glistrup and three followers shortly before the 1990 election. Unsuccessfully, they launched a new “Party of Well-Being” but did not manage to collect the sufficient number of signatures to run for the 1990 election. Not surprisingly, given this unrest, support for the Progress Party dropped to 6.4 per cent in the 1990 election.

The next critical point came after the election in September 1994 when increasing dissatisfaction with Pia Kjaersgaard’s strong leadership led to a successful rebellion in the parliamentary group and a prolonged state of civil war in the party. By October 6, 1995, Pia Kjaersgaard along with three other MP’s broke with the Progress Party and launched the Danish People’s Party. As it was Pia Kjaersgaard who represented the party’s new political identity, her party was the one to survive. Due to the high personal popularity of Progress Party leader Kirsten Jacobsen who won a great victory in her own constituency, the party

survived the 1998 election. But by 2000 when Glistrup had been re-admitted membership of the Progress Party against the will of the four MP's, they collectively broke with the party and did not seek reelection in 2001. Meanwhile, Glistrup captured control over his old party and appeared in 2001 as 'campaign leader', but his charisma had gone and his overt racism was far too extreme, even in an election only two months after the terrorist attacks in the USA. Ironically, it became Glistrup's own task to close down the party he had launched 29 years earlier. The Progress Party barely received 0.6 per cent in the 2001 election., leaving the Danish People's Party as the only successor of the Progress Party.

However, the Danish People's Party is more than a successor; is also represents a metamorphosis of the new right. With the formation of a new party came the opportunity to get rid of the legacy of neoliberalism. Some elements were formally maintained in party documents such as the working programme of 1998, but in practice, the new party abandoned criticism of the welfare state and taxes, and increasingly argued in favour of improved conditions for pensioners. The party has presented itself as a nationalist, euro-sceptic, pro-welfare, anti-immigration party seeking practical cooperation and compromise with other parties. The party is highly centralised (with a very professional organisation at the central level), and has frequently excluded members, e.g. members who fraternise with right-wing extremism. However, even if Pia Kjaersgaard is a very strong and undisputed leader - the only Danish party leader with a significant impact on support for the party that cannot be explained by ideology (Andersen & Borre, 2003) - she is surrounded by a few skilled and relatively young politicians who would be able to take over.

After the 2001 election, the party found itself in an ideal position. As the Liberal-Conservative government was able to form a majority in parliament solely with the support of the Danish People's Party, and as the Liberals in particular have moved in the same direction, the Danish People's Party came to function as the governments' parliamentary support in nearly all major reforms, including a dramatic tightening of all sorts of rules for immigrants. At the same time, it has been approached on several occasions by the trade unions lobbying for the party's support, and it has increasingly achieved an image as a pro-welfare party usually aiming to get concessions on welfare issues, in particular for pensioners, from the Liberal-Conservative government.

As pointed out below, the party has achieved a position as centrist on the traditional left-right dimension but as extreme right on a new left-right dimension which has increasingly come to dominate Danish politics, transforming even the other parties, in particular the Liberals and the three small centre parties (Radical Liberals, Centre Democrats and Christian Democrats), as well as the left wing which underwent a similar metamorphosis already in the 1970s to adjust to new "green" values. Due to the changing cleavage structure, socialist parties have lost immense support among manual workers who are generally to the left on the old left-right dimension (and in Denmark even on "green" issues which were captured by the left wing in the 1970's) - but to the right on the value politics dimension. In the sense, the birth of the New Right with the anti-tax Progress Party in 1973 was as premature as the birth of the

new left with the advent of SF in 1960. Both parties had to be transformed, not in order to opportunistically exploit new issues (Klages, 2002), but to adapt to changing cleavages. A model of changing cleavage structures and cleavage mobilisation is presented briefly below.

## 2. A Cleavage Approach

This article analyses and interprets the emergence and transformation of the new right in Denmark from the perspective of changing cleavage structures (Andersen & Bjørklund, 1990; Borre, 1995; Andersen & Borre, 2003), roughly following the approach of Lipset & Rokkan (1967), only applied to a changing society. From the 1920s to the 1960's, most Western European party systems had been “frozen” as the conflicts of industrial society was already fully mobilised. In spite of the growth of the new middle class which could blur class divisions, there were no genuinely new conflicts in society that could be politically mobilized. But with post-industrial society, and with globalization and Europeanization, this changed.

Political cleavages in Western Europe, according to Lipset & Rokkan (1967), basically reflected the cultural or value conflicts related to the *national revolution*, and the economic conflicts related to the *industrial revolution* (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). In Denmark, the latter were wholly predominant, in particular the conflict between labour and capital. Like elsewhere, the cleavage between urban and rural economy was losing importance. Conflict was largely unidimensional, structured by the socioeconomic left-right dimension.

With postindustrialism a new conflict emerged, sometimes interpreted as a value conflict rooted in increasing wealth, sometimes as a structurally based struggle against industrialism. According to the former approach, physical security and increasing wealth (or marginal utility considerations) leads to changing value priorities as people orient themselves towards higher-order needs such as aesthetic needs and need for self-realisation (Inglehart, 1990). According to a structural interpretation, environmentalism reflects growing consciousness of the counter-productive accumulation of environmental problems related to the logic of industrialism (Beck, 1986; Kumar, 1988; Andersen, 1990). Similarly, anti-authoritarian values are related to the growth of network society and increasing recognition of the counterproductivity of hierarchical or taylorist forms of organisation.

Postmaterialism contributes to explain the appearance of the “new left”. But it has little to say about the emergence of the “new right”. It is postmaterialists vs. “the others”. If there is a separate place for the “new right”, it is as a counter-reaction (Ignazi, 1992). An alternative interpretation of postmaterialism (Flanagan, 19xx) which emphasise two different dimensions, the “green” dimension and the authoritarian-libertarian one, is helpful as it allows the “new right” to be placed at the authoritarian pole of a new dimension. But it fails to provide a satisfactory explanation of why value change came about, and it fails to conceptualise the most important issue of immigration.

At this point, the notion of globalization and Europeanization provides an alternative. Just as the national revolution - the building of the modern nation-state - involved cultural

conflicts (between centre and periphery, and between the state and the church), globalization, or more specifically, immigration, involves multiculturalism and thus new potential conflicts between cultures. Europeanization also involves a new kind of centre-periphery conflict.<sup>1</sup>

If the national revolution and the industrial revolution generated the political cleavage structures of the 20th century, it is reasonable to expect that the post-national and post-industrial revolutions will feed the cleavage structures of the 21st century; at the same time, we would expect a transformation of existing parties in order to adapt. Parties may change profoundly even if they nominally remain the same. It is within this framework we interpret the new right and its electoral support in Denmark - as well as the changing profile of the Liberals, the centre parties, and the new left (for a fuller elaboration of this perspective, see Andersen & Borre, 2003).

It is a classic notion in Rokkan and Lipset (1967) that structurally determined conflicts only form the “raw material” of political cleavages; the political consequences are country-specific, depending on how conflicts are articulated and on which alliances are forged by political leaders. For instance, environmental conflict in Denmark was virtually swallowed by the general left-right conflict as the issue was “captured” by the new left and articulated in the language of anti-capitalism rather than as an almost moral question of priorities between the environment and economic growth. Thus, it is “natural” that conflicts over postmaterialism (linked to postindustrialization) tend to combine with ethnic conflicts (linked to globalization) or even with conflicts over Europeanization. Not because this is structurally determined or logically unavoidable, but because it is a likely outcome of discursive practises and political opportunity structures (Kitschelt, 1995). The emerging value political dimension is broader and also absorbs the classical but much more narrow conflict between authoritarian and libertarian values.

This approach moves beyond the categories of postmaterialism or new politics. (Andersen & Bjørklund; 1990; Borre 1995) which failed to include the globalisation dimension(s). In our model, the new right is understood not simply as a counter-reaction to the new left, but with the point of departure in the notions of nation and culture.

Party competition is important for the mobilization of new cleavages. Due to the open access structure in the Danish party system, new conflicts are easily mobilised, and party competition becomes more intense. This means that the “conventional” right is less conventional than it used to be: The value politics dimension made the Social Democrats vulnerable to competition not only from the Danish People’s Party, but also from the Liberals. As voters’ sentiments on these issues were very different from those of the Social Democratic coalition government, and as these issues became ever more salient, the Liberal party exploited the opportunity to mobilise on them (Andersen, 2003a). As these issues brought Social Democrats under pressure and caused much internal disagreement, this in turn generated substantial media attention which fuelled mobilization even further. In short, even

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1) At the same time, globalisation also means a liberalisation of market forces, but this aspect only serves to reinforce old conflicts between left and right.

though the emergence of new cleavages is structurally rooted, the timing and the strength of such mobilization depend on self-reinforcing mechanisms of party competition.

This approach sees the Danish People's Party as a phenomenon which, basically, must be studied by the same approach as other parties. The party is assumed to be located simply at one pole of a continuum. The difference becomes clear when it is confronted with other approaches. Thus, one line of research points out the parties' distinctiveness in terms of populism, or in terms of protest. Another line of research sees the emergence of new right parties as a symptom of marginalisation among groups who feel threatened by social change, in particular by information society and globalisation. The approach here, by contrast, avoids the notion of marginalisation and point at more enduring conflicts over culture. The common line for many alternative approaches is that they see new right parties as *symptoms* of something else. Below, we shall contrast some of these interpretations.

### **3. The changing political agenda in Denmark**

It was dissatisfaction with rapidly increasing taxes under a bourgeois government that created the basis for the Progress Party breakthrough in the early 1970's. At that time, taxes was also the single most important issue at the voters' agenda (table 2). Engagement in this issue soon died out, however, when the economy and the employment situation worsened after the first oil crisis. Even though taxation was given high priority by many of the parties - and by the media - in 1990 and 2001, the saliency of this issue among voters remained rather low. In 2001, 15 per cent of the voters mentioned tax as an important issue (equivalent to 6 per cent of all answers, as compared to 24 per cent in 1973). Among liberals and conservatives, as well as among adherents of the new right, the proportion of respondents mentioning taxes was 21 and 20 per cent, respectively. Thus unlike the elections from 1973 to 1984 (Glans, 1984), high issue saliency of taxes was no longer a distinctive characteristic of the new right in 2001.

[ table 2 goes here ]

When it comes to immigration, there are few signs that the degree of hostility towards immigrants has worsened since the 1970s. But saliency of the issue has certainly increased. Alongside this, party polarisation has also increased; by 1979, there was virtually no party difference in attitudes towards immigrants among Danish voters; only a slightly higher sympathy on the left wing was beginning to crystallize (Bjørklund & Andersen, 2002). What brought the issue on the agenda, was the sudden shock of asylum-seeking refugees from the mid-1980s. At that time, the issue only appeared as short-term flashes on the voters' agenda, following newspaper headlines (Tonsgaard 1989; Togeby 1997:67), but from 1990, the growing immigrant population and increasing public attention to the problems it entailed put the issue permanently at the voters' agenda. By 1994, 8 per cent of the answers concerned immigration, by 1998 it was 14 per cent and in 2001, the figure was 20 per cent. This means that 35 per cent of all voters in 1998 and 51 per cent in 1998 mentioned immigration among



the most important issues. Similar measurements between the elections provide proportions in-between (Andersen, 2003a).

However, mentioning immigration as an important problem has long ago ceased being equivalent to hostility against foreigners. In 2001, the issue was salient for all voters - 44 per cent among left wing voters, 43 per cent among social democrats, 46 per cent among centre party voters, 51 per cent among liberals and conservatives, and 78 per cent among those who voted for the Danish People's Party or the Progress Party. There remains an association between negative attitudes to foreigners and saliency of the issue, but it has become increasingly weak; concern for integration or fear of racism are almost equally strong determinants of issue saliency (Andersen, 2003a).

Still, taken together, welfare issues were more important on the voters' agenda even in 2001. Indeed, this year there were only two major types of issues on the voters' agenda: Immigration and welfare (among which health care and care for the elderly were the most important). Among these issues, immigration was clearly the most divisive one.

#### **4. A right-wing party , but what kind of right wing?**

The label of parties like the Danish People's Party is frequently the subject of discussion. Should they be labelled extreme right parties? And what is meant by extreme? Taking a point of departure in people's perceptions and identities, the label "extreme right" does not seem entirely unwarranted (table 3). In fact, Danish voters do locate the Danish People's Party to an extreme right position (8.13 on a scale from 0 to 10, as against 7.32 for the Liberals). Even the Danish People's Party's own voters locate their party further to the right than supporters of any other parties (7.83, as against 7.47 for the Conservatives). Only the voters' own position deviate somewhat: Average self-placement for those who vote for the Danish People's Party is 6.91, as against 7.05 for conservative voters and 6.71 for liberal voters. Still, supporters of the party clearly conceive of themselves as being to the right - but not *extreme* right.

[ table 3 goes here ]

However, this partly reflects the changing meaning of left and right (Goul Andersen, 1993; Kitschelt, 1995). Traditionally, being to the right meant being to the right on a socioeconomic left-right dimension, but increasingly, left-right identity reflects both position on a socioeconomic and a value dimension, and by 2001, position on the latter dimension even appeared to be slightly more important for people's left-right identities than position on the former (Andersen, 2003a). Thus, Danish People's Party voters conceive themselves and their party to be far to the right because it is far to the right on the value dimension.

Indeed, Danish People's Party voters *are* very far to the right on the value dimension. This holds especially for immigration, but also for other issues on this dimension among

which the most important are support for developmental aid, law and order and environment<sup>2</sup> (table 4). There is a huge distance between the Danish People's Party voters and Liberal/Conservative voters when it comes to considering immigrants a threat to Danish culture. As measured by the balance of opinion (disagree minus agree, in percentages), the difference is almost equivalent to the difference between the Conservatives and Liberals, on the one hand, and left wing voters on the other. At the same time we note a marked difference between the left wing and centre party supporters on the one hand, and social democrats at the other. As many Social Democrats hostile to immigration had left the party in 2001, those who remained loyal were even more positive to immigration than social democrats had used to be.

[table 4 goes here]

The same relationship is found when it comes to aid to developing countries, law and order, and environmental attitudes. The main difference is that Social Democrats are among the progressives when we speak of the environment, and that the differences between Danish Peoples Party voters and Liberal/Conservative voters on these issues are much more modest.

A completely different pattern is found when we look at old left-right issues (table 5). Here, we find the well-known ordering of left wing, social democrats, and adherents of the centre parties. But the Danish People's Party does not fit in as an extreme right party. To begin with pensions and health care - where the legacy for favouring more spending stretches back even to the Progress Party - we find Danish People's Party voters as those who most unanimously favour increasing expenditures, even in comparison with social democrats and left wing voters. However, on these two expenditure issues, there is little party polarisation at all. On other issues, adherents of Danish People's Party voters come out as belonging to the right-of-centre group of voters. Unlike liberals and conservatives, most of these voters deny that social reforms have gone too far, but the majority is small and well away from the figures of the centre parties. This holds even more when it comes to choosing between tax relief and more welfare where Danish People's Party voters and conservative/liberal voters are quite similar.

[ table 5 goes here ]

The same holds for attitudes towards state control whereas economic equality is evaluated more positively among Danish People's Party voters than among other voters to the right - here, the proportion favouring equality is at the same level as centre party voters.

Borre (2003) has combined similar information into two indexes that serve to locate all parties on a socioeconomic and value political left-right dimension, respectively (table 6).

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2) Questions concerning the environment are actually twodimensional in Denmark as they load both on a traditional left-right dimension and on a value politics dimension. As mentioned, this reflects the left wing mobilisation on such issues in the 1970s.

As evidenced by the table, Danish People's Party voters are obviously to the right on new politics, but closer to the centre on old politics.

[ table 6 goes here ]

Finally, there is a marked difference between the Danish People's Party and the traditional right parties in attitudes to the EU. In a Danish context, EU is a multidimensional item which originally represented "more market and less state" and fitted well into the traditional left-right dimension. Increasingly, the market liberalisation aspect has become more ambiguous while other aspects have become more pertinent. Mogens Glistrup has always remained loyal to the EU whereas Pia Kjaersgaard and her party has taken a more critical stance, opposing further integration.

The voting patterns in the six Danish EU referenda clearly show a restructuring of attitudes, even though the new left remains overwhelmingly opposed to further integration and the social democratic voters - unlike their leaders - are sceptical. In the first referendum in 1972, voting patterns closely followed the left-right scale, with 97 per cent voting yes among liberals, 89 per cent among conservatives, and 17 per cent among those supporting the Socialist People's Party. In the 2000 referendum over Danish inclusion in the Economic and Monetary Union (where a majority voted no), the proportion voting yes among Socialist People's Party voters had increased to 25 per cent, whereas it had dropped from 97 to 63 per cent among liberals. Among most other parties, there was a decline in yes-votes roughly corresponding with the average difference between the two referenda. Among Danish People's Party voters, however, only 16 per cent voted yes in 2000 (Andersen, 2003b: 88). This is different from the Progress Party. Thus in 1986, 63 per cent of Progress Party adherents voted yes, and as late as in 1993, the proportion was 45 per cent. Likewise, in the eyes of the voters, but contrary to the party's official position as being only "sceptical", the Danish People's Party is considered the most negative towards EU among all parties. Nothing indicates that this issue is very important to the party's voters. But it is obvious that the party has adjusted its position and has been more than followed by its voters.

The figures for old and new left-right position above are. in a nutshell, the explanation of the emergence and support of the Danish People's Party: The party has contributed to mobilize on value politics. It does not have an issue ownership any more, but it takes an extreme stand. At the same time, it is not a single issue party: There is consistence across issues just as on the old left-right dimension, and more importantly: These issues are of great concern to all voters and serve to divide the parties in other ways than previously.

## **5. Social differences**

As voters increasing vote rationally in accordance with their attitudes - a phenomenon usually called *issue voting* even though this unintentionally tend to connote short term issues - the

patterns described above should have an impact on social patterns of voting. Attitudes towards value politics are very strongly determined by education. This means that education has increasingly become a sort of two dimensional variable - a bit parallel to Bourdieu's (1986) classical distinction between economic and cultural capital<sup>3</sup>. Education determines market position which other things being equal draws to the right. But on the other hand, education breeds liberal and tolerant values which normally pull to the left, or at least to the centre parties specialising on leftist positions on this dimension.

Likewise, mainly because of its correlation with education, class pulls in different directions. Working class persons are pulled to the left on socioeconomic left-right issues, but to the right on value politics. The result is that over a 35 year period from 1966 to 2001, working class support for Socialist parties was nearly halved, from 81 to 41 per cent - whereas the voting pattern of other groups remained almost unaffected (Andersen & Andersen, 2003). What was lost for the socialists among lower-level white collar workers, was won among the upper levels.

For the new right parties, this development means that they have become the most clean-cut labour parties. It is quite interesting to follow the development (table 7). In the 1960's, the social composition of the left wing was almost the same as the social composition of social democratic supporters. But this changed rapidly and markedly in the 1970's when the proportion of workers of the left wing parties declined to about average. Blue-collar workers were not exactly hostile to the values of the new left, but nor were they strongly attracted, unlike new middle class groups with higher education..

[ table 7 goes here ]

Around the Progress Party's breakthrough in 1973, the party was remarkable by having less under-representation of workers than any other non-socialist party. Since then, the social composition of the voters of the Progress Party and the Danish People's party has changed further, however. Increasingly, workers have become over-represented. In the the late 1980s, this over-representation reached the same level as among the social democrats. And since 1994, the proportion of workers among Danish People's Party's voters has even climbed well above that of the social democrats. At the same time, the proportion of workers on the left wing has declined even more, to a level even below the non-socialist parties *excluding* the new right parties.

Another significant aspect is the majority of men among the Danish People's Party's supporters. As there is much less difference in attitudes, and as women vote further to the left than men, this actually means that women tend to be the "hardliners" on value politics within most parties. As far as age is concerned, there is a constant over-representation among the old, whereas the support among young people to some extent follow the ups and downs of the

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3) The context is completely different, of course, and it was quite different aspects of cultural capital - interpreted from a power perspective - that was emphasised by Bourdieu.

party. However, the party has a stronghold among young males with working-class backgrounds or with low education (table 8).

[ table 8 goes here ]

## **6. Marginalisation and alienation?**

It has become a widespread assumption that support for the new right is an effect of processes of marginalisation related to the transition to post-industrialism and globalisation (Betz, 1994). This provides the most potent alternative explanation to the cleavage approach. And it is obvious to parallelize to the “extremism of the centre” or the middle class which was feeding fascism in the interwar period (Lipset, 1960). However, like the theory of fascism, the marginalisation theory is difficult to test. The premises are largely wrong, however.

To begin with macro level observations, we may note that during mass unemployment in the 1980's, support for the Progress Party was at a low, whereas it increased in the 1990's when Denmark experienced the largest drop in unemployment rates since the 1950's, most strongly for people with low education (Jensen, 2003). Also at the individual level, there is no indication that labour market marginalisation or exclusion increases support for the new right. We do find in 2001, however, that support for the Danish People's Party is larger among those unemployed than among the employed. But most of this is a simple effect of class composition (table 9). Among workers, there is no difference at all between employed and unemployed. Among white collars, there is such a difference, but this mainly reflects differences in educational composition between the employed and unemployed. The same applies to those disablement pensioners and others below the age of 60 who are entirely outside the labour market.

[ table 9 goes here ]

When it comes to other indications of marginalisation, the evidence is a little more ambiguous. But not much. There are slightly higher proportions among Danish People's Party voters who have personally experienced an economic downturn during the years preceding the 2001 election. There are also slightly higher proportions who hold a pessimistic view about the future. And there is a slightly higher proportion who are not acquainted with the use of new information technology. But the differences typically amount to less than 10 percentage points and are too small to be really important (Meret, 2003; Andersen, 2000). As far as income is concerned, Danish People Party voters are certainly at the lower end. But this largely reflects the social composition, and the proportion of homeowners is about average (Andersen & Andersen, 2003).

The Danish People's Party does combine strong negative attitudes towards foreigners and towards the EU, but generally speaking, these attitudes are weakly interconnected in the Danish population, although the association seems to be strengthening

somewhat over time (Andersen, 2003b). By the same token, Danish People's Party voters are among the most isolationist in the Danish population - but again with small differences to the other parties (Tobiasen, 2003).

Not surprisingly, the Danish People's Party's voters are characterised by relatively low trust in politicians. And it is noteworthy that the Danish People's Party's MP's have the habit of referring to politicians as "they" rather than as "we". Definitely, there is a notion of the "people against the elites". But similar distrust is found on the left wing, and the relative strength of distrust depend strongly on the colour and on the practises of the government currently in office. In short, distrust reflect policy distance to the government. More interestingly, Danish People's Party voters also reveal unusually low level of social trust, which does seem to indicate that persons with specific psychological and sociological characteristics are attracted by the party (Meret, 2003).

Despite such differences, however, the overwhelming conclusion is that Danish People's Party voters are rather similar to others. But they do hold different political attitudes which determine their choice of party. People know what they are doing, and voting for the party does not seem to reflect unconscious resentment, projection of frustrations, or the like.

## **7. Delicate balances and possible futures**

The encompassing political mobilization on the value political dimension in Denmark contributes on the one hand to focus public debates on those issues on which the Danish People's Party thrives. On the other hand, it also means strong competition. Previously, the party could demand unspecified tightening of rules for immigration or more law and order. By 2003, other parties have the same demands - or rules have already been tightened to a degree where it is impossible going much further without violating international conventions on human rights, or for purely practical reasons. Further, the proportion of the voters who want to go any further declines; after all, sentiments towards immigrants are not by any means unambiguously negative in Denmark (Gaasholt & Togeby, 1995; Togeby, 1997; Andersen, 2002)..

This means that the party's room of manoeuvre has been narrowed. On the one hand, the Danish People's Party has to make claims that make it possible for voters to distinguish the party from the government in office. On the other hand, the party cannot go too far without being considered extremist. And finally, in order to maintain its privileged parliamentary situation as the governments main coalition partner, it has to abstain from too populist actions that would make the party less "respectable", as was the case with the Progress Party in the 1970s and 1980s.

This is not an impossible situation, and the party can always rely on some percentages of xenophobic or outright racist core voters. But those are a minority. It means that the party has to strike delicate balances which is not always easy. When the party had its founding meeting in 1996, the nationalist strings were definitely hit too hard and brought associations of fascist hyper-nationalism. In 1999, Pia Kjaersgaard uttered that the whole

family should be sent out of the country if a young family member broke the law seriously. In 2003, the party has also taken some populist stands which does threaten to undermine the party's position. The background was a Danish Supreme Court decision where Pia Kjaersgaard's charge against a person accusing her of racism was rejected. The Supreme Court found that, given the statements of Pia Kjaersgaard, and given the broadening of the usage of the term "racism" in the general population, the accusation could not be considered entirely unjustified. Pia Kjaersgaard reacted by accusing the Supreme Court of having made a "political" decision - a statement which was obviously not welcomed by the governing parties. Pia Kjaersgaard had also some difficulties in explaining a statement that she did not consider international conventions of human rights an insurmountable obstacle to making different rules for people bringing their spouse to Denmark, depending on ethnicity. In the end, she specified, however, that the party did not want to violate the conventions.

Finally, also the cooperation between the trade unions and the party (which lent legitimacy to the party, in return for influence to the unions) has been interrupted by June/July 2003 because the Danish TUC leader, Hans Jensen, stated that the cooperation with the party was highly involuntary, dictated only by the political circumstances. This offended the leadership of the Danish People's Party who invited Hans Jensen to morning coffee to explain what he meant. As he refused - in a not very polite letter - the party declared that it did not want any further cooperation with the unions.

Such newspaper headlines are probably not very beneficial for the party. At the same time, it seems likely that the tightening of rules adopted in 2002 will serve to reduce the saliency of the issue of immigration. The people got what it wanted, so to speak, and there is little more in terms of tightening that could possibly be done. Most likely, the value dimension will play a smaller role in the next elections, and this is likely to reduce support for the party somewhat. On the other hand, there is any reason to believe that the new value cleavage, including the issue of immigration and multiculturalism, will be an enduring one in Danish politics. The party may experience its ups and downs. But there is nothing to indicate that it could disappear.

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**TABLES AND FIGURES:**

**Table 1. Electoral support for the Progress Party and the Danish People's Party, 1973-2001. Percentages.**

	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001
Danish People's Party											7.4	12.0
Progress Party	15.9	13.6	14.6	11.0	8.9	3.6	4.8	9.0	6.4	6.4	2.4	0.6
New right, total											9.8	12.6

**Table 2. The political agenda of Danish voters, 1971-2001. Percentages of all answers.**

	1971	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001
1.Unemployment	3	1	40	42	23	44		16	13	29	24	7	3
2.Economic problems	24	17	32	29	51	28	63	31	24	19	15	7	4
3.Taxes	12	24	6	4	5	6	4	2	7	9	2	5	6
1-3.Econ-issues total	39	42	78	75	79	78	67	49	44	57	41	19	13
4.Environment	8	4	1	3	6	2	3	15	9	10	8	9	4
5.Welfare	26	14	4	13	7	8	13	15	6	20	38	47	51
6.Immigration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	4	8	14	20
7.Foreign/defence pol.	17	3	1	1	1	2	9	3	15	3	3	5	4
8.Else	10	37	16	8	7	10	8	14	24	6	2	6 <sup>1)</sup>	8 <sup>1)</sup>
I alt	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q. "Now I would like to ask which problems you consider most important today for politicians to take care of?"  
 Table shows distribution of all answers. Average number of answers was 2.5 in 2001, 2.4 in 1998, falling to a little below 2.0 answers in the 1970s.  
 1) Of which: Law and order: 3 per cent. in 1998, 2 per cent. in 2001.  
 Source: Election surveys (1994: Thomsen (1995)).

**Table 3. Voters' placement of all parties on a left-right scale, placement of own party, and self-placement on left-right scale, 2001. 0=extreme left, 10=extreme right.**

	party position among all voters	party position among own voters	voters' own position
Ø.Unity list	1.47	1.14	1.53
F.Socialist People's Party	2.78	2.70	2.97
A.Social Democrats	4.38	4.57	4.26
B.Radical Liberals	4.61	4.66	4.62
Q.Christian Democrats	5.48	5.81	5.54
C.Conservatives	6.98	7.47	7.05
V.Liberals	7.32	7.42	6.71
O.Danish People's Party	8.13	7.83	6.91

**Table 4. Attitudes towards value politics issues, 2001.**

**Percentage difference (pos.=overweight to the leftist attitude).**

	Immigration a threat (-)	Reduce (-)/ increase (+) Spending on developmental aid	Law and order (-) or human treatment of criminals (+)	Growth more important than environment (-)	N
Danish People's Party	-70	-73	-80	0	210
Cons./Lib.	-6	-53	-63	+6	815
Centre Parties	+64	+10	+18	+63	165
Social Dem.	+14	-15	-13	+47	518
Left Wing	+74	+22	+46	+83	171

**Table 5. Attitudes towards old politics issues, 2001.**

**Percentage difference (pos.=overweight to the leftist attitude).**

	reduce(-) / increase (+) spending on pensions	reduce(-) / increase (+) spending on health care	social reforms gone too far (-)	tax relief(-) or more welfare(+)	higher economic equality (+)	maintain state control of business (+)	N
Danish People's Party	65	77	12	-20	1	-41	210
Cons./Lib.	40	66	-8	-25	-26	-56	815
Centre Parties	29	59	40	25	-2	-8	165
Social Dem.	47	69	55	41	35	11	518
Left wing	49	69	77	67	62	41	171

**Table 6. Position on new and old politics index, 2001.**

	old politics	value politics
Unitary List	1.90	1.91
Socialist Peoples Party	2.00	2.52
Social Democrats	2.43	3.18
Radical Liberals	2.91	2.39
Christian Democrats	3.12	3.01
Conservatives	3.78	3.56
Liberals	3.59	3.70
Danish Peoples Party	3.19	4.15

Source: Borre (2003)

**Table 7. Proportion of workers among the supporters of various party groups. Deviations from sample means. Percentage points.**

	1966	1973	1977	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001
Progress Party/DPP		-4	-1	+2	+6	+9	+4	+14	+15	+16	+13	+21
Other bourg part.	-26	-15	-20	-17	-15	-12	-12	-15	-16	-11	-10	-8
Social demcr. part.	+27	+26	+20	+15	+18	+20	+19	+16	+16	+13	+9	+8
Left Wing	+26	+17	+6	+3	+4	0	+2	+4	+1	-3	-3	-9
Normal	40	37	35	36	36	32	32	36	31	34	38	35

Source: Bjørklund & Andersen (2002). Election surveys, Danish Election Programme.

Note. Entries are deviations between the proportion of manual workers among the supporters of various party groups and in the entire sample ("normal"). Only voters belonging to the labour force are included (1966 including housewives classified according to husband's position but this does not affect the figures significantly).

**Table 8. Support for the Progress Party/Danish Peoples's Party (combined support), by age, gender and class, 2001. Percentages.**

	Workers		White collar	
	men	women	men	women
18-29 years	23	15	7	7
30-39 years	22	17	6	6
40 years or more	17	14	9	7
(N)	894	581	472	660
	1100	834	1143	1695
	2351	1488	2577	2934

Source: Danish Election Studies; 2001: AIM telebus, jan-aug.2002.



**Table 9. Support for the Progress Party/Danish Peoples's Party (combined support), by labour market status, 1987-2001. Percentages.**

	1987	1990	1994	1998	2001
Employed	5	7	6	5	12
Unemployed	7	6	6	10	15
Disablement pensioners and others (18-59 years)	2	7	6	12	16
(N)	1905	1508	1885	2064	17334
	156	183	229	174	748
	98	122	165	197	1034

Source: Danish Election Studies; 2001: AIM telebus, jan-aug.2002.

**Table 10. Support for the Progress Party/Danish Peoples's Party (combined support), by labour market status and class, 2001. Percentages.**

	employed	unemployed
manual workers	18	17
nonmanual employees	7	15
N	6916	336
	9247	235