

Five theories of voting action
strategy and structure of psychological explanation

M. Visser

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Preface

Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness. Let us not take it for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in what is commonly thought small.

Virginia Woolf

This dissertation is an exercise in political psychology and psychologically oriented political science. The approach it takes to the study of voting is inherently psychological, yet the choice and scope of psychological theories is bounded by the discussion of voting behavior as it appears from the political science literature. Digressions into psychological theory and history provide wider perspectives and foster searches for convergences, yet the terminus of these investigations invariably centers on issues from political science.

The book gradually grew out of an empirical research program on 'Political change in the Netherlands', written by Jacques Thomassen and Jan Van Deth and funded in 1989 by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO, grantnr. 430-214-032). For five years a small research group, headed by Thomassen and consisting of Kees Aarts, Raymond Horstman and the present writer, intensively delved into voting behavior in the Netherlands (and abroad), which endeavor in the end resulted in seven (internationally) published articles, two data source books and ten conference papers. During these (and four more) years promotor Jacques Thomassen and assistant-promotor Kees Aarts continuously and generously provided positive feedback and support for the present dissertation, even when it tended to transcend the limits of the 'Political change' project.

My colleagues at the Twente Political Science section provided a real forum in the Popperian sense, on occasion friendly yet determinedly filletting my papers to scientific shreds. Ank Michels and Ingrid Smeets formed a closer peer group during the first years; with them I discussed many of the ideas propounded in the following pages and shared the vicissitudes and contingencies, inherent in the life of a junior research associate.

At a wider range two other institutions were influential. The annual voting behavior workshops, until 1996 organized by Hans Anker for the Dutch Political Science Association, often offered good discussion opportunities and testing grounds for new papers. Also quite important for the development of my views was the GSPS Summer School, which Thomassen and I organized in June 1992. Among many distinguished guests, the School hosted Warren Miller, Ronald Inglehart, Hans-Dieter Klingemann and John Curtice. The discussions with these experienced scientists often equalled years of solitary reading in providing insight in and clarification of theoretical problems. Of these guests, Klingemann also provided important additional feedback in the final stages of this dissertation.

As an interdisciplinary project, this book has been thoroughly reviewed from other sides as well. The Twente psychologist Erwin Seydel provided fruitful comments and enthusiastic support in various stages of the project, while the theoretical psychologist Hans Van Rappard (Free University Amsterdam) painstakingly commented on significant parts of the text. The Twente policy scientists Rob Hoppe and Huib de Jong critically reviewed the whole manuscript. The book has benefitted greatly from their efforts.

With regard to the English language, various journal editors have often suggested

corrections and additions that mostly have found their way into the final version of the book. Parts of the current text are reprinted, with slight alterations, with the kind permission of the Clinical Psychology Publishing Company, the International Society of Political Psychology, the Verlag Dr R. Krämer and the managing editor of *Vraagstelling*.

Nearly eight years of scientific work on 'the psychology of voting' inevitably has taken its toll from social life. It is therefore appropriate that this dissertation is dedicated to my wife, my parents and the household zoo of three cats, who over the years have contributed to this project in often complex and paradoxical ways.

In the end, however, the responsibility for the book has been and continues to be mine - and mine alone.

*Doesburg,
May 11, 1998*

M.V

The study of voting behavior

1.1 The behavioral persuasion

Ever since the 'behavioral persuasion' pervaded the discipline of political science in the 1950s, empirical research on political behavior has dominated that discipline's research agenda (Ricci 1984: 133ff). Broadly defined as behavior concerned with the relation between citizens and their governments, political behavior covers a large range of possible subjects of research, from the behaviors of bureaucrats and interest groups to the dealings of political terrorists.

Among political behavior, the study of voting behavior over the years has occupied a central position, both in terms of quantity and quality. Its antecedents going back to the beginning of this century, voting research at first was predominantly demographically oriented, an orientation partly forced upon it by the aggregate nature of the available election and census data. With the advent of the first public opinion polls in the 1930s it became possible to research voting choices at the level of the individual voter. Stimulated by the emerging 'behavioral persuasion', the use of opinion polls and surveys quickly proliferated to become the dominant method of inquiry in the field of electoral research, if not in most areas of political behavior research.

The 'behavioral persuasion' offered a clear set of guidelines for political research. Inspired by Karl Popper's philosophy of science, behaviorist political science emphasized the dichotomy between factual and normative considerations, the importance of testability as a requirement of scientific propositions and of falsifiability and tentativity as a characteristic of scientific results. Application of the scientific method was considered crucial, both with regard to the reliability of research results as to the communication of such results to the scientific community. In addition to these tenets, behaviorist political scientists also conceived of their endeavor as contributing small building blocks of piecemeal research results to a steadily expanding whole of scientific knowledge about the world of politics (Ricci 1984: 136-144; for a cautionary note on Popper's influence on political science, see Farr 1988).

While in the early 1970s the prominence of behavioralism in political science became subject of critique by 'post-behavioralists', some ten years later a certain sense of disillusion also spread among political scientists who had remained committed to behavioralism. According to many observers, some twenty-plus years of behavioral research had failed to establish any law of political behavior, apart from rather trivial or tautological generalizations. The discipline of political science was seen as plagued by misfits between theoretical understanding and available data, by a lack of experimental control of its research subjects and a lack of replication of existing results. A scientific forum in the Popperian sense did not really exist among political scientists, the absence of which led to inconclusive scientific debates and closed citation and review circles, nowhere approaching the ideal of falsification (Ricci 1984: 249ff).

These observations were particularly applicable to the field of electoral research. In a research tradition so old the 'behavioral persuasion' should have led to a certain accumulation of knowledge and to the establishment of a generally shared mode of analysis of voting behavior. Most commentators agreed, however, that this by-and-large had not been the case. There had been important advances in data collection, methodology and statistics, yet these advances had been accompanied by a proliferation of different theoretical views and continuing controversies with regard to the proper approach to the study of voting behavior (Asher 1983; Niemi & Weisberg 1984: 14; for the Dutch political science community these concerns were, in varying degrees of intensity, reflected in the reviews by Daalder 1984, 1991; Niemöller & Van der Eijk 1986; Thomassen 1986, and Van Deth 1986). Furthermore, in the decade that has passed since these concerns were voiced, this divided state of affairs has not noticeably changed (Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Huckfeldt & Sprague 1993).

The current diversity of viewpoints in electoral research is to a large extent due to the fact that political science does not have a dominant theory of (political) behavior, or a dominant approach to its analysis. Existing approaches differ from one another with regard to underlying theories of human behavior, the disciplines of economics, psychology and sociology being the main suppliers of such theories. In addition, differences exist with regard to the basic unit of analysis (micro-level versus macro-level) and time perspective (static versus dynamic situations, equilibrium versus change)(Fiorina 1975; Lau & Sears 1986a).

Thus, when political scientists became 'behaviorally persuaded', this implied a division of the discipline in political sociology, political psychology and political economy, with further subdivisions as to level of analysis and time perspective. In the field of voting behavior this development led to the establishment of clearly discernible economic, psychological and sociological 'schools' of electoral research, which increasingly became institutionalized and intellectually separated from each other. Within these schools further fragmentation often occurred, reflecting theoretical differences which exist within the disciplines of psychology, sociology and economics as well.

Considered in itself, theoretical diversity is not necessarily detrimental to scientific progress. Insight in complex research problems may often be gained from an analysis from different points of view, each perspective contributing a piece of the puzzle. Progress is hindered, however, when theoretical diversity begins to impede communication between scientists working in the same field, or when a tendency develops to recycle old concepts under new names without appropriate knowledge of and reference to the older literature.

While then acknowledging and applauding the progress electoral research has made in the fields of methodology and measurements, this dissertation will attempt to address some of the concerns related to the continuing theoretical segmentation and proliferation. It will concentrate on those approaches to the study of voting behavior which derive their theory from the scientific discipline of psychology, which take the individual voter as their basic unit of analysis, and which explain voting behavior in one as well as more points in time. The psychological discipline has been selected because, more than in the cases of sociology and economy, the discipline of psychology has known a long history of developments and 'paradigm shifts' with direct relevance for the analysis of voting choices.

The *research purpose* of the dissertation is to describe, analyze and uncover convergences between different existing psychological theories of voting behavior at the individual level, both with regard to their structure and to the various strategies of explanation these theories imply.

In order to achieve this purpose and to connect meaningful research questions to it, three matters must be addressed first. First, it must be specified what exactly constitutes a 'psychological' theory or explanation of voting behavior, and in which ways these differ from other, non-psychological theories and modes of explanation. Second, it is necessary to be more specific about the term 'voting behavior': what is such behavior, and how can it be explained? Third, the term 'strategy of explanation' needs to be clarified in somewhat greater detail.

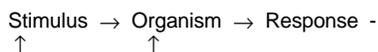
1.2 Psychology and behavior

Behavior in general is an omnipresent and continuous phenomenon. People always behave in one way or another, and in fact it may well be argued that it is impossible for (living) humans not to behave. For social scientists who wish to

study behavior, not all possible behaviors are equally interesting. According to their field of behavioral interest, the different social sciences will select one aspect of behavior for detailed study, and leave the rest of all behaviors to the other branches of social inquiry. Thus economists will be primarily interested in behavior related to the production, distribution and consumption of scarce goods, while anthropologists study behavior in specific social-cultural settings. In this dissertation the political aspect of behavior will occupy a central place, in particular one class of political behavior, i.e. voting behavior.

The principal target of behavioral social and political scientists is the explanation (and prediction) of behavior: why do people behave as they do? The explanation of behavior requires the coupling of behaviors to antecedent causes; asking why a certain action has been performed amounts to identifying the causes of that action.

A *psychological* theory of behavior characteristically approaches this task of explanation with the following basic model:



In this stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) chain, an organism with certain characteristics and capacities responds at the onset of certain stimuli from the environment, which response is codetermined by both the nature of the stimuli and the state of the organism. The response may have effects on both the environmental stimulus conditions and the state of the organism.

According to this model, there seem to be two principal sources of causation of behavior. One source is the environment of the behaving human organism; its action must be understood as a response to certain stimuli emanating from its environment. For example, when we witness a house on fire and people running away from it, this action of running away may be readily explained as a response to the environmental conditions of fire, heat and possible explosion danger.

Yet behavior is not unequivocally or mechanically linked to environmental events. There is, first, the fact of interpersonal variability of behavior: two humans react differently to an identical situation, as when in the previous example one person flees the house, but the other turns around and reenters the blazing house in search of lost companions or goods. A second fact is intrapersonal variability of behavior: a human organism behaves differently than it did before in an identical situation. The brave person who returned to the burning house becomes seriously wounded and consequently learns that, when faced with an identical situation in the future, it is better to leave as quickly as possible. Therefore the second source of behavioral causation must be located in the acting organism itself, apart from its environment.

Placing the source of causation in a human organism poses an epistemological problem, however. While environmental conditions and properties and the physical behavior of the organism are open to observation, the internal state of humans cannot be inspected (Valentine 1992: 117ff). Thus in the electoral case, the voting analyst may, on the one hand, observe the events surrounding the election (like campaigns, speeches, debates, conventions, etc.) or the behavior of voters pertaining to the elections (political discussions, attendance of campaign activities, etc.). On the other hand, he may analyze the official election results, the aggregate outcome of the numerous physical movements of crossing the ballot paper (or pulling the switch), which have occurred in the secrecy of the voting booth.

From the facts of interpersonal and intrapersonal variability of behavior in identical situations it becomes clear, however, that the electoral environment conveys different meanings to different persons, and that therefore it is not

possible to explain the election results from the antecedent environmental conditions alone. It is necessary to gain insight, at the level of the individual voter, into the factors and mechanisms which mediate between the stimulus situation on the one hand, and the physical response on the other. The epistemological problem then may be solved by postulating the existence of certain mental processes which may be helpful in the explanation of voting behavior, or, put somewhat differently, by conceptualizing the variables intervening between environmental conditions and the consummatory action.

The term 'intervening variables' was first coined by American learning theorists who rejected Watson's early radical environmentalism. Regarding the response (R) as a function of the stimulus (S), they studied the form of this function in different situations and cases. The extreme variation in situations, however, made it quite difficult to determine the exact S-R relationship. The interposition of intervening variables between stimulus and response simplified this approach: the intervening variable linked a variety of stimuli to the response and thus made more parsimonious explanations of behavior possible. Now obviously the choice of intervening variables was arbitrary, and soon disagreement reigned among learning theorists on the nature and number of these variables. For the moderate behaviorist the formulation of concepts (hypothetical constructs) was as important as the establishment of relations among them, whereas for the strict learning theorist only the latter aspect counted (Lazarsfeld 1966: 145ff).

Among learning psychologists, Edward C. Tolman probably went furthest in the formulation of intervening variables. Although habitually working with laboratory rats, he also contributed to Parsons & Shils' 'general theory of action' project a quite elaborated psychological model (Tolman 1951, 1952; see also Chapter 4). In this model Tolman replaced the simple S-O-R chain with a distinction between independent, dependent and intervening variables, which provides further insight into the nature of psychological explanations.

First, the dependent variable is behavior, which Tolman did not define by its micro-level, physiological character, but by its molar, action-specific properties. Second, as independent variables Tolman regarded three types of factors: the stimulus situation (defined as the physical, social and cultural objects and processes making up the individual's environment at a given moment); states of drive arousal and satiation (defined as the physiological states of certain bodily organs and tissues); individual physiological conditions (determined by age, heredity, sex, drugs, endocrine disturbances, etc.)(Tolman 1951: 279-281).

In the third place, although independent variables are the initiating causes of a person's behavior, they do not constitute psychological causes of that behavior. For example, given a certain stimulus situation, it is still uncertain which objects in that situation a person will perceive and how he will react to these. By the same token, states of drive arousal do not automatically translate into consummatory behaviors: they must enter the person's (sub)consciousness as needs, which then may be gratified by appropriate action. Perceptual traces and needs are examples of intervening variables, defined as 'postulated explanatory entities conceived to be connected by one set of causal functions to the independent variables...and by another set of functions to the dependent variable of behavior' (Tolman 1951: 281).¹

1 Although the role of intervening variables is treated here as characteristic of a psychological approach, it is to be noted that some psychologists reject the interposition of intervening variables and consider environmental conditions and behavior as directly and lawfully related to one another. Psychological theories of this nature are B.F. Skinner's experimental analysis of behavior (Skinner

Although Tolman distinguished various classes of intervening variables, the most important category for the purpose of this dissertation is formed by phenomenological intervening variables. Such variables are derived from introspective reports which respondents give of their subjective experiences of themselves and their environments. They contrast, for example, with neurophysiological intervening variables, which refer to neural associative or field processes in the brain as mediating events (Tolman 1951: 282-283). In a psychological mode of behavioral explanation, then, the epistemological problem, posed earlier, is solved by postulating the existence of intervening variables of a predominantly phenomenological nature between environment and action.

With Tolman's categorization, the psychological approach to the study of behavior may be demarcated from other modes of behavioral explanation. The most important distinction pertains to the question whether intervening variables are postulated at all. Some fields of social science, most notably sociology, geography and anthropology, focus their attention on aggregate phenomena, like the actions of groups, societies or cultures, and seek to establish direct relationships between social, cultural, or spatial properties of the stimulus situation on the one hand and behavior on the other.

In political sociology, however, different levels of aggregation may be distinguished in this respect. On the one hand, macro-sociological analyses of voting behavior tend to point at the social cleavage structure of society and its institutional forms as determinants of mass electoral choice, without inquiring into the psychological links between group processes and votes (see, for example, Houska 1985; Irwin & Van Holsteyn 1989; Lipset & Rokkan 1967; Lijphart 1974, 1975; Lipset 1981; Visser 1993b, 1994e). On the other hand, micro-sociologists have attempted to explain group voting by reference to mental properties of individual group members, which approach comes quite close to social psychology, and thus within the purview of this dissertation (examples are Andeweg 1982: 36ff, 1995; Miller & Stouthard 1975; Suchman & Menzell 1955; Visser 1993a).

Another social science, economy, partly inquires into mental causes of behavior, for which purpose the intervening variables of 'subjective utility function' and 'preference' have been employed. Regarding human decision-making as inherently rational, economists initially declined to impute much psychological meaning in utility and preference. Instead they considered these variables in an almost tautological sense: 'Of two alternatives...a player will choose the one which yields the more preferred outcome, or more precisely, in terms of the utility function he will attempt to maximize expected utility' (Luce & Raiffa 1957: 50). Early proponents of utility theory made no effort to inquire into the motives for a certain decision, and they quite decisively rejected the measurement of preferences by reference to psychological states (Luce & Raiffa 1957: 50; Savage 1954: 17, 27-28; Von Neumann & Morgenstern 1953: 16).

In later extensions of utility theory, however, it was recognized that there are cognitive limits to the rationality of preference formation and decision-making, and that especially in situations of uncertainty and incomplete information it may be quite rational to employ decisional shortcuts (Simon 1959, 1987). Thus in the election situation, a rational voter, given the opportunity, would vote for the party which he believes will provide him with more benefits than any other party, or, in other words, will yield maximum subjective utility. Since, however, voters act in a situation of uncertainty and do not have complete information on costs and

1993; Holland & Skinner 1961), self-perception theory (Bem 1967, 1972) and the ecological (or Gibsonian) approach to perception (reviewed in Fiske & Taylor 1991: 287-292). For a Skinnerian analysis of voting behavior see Lamal & Greenspoon 1992, and Visser 1996.

benefits of the policies that parties propose, they use ideologies as a reasonable decisional shortcut: 'Ideologies help [the voter] focus attention on the differences between parties; therefore they can be used as samples of all the differentiating stands' (Downs 1957: 98). The recognition of such cognitive bounds fostered an increasing understanding between economists and cognitive psychologists, which in some recent voting studies has led to a theoretical convergence in terms of 'low-information rationality' (see, for example, Fuchs & Klingemann 1990; Himmelweit et al. 1981: 11-16, 112ff; Kuchler 1986; Popkin 1994: 7-17).

Alternatively it has been proposed to conceive of (political) utility in terms of economic rewards and losses. The consequences of a certain party choice are then judged by the voter in terms of his personal economic situation (pocketbook voting) or in terms of the economic well-being of the nation as a whole (sociotropic voting)(Downs 1957; Fiorina 1981; Kinder & Kiewiet 1981; Krause 1997; for the Low Countries see Kaashoek 1995; Maddens 1995; Middendorp & Kolkhuis Tanke 1989). To the extent that the relations between voting actions and economic consequences are conceived of in psychological terms, i.e. as subjective perceptions, expectations and evaluations, this conception of utility theory would come close to social learning theory, summarily discussed in Chapter 4 (on the relation between utility and learning theory, see also Mueller 1989: 348ff). In the remainder of this dissertation, then, concepts from economic theory will play a role only insofar as they have clear psychological implications.

1.3 Voting behavior and action

In the previous section it has been detailed how (learning) psychologists dealt with the epistemological problem, stemming from the impossibility of observing the organismic processes occurring between the onset of environmental stimuli and the physical response. There were, however, other problems as well, one of which is pertinent for the present discussion (see further Chapter 4).

The stimulus-organism-response chain, presented earlier, presupposes that for every stimulus a response may be determined and vice versa. This assumption was questioned even before the heydays of behaviorism. The American philosopher John Dewey argued that, logically speaking, stimuli cannot be known apart from the responses to which they supposedly give rise, because one starts from the response as it exists (or is consummated) in the human respondent: '[S]timulus and response are not distinctions in existence, but teleological distinctions, that is, distinctions of a functional nature, with reference to reaching or maintaining an end' (quoted in Valentine 1992: 164). The S-O-R chain thus refers to an analytical distinction within whole, continuous circuits of activity. In empirical practice, stimulus, organism and response should not be regarded as separate entities, but as integrated parts of a coordinated whole in the context of some delineated action (Smith 1973; Watzlawick et al. 1967: 54-56).

Besides theoretical grounds for distinguishing between single responses (or behaviors) and actions, there are in the context of this dissertation some practical grounds as well. Contrary to many other classes of behavior, voting behavior cannot be plausibly considered as a continuous phenomenon. The occasions with which this behavior is linked up, i.e. elections, are held at certain time intervals, varying, for example, from two (U.S. Congress) to seven years (French presidency). The electoral process thus provides only intermittent opportunities for citizens to evaluate the policy achievements of the governing parties or officials, to compare these achievements and future policy plans to the alternatives put forward by

opposition parties or candidates, and, in case of dissatisfaction with the government, to alter the relative power positions between government and opposition parties or candidates.

To address these theoretical and practical considerations, it is useful to make a general distinction between behavior and *action*, the latter defined as follows: 'We shall talk of action whenever we combine into one unit a goal-directed series of behavior that ends in a fairly distinguishable consummatory move' (Lazarsfeld 1959: 2). Applied to electoral behavior, voting action may be defined as the 'unit of series of behavior, directed at the goal of making an electoral choice, that ends in a consummatory move in favor of some party (or candidate)'.

Action thus constitutes a continuous whole of behaviors with some beginning and some end. The analysis of actions makes it possible for the social researcher to select out of the continuous 'stream of behavior' one behavioral sequence, and follow it from its first manifestations to its final end. More specific, students of voting action are concerned with that part of the person's total behavior which is involved in the formation and execution of a voting decision on Election day.

To repeat, the definition makes clear that actions must be distinguished from single behaviors or responses, such as muscle contractions or glandular secretions. As continuous S-O-R chains, actions are always related to environmental goal-objects, which may be approached or avoided through a diversity of alternative physiological micro-movements (Krech & Crutchfield 1948: 30-31; Tolman 1951: 279 n.1, 281). Voting actions may thus be consummated by such diverse micro-behaviors like crossing a box on the ballot paper or pulling the lever of the voting machine. Although the terms behavior and action are sometimes used rather loosely throughout this book to avoid literary stuffiness, the reader should keep this distinction clearly in mind.

Finally, the terms voting action and voting behavior explicitly refer to the action of casting a vote in favor of some party or candidate, and is to be distinguished from the decision to vote (or turnout), which will not be covered in this dissertation.

1.4 Strategies of explanation

As a final introductory point, the term 'strategy of explanation' needs to be elucidated. Generally two such strategies are distinguished, commonly labelled as causal and functional. Most behavioral political scientists and psychologists emphasize that these strategies be clearly distinguished. In their view, confusing function with cause amounts to committing the errors of teleology and purposivism, and leads to non-falsifiable explanations of voting actions (e.g., Bruner et al. 1956: 245-246; Lane 1973: 95-96; 1986; Smith 1969: 73-74; Van Deth 1984: 74-77).

Contrary to these common objections, however, it is argued here that a purely causal strategy cannot obtain in voting research, for several reasons noted in the last two sections and summarized as follows. First, a truly causal strategy in the psychological sense would require a strictly experimental setup of the election situation, in which electoral stimuli and other contingencies would appear under the full control of the researcher. An election, however, is a natural, live event, and although it can be simulated in a psychological laboratory, the occurring voting choices cannot be understood from antecedent conditions alone. In order to explain voting actions, the analyst must resort to some form of inquiring into subjective experience of voters, which necessarily yields data (and variables) of the phenomenological nature defined earlier. Second, the theoretical and practical considerations which in the previous section led to a definition of voting action as

a 'goal-directed series of behavior' also conspire against a causal approach in the psychological sense. While it already theoretically questionable whether single responses can be unequivocally linked to single stimuli, such a link would be impossible to ascertain in empirical practice, where a large and diverse multitude of election-related behaviors and socio-political stimuli are involved.

A functional (or teleological) strategy, on the other hand, is not constrained by such limitations and may constitute an useful addition to current knowledge, in the following vein:

Teleological explanations are likely to be favored where we are more interested in the result rather than in the details of the behavior... Because the essence of teleological phenomena is a relation of many causes to one effect, and because even philosophers are agreed that time cannot go backwards and there can be no such thing as a final cause, teleological explanations are generally bound to lack predictive power and can only provide explanatory satisfaction in the sense of increasing the intelligibility of a sequence of behavior (Valentine 1992: 175).

The functional view is primarily heuristic in nature, directed at asking important questions and providing additional meaning to existing knowledge and opinion.

In this dissertation, then, the difference between the two strategies is regarded as a difference of degree, rather than a difference in kind, and may be outlined as follows. First, the causal strategy seeks behavioral similarities and differences among many persons. It entails the intensive investigation of isolated psychological functions, opinions or attitudes, abstracted from many individuals. The purpose of this strategy is nomothetic, intent on finding broad, preferably universal, laws with which *interindividual* variability in thought and action may be analyzed and explained. Opinion polls, sample surveys and (quasi)experimental research designs are the typical means of data collection in the causal tradition, while quantitative, statistical methods are commonly applied to the analysis of the data.

The functional (or teleological) strategy, on the other hand, is primarily interested in psychological and behavioral variation within individual systems. Opinions, attitudes and beliefs are studied in their functional relationships to the individual's needs, interests and general life strivings. The purpose of this strategy is idiographic, aiming at discovering patterns in *intraindividual* variability of thought and action over time and in different situations. Data are typically collected through clinical, in-depth studies of single individuals or small groups for the purpose of qualitative analysis, directed at an interpretative understanding of the cases at hand (Allport 1960; 1961: 7-13; Bühler & Allen 1972: 40-44; Valentine 1992: 187ff).

1.5 Research questions and outline

With the preliminary specification of the terms 'voting behavior', 'voting action', 'psychological theory' and 'strategy of explanation' concluded, it is possible to translate the research purpose of this dissertation into four *research questions*, one descriptive, one analytical, one strategic and one integrative:

- * Which intervening variables do psychologically oriented schools in voting action research employ?
- * What are the (historical) antecedents of these intervening variables in psycho-

logical theory?

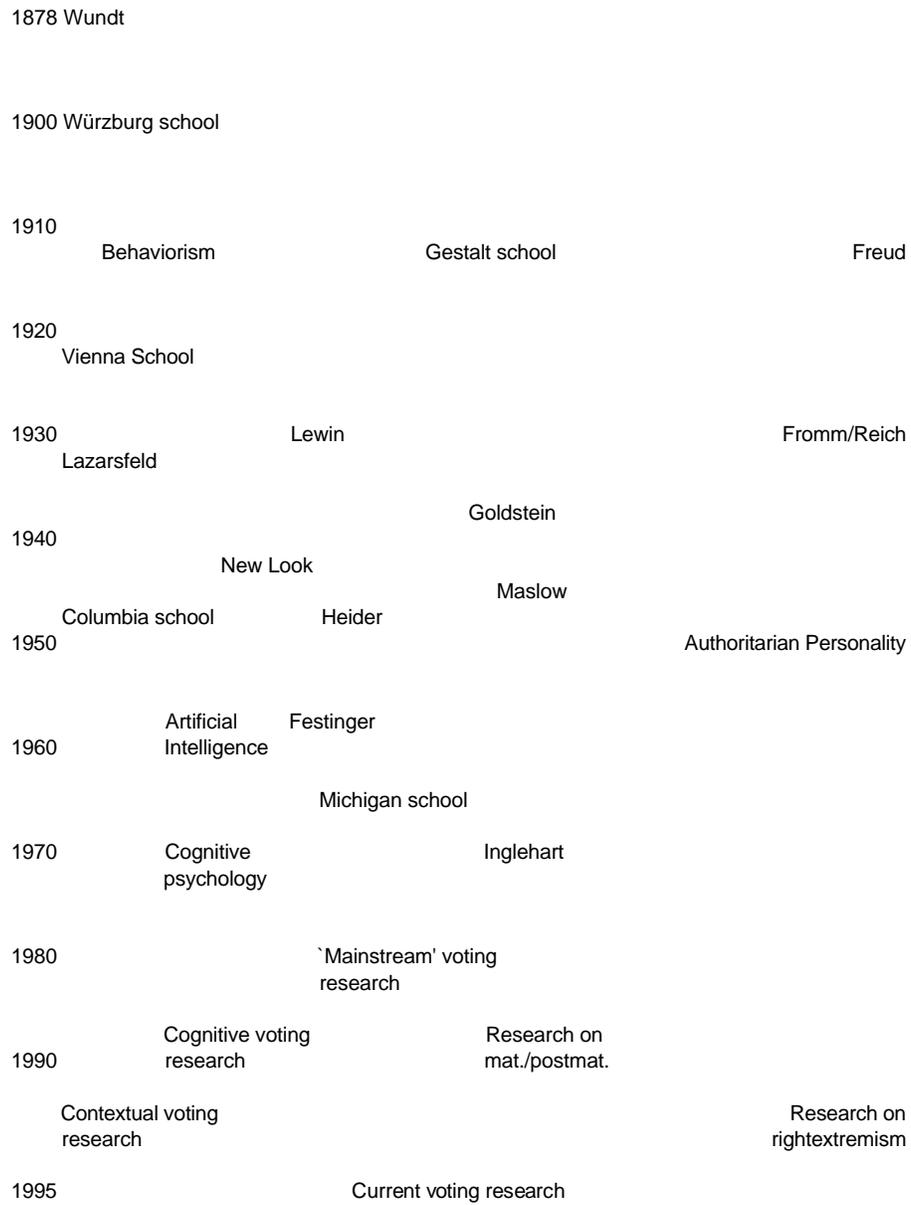
- * What strategies of explanation do psychologically oriented schools in voting action research employ?
- * To what extent and in which ways may theoretical convergences between the intervening variables be discerned?

In order to attain an answer to these research questions and to achieve the research purposes, this study proceeds as follows. To this date, five approaches to the study of voting behavior may be identified which conform to the requirements, posed earlier, that they derive their theory from the scientific discipline of psychology, that they take the individual voter as basic unit of analysis and that they explain voting actions in one as well as more points in time.

In the first five chapters a discussion of these five approaches is offered, guided by the first three research questions. Description and analysis follow the scheme in Figure 1 (next page), in which the approaches are listed, together with their psychological antecedents. In this scheme, the lines signify instances of theoretical influence, either positive (different schools and scientists build forth on each other's work) or negative (different schools and scientists take issue with one another and develop opposite views). Since the schools to some extent succeed one another in time, it is possible to compare the theoretical contribution of each school vis-a-vis the others and evaluate this contribution in terms of integration and diversification. Each chapter also contains a short characterization of the strategy of explanation involved.

A first line in Figure 1 to be discussed has the Columbia school as its focal point, denoting a group of researchers assembled at Columbia University under the central direction of Paul Lazarsfeld. Historically, the antecedents of Lazarsfeld's ideas may be traced to the Vienna and Würzburg schools in psychology, while the Columbia research extended over a period between the late 1930s and the early 1960s (Chapter 2).

Figure 1. Schools of voting research and psychological antecedents, 1878-1995



A second line in the scheme is concentrated around the Michigan school, which started in the late 1940s and continues to the present. The senior researchers here are Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes. Psychological antecedents primarily exist in Kurt Lewin's field theory, who in his turn was influenced by Gestalt psychology and Freud. Current applications are found in what, for lack of a better term, has been labelled as 'mainstream', social psychologically oriented voting research (Chapter 3).

A third line covers the development of a cognitive school of voting research, consisting of a loose collection of scholars who, sometimes coming from the Michigan tradition, have incorporated insights from cognitive psychology in their voting research. Historical antecedents are diverse and lie in Fritz Heider's and Leon Festinger's reformulations of Gestalt principles, in the so-called New Look movement in perception, and in developments in the fields of Artificial Intelligence and behaviorism (Chapter 4)

A fourth line in Figure 1 delineates the psychodynamic approach, which at present concentrates its research efforts on the explanation of right-wing extremism and authoritarianism. Antecedents ultimately may be traced back to Freudian psychoanalysis, which received an important theoretical elaboration by a group of analytical social psychologists, partly belonging to the Frankfurter Schule, and an empirical base in the research on the authoritarian personality (Chapter 5).

A final line in the scheme is concerned with the influence of materialist and post-materialist value orientations on voting action. Primarily developed in the work of Ronald Inglehart, its psychological antecedents lie in the humanistic psychology of Abraham Maslow, who in his turn was strongly influenced by Kurt Goldstein, a peripheral member of the Gestalt school. Another major antecedent is to be found in the Vienna school, in particular in the work of Charlotte Bühler (Chapter 6).

In the final chapter the different conclusions regarding the first three research questions are reevaluated and redrawn on a higher level of theoretical abstraction, permitting a further search for theoretical convergences between intervening variables in relation to the different strategies of explanation. The book closes by revisiting the 'behavioral persuasion' and sketching various avenues for further research (Chapter 7).

The empirical analysis of voting action

2.1 Introduction

It is probably true to say that the psychology of action formally entered voting behavior research when in 1939 Paul Lazarsfeld and his team started to plan the Erie County election study. Lazarsfeld brought to the task a distinct experience as an applied social psychologist and a set of ideas, directly originating in the Vienna school of psychology under the direction of Karl and Charlotte Bühler, who in their turn were formerly affiliated with the Würzburg school in psychology. Among other research activities, the Würzburgers systematically conducted experiments on thinking, from which their discovery of unconscious directive forces in thought processes emerged. These forces, variously labelled 'Einstellung', set or determining tendency, contributed heavily to the later concept of attitude, which was to become a central concept in psychological voting research. Elaborating on the Würzburg work, the Böhlers developed a comprehensive action scheme, which, through Lazarsfeld's work, became directly relevant for the study of votes as actions of a distinct nature.

In order to attain an adequate background of Lazarsfeld's undertaking, this chapter will first provide a concise sketch of the Würzburg school and the ideas of Karl Bühler (2.2), after which their influence upon the ideas of Lazarsfeld is discussed (2.3). Third, after specifying the Columbia model of voting action, it will be followed in the course of concrete empirical investigations (2.4). Finally, conclusions are drawn with regard to the first three research questions (2.5).

2.2 The Würzburg school

When at the turn of this century a group of young German psychologists gathered at the Bavarian University of Würzburg, experimental psychology was still in its infant years. Only 22 years earlier Wilhelm Wundt had opened the first psychological laboratory in Leipzig, a fact usually taken as the official birth of psychology. Wundt's ideas became extremely influential in the last quarter of the 19th century, spreading over Germany and, since many European and American psychologists received their first training in Wundt's laboratory, over the rest of Europe and the United States as well (Eisenga & Van Rappard 1987: 11ff).

Although Wundt's psychology embraced both 'Ganzheit' and reductionist principles, in his analytic thinking about human consciousness three assumptions were considered fundamental. First, all elements of consciousness can be directly or indirectly derived from sensations or bodily feelings (sensationalism). Second, all complex ideas are associative or apperceptive combinations of simpler elements (associationism). Third, higher mental processes (like thought and will) cannot be properly studied in the laboratory (Leahey 1991: 55-61, 65).

The Würzburg psychologists, led by a former student of Wundt, Oswald Külpe, took issue with all these assumptions. In the first place they asserted that thinking could very well be experimentally researched. They gave their experimental subjects complicated tasks which required some form of thinking, like agreeing or disagreeing with metaphysical theses or Nietzsche's aphorisms, or combining learned and unlearned pairs of nonsense syllables. After the experiment subjects were subjected to detailed, introspective interviewing (method of 'Ausfrage'). The 'Ausfrage' was retrospective in nature, asking the subject to analyze his experiences after the experiment. Such a detailed recall of the complex tasks soon required that subjects concentrated on different parts of the experience (fractionation), focusing on their mental state in four distinct periods of the experiment: in the preparatory period, while awaiting the appearance of the stimulus word; during the appearance of the stimulus word; in the period of the search for the reaction word; during the event of the occurrence of the reaction word (Boring 1950: 404, 407; Lazarsfeld 1972: 76-77).

The Würzburgers discovered that the thought processes of the subjects would run

off almost automatically (i.e., with little experienced mental content) at the presentation of the stimulus word, under the condition that the experimental task (or 'Aufgabe') had been well understood by the subject in the preparatory period. The interpretation of this finding was that the 'Aufgabe' creates a mental set (or 'Einstellung') in the subject which directs the course of his thought associations, a conclusion directly at odds with traditional associationism. The 'Einstellung' itself, however, was not consciously experienced by the subjects; it was an unconscious element directing conscious thinking, and as such contradicting Wundt's first assumption (Heckhausen 1991: 19, 22ff).

It was in the work of Narziß Ach that the Würzburg findings received their most authoritative statement (Ach 1951). He invented the term determining tendency to account for the way in which the task set results in the intended end. In Ach's work, according to Boring,

it became clear that the problems of thought and action are essentially the same. In both cases one has some specific end to achieve, and the psychophysical process, released by a stimulus, runs its course to that end. To name a rhyme for a stimulus word is psychologically not different from pressing a given finger when a given letter appears...[T]he key to thought, as well as to action, is to be found in the preparation of the subject (Boring 1950: 404-405,407; see also Heckhausen 1991: 163ff; Van Parreren 1993).

Among the Würzburgers Karl Bühler probably went furthest in retaining a unitary action scheme in his psychological system. In his most famous book (*Krise der Psychologie*, 1927) he made an effort to redefine the ideas of three then prevalent schools of psychology as three aspects of human action. The first school, the Würzburgian, emphasized the aspect of inner experience of the actor, studied by introspective methods. The second school, behaviorism, discarded mental states and stressed the aspect of observable behavior in a concrete situation. A third school, Dilthey's 'Geisteswissenschaftliche' psychology, proposed to study the structure of human products in order to attain psychological knowledge of its creators; therefore it emphasized the aspect of the result of human action. Bühler posited that all three aspects are indispensable for the analysis of action, and that a broad range of methods should be applied to the study of these aspects (Lazarsfeld 1972: 54, 63-64; Wellek 1968).

In analyzing thought processes, Bühler further undermined prevailing atomistic and associationistic conceptions. Studying the nature of 'Gestaltqualitäten', he posited an active and constructive mind which imputes meaning ('Sinn') to comprehended wholes of thought elements. Solving a problem or understanding a thought often involves a 'Aha-erlebnis', in which the thought to be understood is suddenly comprehended in relation to a more general thought, emanating from memory. Both the problem and the more general thought are viewed as wholes, and real comprehension can only occur between these wholes (Bühler 1951; Bühler 1962: 87-88; Smith 1988: 261).

In order to investigate complex thought processes most effectively Bühler developed the extensive method of introspective interviewing ('Ausfrage'), discussed earlier. In his later work on child psychology Bühler extended the method by repeatedly interviewing the same subjects at different time intervals, thus foreshadowing the later panel technique.²

2 The real impact of Karl Bühler's work on psychology has been obscured by his forced emigration to the United States in 1938. Having been deccribed as 'truly one of the casualties of the

Karl Bühler and his wife Charlotte arrived in Vienna in 1922, and founded the Psychological Institute of the University of Vienna. They soon attracted a score of talented students, among them Paul Lazarsfeld.

2.3 Lazarsfeld and the empirical analysis of action

Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901-1976) entered the University of Vienna after the first World War and received his Ph.D. in applied mathematics in 1925. In the early 1920s he studied under Karl Bühler and worked as an assistant to Charlotte Bühler, then engaged in developmental psychology. In 1925 Lazarsfeld founded the 'Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle' as a part of the Psychological Institute, dedicated to the application of psychology to social and economic problems. Until his emigration to the United States in 1933, Lazarsfeld acted as research director of the 'Forschungsstelle', directing and stimulating a great number of research projects for business firms, city agencies and others (the Bureau of Applied Social Research that Lazarsfeld founded at Columbia University and headed for three decades was in many aspects the successor of the 'Forschungsstelle' (Lazarsfeld 1971: xv; Sills 1979: 412; Zeisel 1968)).

During these formative years at the Psychological Institute Lazarsfeld developed a strong interest in the empirical study of human action, an interest that would occupy him for the rest of his professional life. Action analysis could be applied to all kinds of actions, choices and decisions, from consumer purchases and occupational choice to migration and voting decisions. Lazarsfeld searched for convergences between different approaches and methods, and for him the analysis of action seemed to offer the promising prospect 'of merging the study of individuals with the study of the aggregate effects of individual actions, and thus as a way of merging psychology and sociology' (Sills 1979: 417). Lazarsfeld also adopted Karl Bühler's method of 'Ausfrage' and repeated introspective interviewing, and combined these with his own interests in statistics and applied mathematics.

Further, latent in the background was the influence of Viennese psychoanalysis. One of Lazarsfeld's co-workers (and his first wife), Marie Jahoda, recalls:

Im Psychologischen Institut der Bühlers hat Freud kaum existiert...In den kleinen intensiven Seminaren, die wir bei den Bühlers gehabt haben, wäre es uns allen schlecht ergangen, wenn wir die Psychoanalyse verteidigt hätten...Aber im Privatleben sind viele von den Studenten im Institut in Analyse gewesen, und wir haben es durchaus diskutiert. Es war ein wirkliches intellektuelles Doppelleben, das wir geführt haben (Jahoda 1985: 8; see also Bühler 1965, and the biography of Frenkel-Brunswik (Levinson 1968a)).

Under the influence of the psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler, Lazarsfeld accepted the notion of unconscious motivation, the uncovering of which required an elaborate methodology, 'the art of asking why' (Boudon 1993: 6-7). Thus, in his Vienna years the groundwork was laid for the greater part of Lazarsfeld's later substantive and methodological contributions to the social sciences.

immigration', his influence was to run largely through his wife Charlotte, who became a leading proponent of humanistic psychology in the United States (Chapter 6), and his students, like Else Frenkel, Egon Brunswik, Marie Jahoda, Hans Zeisel, and Paul Lazarsfeld (Bühler 1965; Mandler & Mandler 1969: 410; Wellek 1968).

The basic ideas of Lazarsfeld were already clearly present in his earliest publications. In an analysis of motives behind Viennese adolescents' choices of occupation Lazarsfeld followed Karl Bühler's fundamental observation that 'jede Handlung aus einer Konvergenz von Bedürfnis und Gelegenheit entsteht'. Obviously, occupational choice constituted such an action (Handlung), and therefore its motives should also be classified in terms of inner needs (Bedürfnis) and external occasions (Gelegenheit). However, these inner and outer factors should not be treated independently, because they interact in the actor's subjective reality: existing needs may influence the actor's perception of occasions, while the occurrence of occasions may determine the degree to which satisfaction of needs may take place. A correct explanation of occupational choice should concentrate on this process of interaction between different motives in the course of the adolescent's development. For each individual the choice process should be researched through detailed introspective interviews ('möglichst eingehender Anamnesen'), in which the course of the decisional process is recorded from the very beginning to the ultimate choice of occupation (Lazarsfeld et al. 1931: 28-32). After his emigration to the U.S. Lazarsfeld refined his theory of action. The proposition that every action originates in a convergence of needs and occasions found a more general expression in the statement that any action is a joint product of factors residing in the individual and factors existing in the situation in which the individual finds himself. Both sets of factors are inextricably interrelated and mutually determining. The individual factors may be distinguished in motives and mechanisms. Motives refer to

[T]he set of inner guiding processes which determine the movement of behavior toward ends or goals... [The processes] refer to some [conscious or unconscious] condition of tension or disequilibrium within the person, with the ensuing conduct serving to relieve the tension or to reestablish equilibrium (Kornhauser & Lazarsfeld 1955: 394, 395).

The variety of different motives that a person may have is reflected in specific attitudes, which Lazarsfeld defined as 'action tendencies toward particular objects', and which are the immediate determinants of behavior. Mechanisms are the mental, sensory and motoric capacities that the person has, and these capacities largely determine in what specific way motives will produce a specific action. The situation consists of external factors, which may influence a person's action as much as his own inner dispositions. Such factors include the attributes of the object at which the action is directed, and the influences arising from the person's social and physical environment (e.g., family, friends, neighborhood, etc.) (Lazarsfeld 1934).

Lazarsfeld further elaborated the process aspect of action by stressing the importance of a time-line. The concrete action is a culminating point of a process extending over time, and a real understanding of any action must involve a developmental analysis of 'what went before'. Each stage in this process leading toward action is in itself jointly determined by the person as he is at that point and the situation he is in at that moment, producing a changed person in the next stage of the process. The inquiry into this process should start at the point in which the need and occasion for its gratification are becoming consciously felt (Kornhauser & Lazarsfeld 1955: 396-398).

Such an analysis of action requires an elaborate methodology. The simple question 'Why did you perform this action' typically results in a plethora of incomparable or meaningless responses, and Lazarsfeld soon concluded that in the absence of a natural structure of an action, the investigator himself must impose a structure on

it, depending upon the purpose of the investigation. Out of these considerations grew a methodology to research actions in an empirical way ('The Art of Asking Why'), that proceeds in five steps (Lazarsfeld 1934; 1959; 1975).

As a first step, the investigator should obtain the fullest possible picture of the action under research. Second, he should determine the elements to be considered for analysing the action by means of an accounting scheme, 'a model [of the action] which both guides the collection of data and provides the framework for their interpretation' (Zeisel 1985: 194). Third, he should formulate the specific questions needed to fill in this accounting scheme, in order to come as close as possible to the actual course of the action under study. In a manner reminiscent of the 'Ausfrage' method, questioning should be openended, detailed and encouraging, a collaboration between respondent and interviewer. Fourth, the researcher should treat the different elements of the accounting scheme as different dimensions requiring different statistical accounts. Finally, sometimes a causal assessment of the different factors preceding an action is needed.

Assessing a causal order in the inner and outer elements of the action process, however, posed a fundamental problem. Do the needs of a person determine his perception of his environment, or do factors in the environment determine the needs and dispositions of a person? Retrospective interviewing alone could not solve this problem, according to Lazarsfeld (1972: 81-82):

[T]he retrospective reconstruction of an activity in progress is likely to be fairly complete on the side of the 'stimulus' - and that is enough for many practical purposes - but it will miss much of the 'inner' elements of the process, which are needed for a more systematic analysis. Only a repeated set of observations, made at the time of the event can get this full picture.

Therefore, in order to cover the different stages of the action-in-progress and to disentangle causes and effects a panel method is needed.

Later Lazarsfeld combined the panel method and the notion of time-line in a more formal form, process analysis, which he visualized in an arrow scheme, borrowed from the Dutch economist Tinbergen. In this scheme the horizontal time-line, which shows the successive stages of the proceeding action, is supplemented by a vertical axis displaying the various variables under observation. Between the variables arrows may be drawn, indicating the relationships between them. Some arrows may have timelags, while others may cross several variables at different times, indicating multiple relationships (Berelson et al. 1954: 280-282; Lipset et al. 1954: 1150-1151).

2.4 The Columbia approach to voting action

When Lazarsfeld in 1939 entered the field of voting studies, it was his basic idea that voting action was essentially similar to consumer decisions or occupational choices. At the beginning of a political campaign a variety of motives exist in the person, which express themselves in a set of attitudes towards various elements of the political world. As the campaign moves on and intensifies, communications of the contending parties start to act upon these motives and attitudes, and both internal and external factors continuously interact at various stages of the decision process to produce a voting decision on election day. The image is one of an emergent voting intention, pushed and pulled by different inner and outer factors. Originally, Lazarsfeld planned to study the impact of media messages on consumer

decisions by means of a panel, but he could not obtain the necessary funds. A less expensive alternative was to investigate the impact of a presidential campaign upon a panel of voters, and for this purpose funds were available (the circumstances surrounding the 1940 study are fully documented in Rossi 1959: 15-20).

Besides financial rewards, the study of voting decisions instead of consumer purchases had methodological advantages. While consumer choices are made over time, all votes are cast on one day, which makes them much easier to recall for respondents. Furthermore, political campaigns involve distinct, grand-scale communication operations to influence the voter, whereas commercial advertisements must compete with a multitude of other advertising efforts. Finally, political campaigns make use of all media of communication, while commercial advertisements often only use some of them.

The study of the 1940 U.S. presidential election in Erie County, Ohio, thus had two goals, one substantive and one methodological. The first goal was to study 'votes in the making': how do voters make up their minds, and what is the role of the mass media in that process? The second goal involved the study of the panel method itself: what is the effect of repeated interviewing on panel respondents?

To answer these questions, a panel of 600 respondents was interviewed seven times in the seven months preceding the election, while the effects of the panel method were countered by using four separate, matched control groups. A community rather than a national sample was selected in order to keep the possible array of campaign stimuli under investigative control. Elaborate accounts were made of the flows of information in all Erie County media, coinciding with the seven panel interview waves, so that subjective and objective factors would be researched simultaneously.

However, when the first results came in, it turned out that voting decisions differed from consumer decisions in some crucial aspects. First, nine out of ten voters had made their decision well before the start of the campaign, so that the whole elaborate research design had relevance for only 54 respondents out of the original 600, a number far too small to permit generalizations or to state statistically significant conclusions. Second, in the absence of substantive change the influence effects of the media campaigns could not clearly be discerned and analyzed. And, finally, the different personality variables intended as measures of the respondents' deeper motives did not show any noticeable effect in the analysis.

The data so much contradicted the original expectations of Lazarsfeld and his staff that, after the first analyses, they laid them aside for a year, out of disappointment (Rossi 1959: 438 n.20). When Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet finally published the results in *The people's choice* (1944), they did not mention the original action model, nor did they say much about the panel methodology. Instead a different picture of voting action emerged, largely as a result of a multivariate elaboration of the data and the inductive finding of relationships between variables originally included for other research purposes.

In this analysis of voting action a strong emphasis was laid on external influences, in particular on the impact of the voters' primary groups. Voting action was seen as almost wholly determined by social forces, in several aspects. First, social groups displayed such clear tendencies toward voting for one party or another that Lazarsfeld et al. were able to explain voting choices from only three social characteristics, expressed in an Index of Political Predisposition (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 16ff). Second, voting intentions supported by the voter's primary groups were far more reliably carried out than intentions lacking such support (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 137ff). Furthermore, the social groups posed themselves between the formal communication media and the individual voter: media messages were pick-

ed up by the groups' most active members (opinion leaders) and disseminated to the less involved group members in a form congenial to the group members' political standards. Since these members individually also tended to view political propaganda in a highly selective way, shielding themselves from opinions unfavorable to their own, there was little opportunity for parties and other political actors to convert voters to their cause (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 73ff, 150ff).

Changes in voting actions and intentions did occur, though, but these too were dependent upon the social process. Voters who in the course of the campaign vacillated between different parties or changed their vote from one election to another were more often than not subjected to crosspressures, i.e., diverging forces pulling the voter in different directions. These cross-pressures were considered mainly social in nature, referring to conflicting pressures arising from a voter's memberships in social groups with different voting tendencies. Although Lazarsfeld and his colleagues acknowledged the possibility of psychological cross-pressures, these did not play a noticeable role in their analyses (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 56ff).

Out of the original action model there appeared an account of voting choices that was almost completely due to social influences, but lacking on the aspects of motives, attitudes, and mechanisms; it was a description of the vote, well summarized in the statement 'a person thinks, politically, as he is, socially. Social characteristics determine political preference' (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 27). Partly, this onesidedness was due to the still nascent state of academic sociology and psychology at that time; having been deprived of his own model of action, there was little work for Lazarsfeld to fall back upon (Rossi 1959: 23).

Eight years later Lazarsfeld and his staff returned to the study of voting. The object of investigation was the 1948 U.S. presidential election in Elmira, New York. The study was intended as a replication of the Erie County research, with an essentially similar design, but with some important substantive additions to the questionnaire and the description of the community. It involved a four-wave panel of 1,000 respondents each, with no control groups. In comparison to the earlier study, more attention was given to the activities of local party and other political organizations, and to the respondents' positions on and perceptions of issues; less effort was put in measuring exposure to campaign items in general. Finally, the report of the 1948 study (*Voting*, 1954) was different from *The people's choice* in modes of analysis and interpretation (Rossi 1959: 24-26).

With regard to the substantive results, *Voting* followed the emphasis in the earlier report on the social environment of the voter. However, the discussion of group associations, which were solely regarded as primary in nature in *The people's choice*, was supplemented by a treatment of group identifications and group perceptions. Group identifications are affective ties that people may hold toward groups which are not necessarily part of their own immediate social environment, and these ties may have a greater impact on the vote than direct group influences. Group perceptions refer to the respondents' perception of voting tendencies among major ethnic, socio-economic, or religious groups. The Columbia researchers found here that the closer respondents felt themselves to be to these groups, the more likely they were to perceive them as voting their way. Conversely, respondents hostile to certain religious and ethnic minority groups were more likely to view them as belonging to the opposite party (Berelson et al. 1954: 77ff; see also Suchman & Menzell 1955).

Besides a psychological treatment of group ties, *Voting* also contained an important discussion of the role of issue opinions. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues

distinguished two types of campaign issues, Position and Style issues, and linked those two to different motivations (self-interest versus self-expression, respectively), interests (material versus cultural), and to inter-party differences (conflict on Position issues versus general consensus on Style issues). Respondents with high levels of partisan and political involvement were found to show the largest differences in issue opinions, which differences levelled off with lower degrees of involvement. Inconsistency between issue opinions was solved by individual voters through the assignment of priority to some issues at the expense of others (Berelson et al. 1954: 182ff).

Another aspect of issues, covered in *Voting*, pertained to the voters' perceptions of the issue positions of the two candidates. It was discovered that such perceptions did not fully correspond to objective reality, but were to some degree distorted by inner factors. Selective perception was more likely to happen when the objective situation was to some extent ambiguous, and selectivity increased with the respondents' partisan involvement, involving such defense mechanisms as denial of differences between one's own issue positions and those of the favored candidate, and projection of unfavorable issue stands on the disliked candidate (Berelson et al. 1954: 215ff).

Inconsistency among group identifications, issue opinions and perceptions could give rise to cross-pressures of a distinct psychological nature, i.e., conflicting forces inducing tensions in the person. Lazarsfeld et al. concluded that the psychological function of selective perception was to avoid these tensions, i.e. to achieve harmony with one's primary and secondary groups as well as in one's ideas; this Ego-protective function became the more important, the more a person was involved in the election campaign (Berelson et al. 1954: 230-233).

2.5 Discussion and conclusions

With the inclusion of group and political perceptions Lazarsfeld returned to the original action scheme, in which the actor's reality is simultaneously formed by his subjective state of mind and by objective events that impinge upon the actor. Rossi concluded that while in *The people's choice* 'the authors saw the individual as conforming to his environment, in [*Voting*] the individual and his environment are viewed as a mutually influencing system' (Rossi 1959: 28). The odd balance of the early work, so confined to external influences, therefore was redressed in the later study, giving due weight to motives, attitudes and mechanisms.

The intervening variables which the Columbia school employed in explaining voting actions reflect this balanced view and include perception, opinion, attitude and identification with regard to external political and social events. Its primary psychological antecedents are found in Lazarsfeld's early action theory and, secondarily, in the psychology of Karl Bühler and (more latently) in Viennese psychoanalysis. By systematically integrating methodological and statistical considerations into the voting action scheme, Lazarsfeld's approach also represented the first example of the causal strategy of explanation in modern electoral research, as defined in Chapter 1.

Voting was the final volume on voting behavior of Lazarsfeld's research group. Several other studies on aspects of political behavior emanated from his Bureau of Applied Social Research, among them a collaborative effort of Lazarsfeld, Lipset, Barton and Linz toward a comparative study of the social psychology of voting, which resulted in a long review article (Lipset et al. 1954) and in three chapters in *Political man* (Lipset 1981: 183-300), and the work of McPhee and associates on computer simulations of the electoral process (McPhee & Smith 1962; McPhee

1963: 74ff, 169ff).

None of these works, however, were new comprehensive studies of 'votes in the making'. The reasons for this withdrawal were financial and organizational. The Bureau had difficulty in finding financial support, and, in general, 'it was destined to remain, like its founder...somewhat marginal to the mainstream of American academic life...[The Bureau] survived for forty years, generally amidst administrative chaos, and with conspicuously little financial support from the university' (Sills 1979: 415). Although the Columbia tradition left its marks in current voting research, especially in contextual analysis³, the future of voting studies (in an institutional sense at least) belonged to other institutes - in particular the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan.

3 Contextual voting research combines the social network analysis of Lazarsfeld, McPhee and their Columbia associates and the study of socio-political cleavages at the societal level with an advanced research methodology, but differs from the older research in that it does not specifically adhere to one social psychological theory of action (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1993: 292-299; Sprague 1982). In spite of these differences in theoretical scope, the empirical results of contextual voting analyses closely resemble those of Lazarsfeld and his colleagues. For example, in studies of Dutch voters and freshman students it was concluded that the more significant others in the proximal environment of a voter vote for a certain party, the higher the probability is that this voter also chooses that party (Visser 1996; Wittebrood 1993). In an analysis of British and American panels, direction and stability of individual voting choices were found to depend heavily on the political choice and homogeneity of the socio-political network of the voter (Zuckerman et al. 1994; for further empirical evidence of contextual effects see also Butler & Stokes 1974: 130-151; Ennis 1962; Heath et al. 1985: 74ff; Huckfeldt et al. 1995)

The field theory of voting action

3.1 Introduction

The development of voting action theory received an important impetus from the electoral research of the Michigan school. This school was much influenced by Kurt Lewin's field theory and subsequent research of Lewin's Research Center for Group Dynamics. The concept of field was originally developed by Gestalt psychologists in order to provide a theoretical account for experimental evidence on whole-processes in perception and thinking. Lewin extended the field concept to the domain of human behavior and combined it with various directional elements which were already visible in the Würzburg experiments and in psychoanalysis. Lewin thus made the field concept amenable to wider applications to social, organizational and political problems, including voting research.

An accurate understanding of the Michigan works therefore requires that the discussion proceeds backward in time, and begins with a discussion of the Gestalt school of psychology (3.2), followed by a sketch of Lewin's ideas (3.3) and its application in Michigan's voting theory (3.4). This chapter then continues with the transition of the Michigan model into what may be called the 'mainstream' of current voting research (3.5). Finally, conclusions are drawn regarding the first three research questions (3.6).

3.2 The Gestalt school

In the previous chapter it was described how at the end of the nineteenth century German experimental psychology was under the influence of prevailing assumptions of sensationism and associationism. The reader also saw how Külpe's Würzburg psychologists came to research conclusions that questioned the general validity of these assumptions. The Würzburgers, however, introduced no new comprehensive system of their own, nor did the group remain together long. Also they still conceived of thought processes as basically associative in nature, with the determining tendency replacing the traditional explanation of association by contiguity. The potential impact of the Würzburg studies was further limited by the fact that the introspective methods they employed (especially the 'Ausfrage') became subject of a polemical debate between their inventors and Wundtian psychologists. The latter argued that this method of detailed introspection yields no reliable and objective data on processes of consciousness, since there is too little difference between a rigorous description of the mind ('Beschreibung') and interpretative statements about the mind ('Kundgabe')(Boring 1950: 406).

This controversy in experimental psychology fuelled critiques from two radically different directions. One attack came from the behaviorists, who contended that psychology should not rely on data of consciousness, given their unreliable and uncontrollable character. Instead, psychology should only concentrate on observable behavior, which could be fully described and predicted in terms of stimulus and response (S-R). The ultimate goal of behaviorism was to account for human behavior without invoking the human mind (Watson 1913; see also Chapters 1 and 4).

The other attack was diametrically opposed to the behaviorist position. It came from Gestalt psychology, which directly and systematically confronted the traditional assumptions of sensationism and associationism. According to these assumptions, the ongoing processes in perception and thinking should be regarded as a summation of elementary contents, whereby those contents tend to be recalled together which have occurred together in spatio-temporal contiguity. Such a mechanistic view was wrong, according to the instigator of the Gestalt movement, Max Wertheimer; what is given in perception and thought 'is in varying degrees structured ('gestaltet'), it consists of more or less definitely structured wholes and whole-processes with their whole-properties and laws, characteristic whole-tendencies and whole-determinations of parts. 'Pieces' almost always appear as

'parts' in whole processes' (Wertheimer 1938: 14; the German term 'Gestalt' itself may be translated as form, configuration, or structure, but is mostly left in its original form).

Gestalt theory thus dealt with wholes, hoping to determine the fundamental nature of those wholes. Wertheimer (1938: 2) expressed the central point of Gestalt theory as follows:

Man könnte das Grundproblem der Gestalttheorie etwa so zu formulieren suchen: Es gibt Zusammenhänge, bei denen nicht, was im Ganzen geschieht, sich daraus herleitet, wie die einzelne Stücke sind und sich zusammensetzen, sondern umgekehrt, wo - im prägnanten Fall - sich das, was an einem Teil dieses Ganzen geschieht, bestimmt [wird] von inneren Strukturgesetzen dieses seines Ganzen.

Experimental evidence for whole-processes in perception came from Wertheimer's well-known stroboscopic experiment. A subject is seated in a dark room and is confronted with two lights that alternatively flash on and off. When the time interval between the flashes is short enough, the subject experiences one light continuously moving from one to another position in a manner indistinguishable from real motion. This phenomenon of apparent movement emerges from a series of simple discrete sensations, but at the same time it cannot be plausibly reduced to them. The 'phi-phenomenon', as it came to be known, is a perceived whole, immediately present in consciousness and a legitimate object of direct study and observation (Ash 1995: 125ff).

Gestalt theory was therefore occupied with wholes, studying the interaction between the structure of wholes with that of their components. This interaction is governed by the law of 'Prägnanz', i.e. the tendency of wholes toward a good Gestalt:

Psychological organization will always be as 'good' as the prevailing conditions allow. In this definition, the term 'good' is undefined. It embraces such properties as regularity, symmetry, simplicity, and others... [Further] in psychological organization either as much or as little will happen as the prevailing conditions permit... A minimum simplicity will be the simplicity of uniformity, a maximum simplicity that of perfect articulation (Koffka 1935: 110, 171).

The dynamic relationship between the proposition that the structure of a whole interacts with the structure of its components and the proposition that wholes tend towards the formation of a good Gestalt may be considered the essence of Gestalt theory (Arnheim 1986; Asch 1968).

The tendency toward good Gestalt ('Prägnanzdruck') inspired the formulation of principles of psychological organization. Fundamental is the organization in figure and ground: the figure emerges in relatively sharp contours from a relatively unarticulated background (for example, the letters on this page appear as black figures on a white background). In the reversible figure on the front page of this dissertation either the contours of a goblet appear on a dark background, or two faces facing each other emerge from a white background. Other principles of organization include good continuance, proximity, similarity, closure and symmetry (Koffka 1935: 106ff).

It is important to note that the Gestaltists did not advocate the notion of an active, constructive mind to account for 'Prägnanzdruck'. Instead the dynamics of organization in perceptual processes are determined by the intrinsic properties of

the data themselves, which act on the organism to produce experience or behavior. To account for the absence of an active mind, the Gestaltists posited a psychophysical parallelism, an isomorphism between the perceptual field and an electro-chemical field in the cerebral cortex, build up under the influence of excitation from external stimuli. The tendency towards a good Gestalt corresponds to the tendency of the cortical field to reach an optimal equilibrium that can be maintained with a minimum of energy (Köhler 1947: 77ff).

Gestalt theory's preoccupation with wholes and processes of dynamic organization led to a concern for fields and field theory. A field is a 'totality of coexisting facts which are conceived of as mutually interdependent' (Lewin 1951c: 240; see also Köhler 1940: 43ff; Krech & Crutchfield 1948: 37-38). In Wertheimer's stroboscopic experiment the two flashing lights interact in the visual field to produce the experience of apparent movement. Visual illusions like Müller-Lyer, Judd or Zöllner are a function of the dynamic interaction between the elements line and arrowhead.

The field concept was not confined to the visual field, though. The self (or Ego) of the person is part of the field, and so are other persons in his environment. The field concept thus could be extended to the behavioral field, in which human thinking and action takes place and which includes the outer world and its objects as perceived and conceived by the actor (Koffka 1935: 24ff; Lewin 1951c). This inclusion of the self lends the behavioral field a dynamic, bipolar organization, since the self is almost always dynamically referred to the other elements in the field (i.e., objects and persons): the self is either directed toward an element or directed away from it, not only in states of intense emotion, but also in less motivated states like attention or perception. Such directed attitudes do not reside in the self as instincts or drives, but are regarded as vectors, which depend upon the relationship between the characteristics of the self and those of the field element (Köhler 1947: 175ff).

An important implication of the concept of behavioral field is that a person can only be aware of all elements in a situation insofar as these elements are part of his field. Therefore, for a real psychological problem to exist, the person must be aware of the whole problem situation. In order to get an adequate view of fields, the Gestalt theorists emphasized the importance of phenomenal experience. All data of immediate experience are a legitimate subject matter of investigation and explanation and should be viewed as discrete phenomena. Gestalt psychology no longer adhered to Wundt's rigorous distinction between 'Beschreibung' and 'Kundgabe', but took the subject's immediate experiences as data of which an impartial, unprejudiced report should be given (Boring 1950: 592-593).

With the application of Gestalt principles to the behavioral field the Gestalt psychologists came close to a general theory of motivation and action. Yet, as Heider (1960: 151) points out, while the law of 'Prägnanz' informs us about the relation of tensions in the organism to changes produced in thinking and action, it says nothing about the origins of tensions, i.e. about the goals that people set, or the needs that underly them. A fourth important Berlin psychologist, Lewin, included these elements in a Gestalt theory of motivation.

3.3 Lewin's Gestalt theory of motivation

Kurt Lewin (1890-1947) studied and worked at the University of Berlin under Wertheimer and Köhler, becoming a 'Dozent' in 1922 and 'außerordentlichen Professor' in 1927. Following the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, he did not return to Berlin from a six month stay at Cornell University, but remained in the United

States. In 1935 he moved to the Child Welfare Research Station of the University of Iowa, and ten years later he returned to the East to become the director of the new Research Center for Group Dynamics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Ash 1995: 263ff; Lippitt 1968; Mandler & Mandler 1969: 401).

Although trained and working at the center of Gestalt theory, Lewin could never truly be called an orthodox Gestalt psychologist: 'He was part of the movement and influenced it as much as he was influenced by it...Much like the rest, he was a product of classical German experimental psychology' (Mandler & Mandler 1969: 399). Gestalt notions like the isomorphism thesis or the law of 'Prägnanz' did not receive much attention in his work, nor was he overly concerned with introspective experiments on perception and thinking. Lewin's interest lay in dynamic psychology, in uncovering the dynamics of human action. He devised a Gestalt theory of motivation, the Gestaltist adaption of the only motivation theory existing at that time, the Freudian system.

Lewin's doctoral research developed as a reaction to the work of the Würzburg psychologist Ach on will and habit. In his experiments Ach had his subjects first learn pairs of nonsense syllables; when the habit of pairing the syllables was firmly established, he instructed his subjects not to respond with the learned syllable, but with a rhyme syllable, thus introducing an element of will. Lewin replicated these experiments with more meaningful tasks and with obstructions, not resulting from past training, but coming from the difficulty of the tasks or interruption by the experimenter (Heckhausen 1991: 23; Heider 1960: 153; Lazarsfeld 1972: 67-68).

From his replications Lewin concluded that associations alone do not motivate actions. It was rather the intention to perform a task, created by the instruction ('Aufgabe') to perform that task, that caused the ultimate response. As noted in Chapter 2, the Würzburgers had labelled this intention 'Einstellung', set or determining tendency, being an unconscious element directing conscious thinking. Lewin thought of it in terms of energy and tension: the instruction to perform a task sets up a tension in the subject, the tension leads to the subject doing the task, which action discharges the tension (Lewin 1935: 45-46). Later Lewin distinguished tensions arising from experimental instructions from more central tensions arising from basic physiological drives and needs (like hunger and sex), calling the former quasi-needs and the latter needs.

As a next step Lewin posed the question what would happen with undischarged tensions: 'How does the act of intending bring about the subsequent action, particularly in those cases in which the consummatory action does not follow immediately the act of intending?' (Lewin 1951b: 96). In order to find an answer to this question Lewin and his students between 1927-1934 published a series of 17 articles in the *Psychologische Forschung* under the general heading of 'Untersuchungen zur Handlungs- und Affektpsychologie'; the series was preceded by a large programmatic paper by Lewin (1935: 43-65; 1938; 1951ab). The experiments reported involved such items as recall of interrupted tasks, substitute value of tasks, satiation, frustration, regression and level of aspiration.

To account for the results of these experiments Lewin extended the Gestalt concept of behavioral field to include both the person and the environment as it exists for him: '[T]o understand or to predict behavior, the person and his environment have to be considered as *one* constellation of interdependent factors ...the life space' (Lewin 1951c: 239-240). In field theoretical symbols the life space could be represented by a closed curve with a number of internal regions, representing the different aspects of the life space: the person and his inner states; an activity, a social position, or any other possible goal or object (Lewin 1951c: 256-257). The needs or quasi-needs that arise in the person create tensions that have the character

of organizing behavior in a manner reminiscent of Köhler's vectors; they determine which regions outside the person acquire positive valence and which acquire negative valence. The concept of valence indicates the degree to which objects and events challenge a person to perform certain activities, like when 'good weather and certain landscapes entice one to a walk' (Lewin 1951b: 118; valence translates the German term 'Aufforderungscharakter', which literally means 'invitatory nature'). A region that has positive valence is attractive to the person, and exerts a force on the person to approach it; a region with negative valence is repulsive to the person, and exerts a force to avoid it. The actual behavior that will occur is dependent upon the constellation of this field of forces:

The combination of a number of forces acting at the same point [of the life space] at a given time is called the *resultant* force...Whenever a resultant force (different from zero) exists, there is either a locomotion in the direction of that force or a change in cognitive structure [of the field] equivalent to this locomotion (Lewin 1951c: 256).

The valence of regions is thus closely related to the state of the needs and quasi-needs, and any change in direction and intensity of (quasi-)needs leads to an increase of positive valence of some regions and a concomitant decrease of negative valence of others, thereby altering the field of forces that ultimately determines action (locomotion) and thinking (cognitive structure). Valence is related to its consummatory value for satisfying the (quasi-)need, and the consummatory action itself reduces the tension in the person, leading to a momentary equilibrium in the total field (Lewin 1935: 51; 1951c: 273-274).

The inclusion of needs altered the orthodox Gestalt view of the field. The tendency toward good Gestalt no longer was the sole organizing force in the behavioral field; human drives, needs and intentions also were responsible for structuring the total life space of the person. In positing a relationship between needs and the cognitive structure of the field Lewin dissented from the Gestalt rule that the dynamics of perceptual organization only inhere in the perceptual data themselves, and not in the 'eye of the beholder'.

Without exaggeration it can be said that Lewin was by far the most successful psychologist to come from Europe to the United States. While the Gestalt psychologists in general changed the study of perception in the States, they suffered the handicap of 'being holistic prophets of theoretical psychology in [the] atomistic, relatively a-theoretic wilderness [of behaviorism]' (Leahey 1991: 76; Henle 1977; for a different view, see Sokal 1984). Most Gestalt notions eventually merged and disappeared in American mainstream psychology, yet they survived in social psychology, largely due to Lewin's influence. His field concept proved capable of infinite extension, and soon was brought to bear on social processes like group cohesion, intragroup communication, maintenance of group standards and intergroup perceptions (see for applications Lewin 1948; 1958, and for reviews Deutsch 1968; Visser 1997a).

Lewin's impact was probably more due to his original experimentation and stimulation of research than to the topological theories he espoused. Both in Iowa and at M.I.T he influenced many important future American psychologists, among them Dorwin Cartwright, Leon Festinger, Ronald Lippitt, Stanley Schachter, Kurt Back, Harold Kelley, John Thibaut, Morton Deutsch and Albert Pepitone. His Research Center for Group Dynamics soon became the central training center for mainstream social psychologists. By the end of World War II 'M.I.T was the center of the new look in American social psychology, and when the Center moved to the University of Michigan..., so did the center of gravity of the field' (Mandler & Mandler 1969: 405).

The establishment of the Research Center for Group Dynamics at Michigan in 1947 provided a distinct Lewinian background for a group of political and social scientists who around that time became interested in the motivation of voting choices.

3.4 The Michigan approach to voting action

The involvement of the Survey Research Center (SRC) of the University of Michigan in election studies occurred almost by accident. In 1948 the SRC conducted a survey on public policy issues, which included one question on voting intentions for the presidential election that year. After Truman's surprise victory, which equally upset his opponent Dewey and the established commercial pollsters, it turned out that only the SRC had correctly gauged the mood of the nation. The national Social Science Research Council established a Committee on Political Behavior to investigate the causes of the pollsters' inaccurate predictions, and more general, to discuss the future of election studies. The SRC, in turn, went back to their sample for a short post-election interview, eventually resulting in the first Michigan contribution to electoral research (*The people elect a president*, 1952). Early in 1952 the Carnegie Corporation issued a grant to the Committee to fund a study of the 1952 U.S. Presidential elections, and the Committee commissioned the SRC to carry out the research, reported two years later in *The voter decides*.

The SRC brought to the study of voting a distinct outlook and experience in research. The Center evolved out of the Division of Program Surveys of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a governmental research unit that during the World War had investigated topics as spending and saving patterns among consumers, and buying and redeeming of war bonds. After the War the Division moved to Michigan and became the SRC, first under the directorship of Rensis Likert, later under Angus Campbell (Eulau 1994: 41-42; Miller 1994: 249-251; Rossi 1959: 37-38).

Three important aspects stood out in the work of the SRC and its departmental predecessor. First, there was an emphasis on the measurement of attitudes and their origins in perceptions, past experience and general motives, growing out of Likert's early work on attitude scaling and measurement. Second, the Center employed national probability samples in its research designs, instead of the quota samples that the polling agencies had used in the 1948 elections forecasts. Finally, the SRC encouraged the use of open interview questions, because open questioning encouraged rapport and cooperation from respondents, and because it turned out that respondents attached different meanings to fixed-alternative answer categories. In order to capture the full diversity of opinion, it was preferred to promote spontaneous responses to general questions, and classify the responses afterwards (Likert 1951: 234-239).

Besides the research experience of the SRC, other factors influenced the formative years of the first Michigan studies as well. In preparation of the 1952 election study SRC Director Campbell assembled a weekly seminar of scholars, in which the plans for the study were laid out and discussed. In this seminar there was a strong influence from social psychologists like M. Brewster Smith, Daniel Katz, Theodore Newcomb, Gerald Gurin and Campbell himself, besides political scientists like Warren Miller and George Belknap (Campbell et al. 1954: v; Miller 1994: 251). Additional important psychological influences came from the Research Center for Group Dynamics, as Miller relates:

Our immediate environment also included psychologists in the Research Center for

Group Dynamics who carried the tradition of their mentor, Kurt Lewin, and his emphasis on field psychology into our thinking... Given a context in which reference group theory, theories of perception, attitudinal change, and the explication of behavior through reference to actor's attitudes and beliefs were the order of the day, the [social psychological] content of the [1952] study seems thoroughly explicable (Miller 1994: 251; see also Lau & Sears 1986a: 4).

The SRC was also influenced, but in a more negative sense, by the earlier election research, including Lazarsfeld's Erie County study. The Michigan group considered these older studies for the greater part as a mere opinion demography, a relating of opinions and attitudes to face sheet data like age, sex, education and socioeconomic status. As we have seen, this method was given an additional sociological rationale in Lazarsfeld's early work, in which group membership serves as the basis of political behavior. Such sociological approaches were held to have little explanatory power: first, because shifts between the major parties generally could be found in all social groups; second, because there was too little change in the relative size of these groups to account for these shifts. Furthermore, the approaches gave no important information on the factors that mediate between social characteristics and the vote (Campbell et al. 1954: 84-86; 1960: 17, 36-37, 43, 64-66; Janowitz & Miller 1952; see also Smith et al. 1956: 11-14; Smith 1969: 68ff).

From these positive and negative influences the SRC group developed a basic Lewinian view of voting action. The voting act is a result of a field of socio-political forces, a political life space (Campbell et al 1960: 33ff). Part of the political life space may be the voter, his primary group or reference groups, the candidates and their various attributes (like party affiliation, issue opinions, performance in government and personal traits), whereby the number of regions in the field and the degree of their interconnectedness may vary, depending upon the ego involvement and cognitive capacities of the voter. Inner needs and past experience will charge certain regions of the political life space with positive valence and other with negative valence, setting up a field of forces directing voting action. Campbell et al. (1960: 66) express this charging process in terms of attitudes, defined as 'orientations to the elements of national politics, seen by the voter as negative or positive'. When the attitudinal forces in the field are so distributed that a strong resultant force in the direction of one candidate exists, the corresponding voting action will occur without delay. When, however, the forces point in divergent directions, the voter will vacillate between possible candidates and the consummatory voting action will be postponed or even cancelled (Campbell et al. 1954: 87, 157ff, 181-184; 1960: 76ff).

If this basic field model is implicit in the earlier Michigan works, there was an attempt to explicate it in the 'funnel of causality', a metaphor intended to order the different field elements in a converging sequence of causal chains (Campbell et al. 1960: 24ff). The funnel idea extended the view, earlier given in *The voter decides*, of the voting act as determined by three attitudinal factors, i.e. orientations toward parties, candidates and issues, and a social factor, i.e. the influence of primary groups. In the earlier work these attitudinal and social forces were treated separately, with a strong emphasis on the former and without an attempt to connect the two sets of forces. The funnel metaphor served to make this connection by positing a two stage causal sequence of factors, in which social influences and circumstances were assumed to affect party identification, and party identification in its turn was held to influence attitudes and the vote itself (Eulau 1960).

A central place in the funnel of causality was therefore allotted to party identification, 'the sense of personal attachment which the individual feels toward the

[party] of his choice', whereby 'strong identification is equated with high significance of the [party] as influential standard' (Campbell et al. 1954: 88-89). Party identification strongly colors the voter's perceptions of and attitudes toward the other elements of politics, the candidates, issues, group interests and the parties' achievements in government (Campbell et al. 1960: 120ff). It is typically acquired early in life, in late adolescence, and it tends to become more persistent as the voter advances in age, due to socializing and learning effects. At the moment of acquisition party identification reflects the voter's immediate social milieu, and the identification with a party is often supported by appropriate group identifications. Changes in group memberships and identifications, such as those resulting from social and geographical mobility, may affect the voter's identification, which in turn will influence his perceptions and attitudes (Campbell et al. 1960: 146ff). Other implications of field theory were also worked out by Campbell and his colleagues. An important part of their research was reserved for the analysis of the cognitive structure of the socio-political field, i.e. the assessment of the number of different regions that exist for the voter and the degree to which he sees these regions as connected to one another (Campbell et al. 1960: 168ff; Converse 1964). As an empirical result, it was found that these fields in general displayed relatively low levels of organization ('levels of conceptualization' in the Michigan terminology); whatever organization existed in the fields could be largely contributed to the pervasive influence of party identification.

3.5 From Michigan model to 'mainstream' research

In the two decades following its publication, the Michigan approach, actively propagated by its founders, proved to be highly influential in voting research in the U.S.A. and in Europe, in fact becoming the 'mainstream' in social psychologically oriented voting research.

Initially, research following *The American voter* focused on replicating the 'funnel of causality' model in other democratic systems than the American. It was soon discovered that the central variable in the funnel, party identification, did not play the same role in European countries as it did in the United States. When the viability of this concept was tested outside its original context, it turned out that differences in party and electoral systems made crucial differences in the ways voters related themselves to their political parties. In Great Britain, for example, Butler and Stokes (1974: 44) found that, while they could discern ample evidence for a lasting partisan disposition ('partisan selfimage'), at the same time the British voters 'in transferring their vote from one party to another ...[were] less likely to retain a conscious identification with a party other than the one they...support[ed]'. Partisan selfimage and voting choice travelled together far more often than in the United States. The same results were soon reported in other party systems as well, like those of West Germany, Canada and the Netherlands (Kaase 1976; Leduc 1981; Norpoth 1978; Richardson 1991).

The Dutch case turned out to be especially deviant. Not only did party identification travel extensively with the vote, it was actually found to be less stable than the vote itself, which distinguished the Netherlands from all other countries in which party identification had been researched. This instability could have been due to the realignment phase through which the Dutch political system was going during the time of measurement in the early 1970s (Barnes 1990), but research in the 1980s, after the supposed realignment phase, showed no increase in stability of party identification. The general conclusion from this research was that the

measurements of party identification in the Netherlands definitely measured something different than the concept of party identification in the Michigan sense. As alternative interpretations it was suggested that the concept probably denotes the motivational strength of the vote preference at a certain moment, or the strength of a voter's intention to vote for a certain party in a certain election (Jennings 1972; Thomassen 1976ab; 1983; Van der Eijk & Niemöller 1983: 324ff; 1985; Visser 1993a).

Far from being a stable long-term commitment to vote for a certain party, party identification in many European countries seemed to be more or less a reflection of the vote itself. In some countries, featuring either extremely fluid or extremely fractionized party systems, voters were found to identify not with a party but with a 'tendance', a general ideological inclination, or with a number of parties that were ideologically closely related, amounting to an ideological identification (Converse & Dupeux 1962; Inglehart & Klingemann 1976; Percheron & Jennings 1981; Van der Eijk & Niemöller 1983: 339ff). In other European countries stable voting patterns were related to class, religious, and other group identifications, being the voters' translations of deep and persistent societal cleavages which could be cognitively easily and directly linked to appropriate votes for cleavage based parties. In these cases social forces thus directly affected political attitudes and perceptions, without intervention of party identification (Campbell & Valen 1961; Dalton 1990; Knutsen & Scarbrough 1995; Lipset & Rokkan 1967; Richardson 1991; Shively 1972; Thomassen 1983; for a review, see Visser 1993ab).

The consequences of these findings were not reflected in the development of the Michigan model, however. On the contrary, the Michigan researchers severed the link between social and attitudinal factors in their 'normal vote' approach, the purpose of which was to arrive at the most parsimonious model of the vote possible. Party identification served as the baseline of the model, subsuming all social factors causally preceding it. Issue and candidate orientations operated as short-term, election-specific factors, determining in concrete elections the amount of deviation of the party vote from a hypothetical vote on the basis of party identification alone, the 'normal vote'; the deviation then could be assigned to the influence of specific candidate appeals or issue controversies surrounding each election (Campbell et al. 1966: 9ff; see also Anker 1990; 1992, and Eulau 1994: 66 n.32).

In further elaborations of this model for the United States itself the basic role of party identification was also questioned, but alternative formulations went in a quite different direction than in the European situation. It was increasingly shown that party identification was not totally immune to shorterterm influences, and that often issue and candidate orientations or the performance of parties in government affected party identification as much as the latter colored the perceptions of the former. The idea of recursive causation, implied in the funnel metaphor, was therefore replaced by the notion of nonrecursive causation, simulated in simultaneous equation models (e.g., Markus & Converse 1979; Page & Jones 1979). In its most farreaching form these results led to a reformulation of party identification into a 'running tally of retrospective evaluations', a combination of voters' past experience with the parties plus the initial bias that voters bring to the political scene (Fiorina 1981: 89ff).

Another subject of research in the wake of *The American voter* that increasingly caught attention, was a further inquiry into the cognitive structure of the socio-political field, especially the role of belief systems and ideology. As stated, the initial Michigan position was that political beliefs, opinions and attitudes were generally organized at low levels of complexity, and that the amount of organization that existed could be attributed largely to the impact of party identification. Subsequent research showed that low levels of ideological sophistication were not

confined to the United States, but were also characteristic for the electorates of most European countries (Inglehart & Klingemann 1976; Klingemann 1979; Thomassen 1976a). Later replications of Michigan's approach seemed to indicate an increase of ideological thinking in the American electorate, but these results became subject of an intense and prolonged methodological debate among 'mainstream' electoral researchers (see Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion).

3.6 Discussion and conclusions

The publication of *The American voter* is generally viewed as a landmark point in the study of voting action. The analyses provided by Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes are indeed skillful and provoking, and no single study before or after it has matched the wide scope and rich variety of the materials presented in *The American voter*. Yet in a theoretical sense the Michigan scholars did not employ different intervening variables than the Columbia school. The intervening variables perception, opinion, attitude and identification were also central to the Michigan work, to which the variables cognitive structure and evaluation were added. Further, by explicitly elaborating on Lazarsfeld's earlier methodological and statistical work, Campbell and his colleagues adhered to the causal strategy of explaining voting action, as outlined in Chapter 1.

The theoretical similarity between the schools becomes more intelligible, once their psychological antecedents are taken into consideration. When regarded by their psychological origins in a general sense, both schools employ action theories as framework of analysis. Both schools combine motivational and cognitive aspects in their models, and they both admit to explanations of voting action from the point of view of the voter (Visser 1994ab).

More specifically, this similarity in psychological antecedents is reflected in some of the main conclusions of the Columbia and Michigan schools. Most importantly, there is a basic equivalence between Michigan's finding that a conflict of forces in the field will reduce or divert the voting response and between Columbia's conclusion that the occurrence of social and attitudinal cross-pressures impedes implementation of a voting intention into a consummatory voting action (compare Berelson et al. 1954: 118ff, 182ff; Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: xxxiii-xxxiv, 56ff; Lipset et al. 1954: 1154-1155 to Campbell et al. 1954: 87, 157ff, 181-184; 1960: 76ff). Further, the schools agree on the pervasive impact of the voter's partisan loyalty (or party identification) with respect to the resolution of conflicting attitudinal forces (compare Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: xxxvi-xxxvii; Lipset et al. 1954: 1160-1164 to Campbell et al. 1960: 120ff). Finally, there is also consensus on the important role of primary and secondary groups in the establishment and maintenance of the voter's partisan attachments (compare Berelson et al. 1954: 54ff; Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 16ff, 137ff; Lipset et al. 1954: 1144-1150 to Campbell et al. 1954: 199ff; 1960: 61-63, 76-77, 146ff, 295ff).

The similarity in methods and theory did not foster scientific companionship between the two schools, though. Besides its own financial and organizational problems, the demise of the Columbia approach was largely due to Michigan's insistent denunciation of it. From the very beginning to the very last Campbell et al. converted the approach taken by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues into a sociological straw man, which could be knocked down with a simple reference to the immobility of social characteristics in the face of important political changes (compare, for example, Janowitz & Miller 1952: 711-713 and Shanks & Miller 1990: 149- 150). From the discussion in this and the previous chapter it should be clear, however,

that this critique unduly confounds (sociological) empirical results with (psychological) theoretical propositions and therefore does serious injustice to Lazarsfeld's theory and methods.

The Michigan approach in its turn soon met with new theoretical challenges, though. The restricted applicability of party identification-Michigan style outside the United States and the increasing importance of the belief system discussion had unwittingly moved voting research in a more cognitive direction. Party identification, as Campbell and his colleagues saw it, still represented an affective tie to a party, and the Michigan scholars put much emphasis on the voters' political evaluations, besides questions of a more cognitive nature. The belief systems debate, however, fully centered on the cognitive capacities of the voter, and from there it was a small step to conceive of voting action in general in cognitive terms. This indeed became the purpose of the cognitive approach, which pervaded both psychology and psychological voting research.

The cognitive theory of voting action

4.1 Introduction

The increasing emphasis of 'mainstream' electoral researchers on the cognitive structure of the field already showed marks of the increasing influence of the cognitive direction in psychology, which at the moment occupies an important position. The cognitive trend resulted from a number of separate developments. Inside social psychology, Heider's and Festinger's interpretations of Gestalt principles in their balance and dissonance theories increasingly became cognitively oriented, especially when compared to Lewin's field theory. Further, on the basis of experiments in the field of perception, the New Look movement emphasized the importance of active mind processes in cognitive categorization, laying the groundwork for the schema concept which is central to current cognitive voting research. Finally, outside the field of psychology the computer appeared, both as an analogy to and as an imitation of mind processes. Eventually the computer analogy fused with mediational behaviorism into the information-processing approach.

This chapter begins with a discussion of balance and dissonance theories (4.2), followed by a look at the New Look (4.3). After signalling the rise of cognitive science and its spread among former learning theorists (4.4), the development of a cognitive approach to voting action is reviewed (4.5). Finally, the chapter concludes with the first three research questions (4.6).

4.2 Theories of balance and dissonance

Next to Lewin, Fritz Heider (1896-1988) was probably the most influential immigrant psychologist to mold the course of modern social psychology. Although Heider received a broad and diverse education, the main influence on his ideas came from the Gestalt school: as a student he spent three years at the University of Berlin, attending the lectures of Wertheimer and Köhler and forming a lasting friendship with Lewin. From 1930-1947 he worked at Smith College under the direction of Kurt Koffka; in 1947 he joined the psychology department of the University of Kansas, working with a group of colleagues who had been closely related to Lewin's Research Center (Heider 1970; Mandler & Mandler 1969: 405-408; Weiner 1979).

Heider's main contribution laid in the generalization of the Gestalt principles of visual perception to the field of interpersonal relations. This contribution took two forms: a theory of causal attribution and a theory of balance. The first theory seeks to account for the processes that are involved in perceiving other persons, their behavior and their personal characteristics (Heider & Simmel 1944). Fundamental in the organization of the social field in terms of actions is the attribution of the origin of an action (be it a movement or any change of position in the field) to a perceptual unit. The origin and the change attributed to that origin form a causal unit, in that the origin causes the change. Human beings are almost always regarded as origins of actions, whereby a tendency exists to regard an action as a manifestation of a person's personal qualities and to disregard the situation which in principle also co-determines an action. Further, the causal unity of person and act implies that properties of an action are often, for reasons of similarity or causal proximity, related to the properties of the person, as when an evil act almost necessarily must come from an evil person. The latter phenomenon may also be interpreted as a case of assimilation of the act to the origin, and may be distinguished from a situation in which the act is contrasted to the origin, assimilation and contrast being two different expressions of the tendency towards 'Prägnanz' (Heider 1944).

The tendency towards good form in the social field may be expressed so that, when a person's attitudes toward the parts of the causal unit are similar, a balanced configuration exists. The next step is to generalize from this proposition and to

investigate in general the relation between attitudes and causal units. This is the purpose of Heider's theory of balance (Heider 1946; 1958: 174ff). A person (P) may have a relation to another person (O) and some non-personal entity X (thing, idea, etc.). That relation may have an evaluative character (P likes O, P hates X) and the unit character just described (P owns X, P causes X, P is proximal to X, etc.), whereby P, O, and X are all part of P's field. According to balance theory, a state of balance between the three entities P-O-X exists when all three relations are positive in all respects, or if two relations are negative and one is positive. 'If no balanced state exists', Heider asserts, 'then forces towards this state will arise. Either the dynamic characters will change, or the unit relations will be changed through action or through cognitive reorganization. If a change is not possible, the state of imbalance will produce tension' (Heider 1946: 107-108; see also Abelson & Rosenberg 1958; Cartwright & Harary 1956; Spellman et al. 1993).

Leon Festinger, a student of Lewin and later his co-worker at the Research Center for Group Dynamics, elaborated his theory of cognitive dissonance from Lewin's observations on buying decisions. A housewife who is buying food is in a situation of (potential) conflict: a food might be attractive, but at the same time expensive, in which case strong forces toward eating the food are opposed by equally strong forces against spending too much money. If the expensive food is bought, however, the latter force, 'instead of keeping the food out of the channel, will make the housewife doubly eager not to waste it', thus pointing in the same direction as the initially attracting forces (Lewin 1958: 199). Festinger generalized from this finding to all decision situations: the stronger the pre-decision conflict, the greater the tendency to carry through the decision afterwards. The decision situation in itself is a source of cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1964: 5).

Basic in Festinger's theory is the notion that 'the human organism tries to establish internal harmony, consistency, or congruity among their opinions, attitudes, knowledge and values. That is, there is a drive toward consonance among cognitions' (Festinger 1957: 260). Two cognitive elements are dissonant if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element is psychologically implied by the other. The presence of dissonance gives rise to pressures to reduce that dissonance; the strength of these pressures is dependent upon the magnitude of the existing dissonance, whereby magnitude is a function of the importance of the dissonant elements. Strategies of dissonance reduction include a change of existing cognitive elements, the addition of new elements or a decrease of the importance of elements.

Besides the decision situation Festinger identified a number of other situations that may imply the existence of cognitive dissonance. It may arise among members of a group in the case of open expression of disagreement in that group. Earlier investigations of group dynamics had shown that communication processes inside groups tended towards conformity, given each member's tendency towards consonance. In case of disagreement, much communication inside the group will be directed at the disagreeing person(s), and the sharper the disagreement, the greater the group pressure towards compliance with group norms. The tendency towards consonance at the individual level leads to a tendency towards conformity at the group level (Deutsch 1968: 412ff; Festinger 1957: 263).

Another situation in which dissonance may arise is when an event occurs that is so compelling that it produces an identical reaction in every one. For example, a messianistic movement predicts the destruction of the earth and the second coming of Christ. The members of the movement sell their belongings, bid farewell to their non-believing relatives and friends, and gather together to await the end of life as we know it. Invariably, the predicted event fails to turn up, creating a very painful dissonance in the assembled group members. According to Festinger, the

dissonance is relieved, paradoxically enough, by increased proselytizing: if more and more people can be persuaded that the disconfirmed belief is right, then it must be right after all. The gathering of social support reduces the painful dissonance (Festinger et al. 1956).

It is important to note here that Heider's balance theory and Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance are, in one major aspect, different from Lewin's field theory. In Lewin's thinking the dynamic factors are not closely linked to the cognitive structure of the field; the properties of the structure do not imply forces, nor do the forces specifically affect the structure. For Lewin the dynamics originate in tensions arising from the person's needs and quasi-needs, inducing valences in a more or less stable field through which locomotion is possible. In balance and dissonance theories, however, 'the dynamic factors are intimately connected with the [cognitive] structure. The dynamic factors arise out of definable structural characteristics and the forces toward the...state [of equilibrium] tend to change the structure in definite directions'. Theories of balance and dissonance thus stay quite close to the original Gestalt position that structured wholes tend toward the formation of a good Gestalt (Heider 1960: 169-170; see also Heider 1957, and the discussion between Abelson 1983, and Zajonc 1983).

Further it must be observed that, although habitually lumped together as consistency theories, there are important differences between balance and dissonance theory as well (Kiesler et al. 1969: 230-232). Most significantly, Festinger's theory is only concerned with cognitions, not with affect; it does not differentiate between the attitudinal and the cognitive aspects of a triadic relationship, as Heider's theory does. Consequently, dissonance theory does not deal with any other motive than the motivation to reduce dissonance, although these other motives clearly may influence the course of dissonance reduction processes. Whereas, therefore, in Heider's approach an even balance is struck between motivational and cognitive elements, in Festinger's theory the role of cognitive processes becomes predominant.

4.3 The New Look

The so-called New Look movement in the study of perception arose from a number of psychological antecedents, which, as exemplified in the work of Egon Brunswik and Edward Tolman, ultimately reside in the Vienna Psychological Institute and in purposive behaviorism.

In the same period that Lazarsfeld directed the research activities of the 'Forschungsstelle', the Hungarian Ph.D. student Egon Brunswik, under the guidance of Karl Bühler, sketched the first contours of his theory of probabilistic functionalism. Brunswik replaced the traditional S-O-R chain with a fivefold distinction between distal stimuli (manipulable physical objects), proximal stimuli (exciting the sense organs, e.g. the retinal image of an object), intra-organismic variables (central events and dispositions), proximal responses (molecular behavior) and distal responses (molar behavioral achievements, having an effect on distal stimuli). Both proximal events are located on the borderline between organism and environment, while distal events are situated in the environment. Although the organism is able to maintain a stable perceptual distal environment in spite of the enormous variation in proximal mediation (phenomenon of perceptual constancies), the relation between proximal and distal stimuli is probabilistic, rather than fixed. Patterns of proximal stimulation function as cues of the distal objects, which cues may be ambiguous or misleading (like the optical illusions, discussed in

Chapter 3). Given this limited ecological validity of cues, the organism must learn to employ probabilistic means and to utilize ambiguous, uncertain evidence in order to achieve distal perceptions (Ash 1995: 318-321; Bruner et al. 1956: 33ff; Hammond 1968; Sanders 1972: 183-193).

When in 1933 Edward Tolman visited the Psychological Institute for a year, he found that his own work and Brunswik's developing theory were essentially complementary. Tolman used the same reasoning which Brunswik applied to proximal and distal stimuli for proximal and distal responses: the organism can manipulate its environment with identical (constant) effects by means of a large variety of proximal movements (see also Chapter 1). In order to encourage further cooperation, Tolman, as chairman of the Berkeley psychology department, arranged for Brunswik to spend a year at Berkeley. After the Nazi seizure of Austria (1938), Brunswik decided to stay in the U.S and worked as a professor at Berkeley until his death in 1955 (Hammond 1968; Mandler & Mandler 1969: 411-413).

As developed in increasing collaboration with Brunswik, the psychology of Tolman constituted a second source of the New Look approach. Although clearly standing in the American experimental tradition, Tolman differed from most other behaviorists of his time in many respects. Most importantly, Tolman opposed the reduction of organismic intervening variables to physiological and neurological processes, which he considered premature for the still infant stage in which experimental psychology existed. Especially in his later work, he accorded intervening variables independent theoretical meaning, apart from their functional relationships to stimuli and responses. Further, Tolman argued that purpose and cognition are observable, objective properties of behavior which can be linked to operational definitions and may be subject to experimental investigation. The reality of cognition, for example, emanated from Tolman's latent learning experiments, in which the differential performance of three groups of rats in a complex T-maze under different contingencies of reinforcement could only be reasonably explained by positing the existence of some 'cognitive map' of the maze among the rats. Finally, Tolman's behaviorism was molar instead of molecular; since behavior is inherently purposive, actions are to be regarded as whole, integrated series of movements, leading toward some goal (Barker 1994: 307-311; Boring 1950: 719-721; Leahey 1991: 205-217; Heckhausen 1991: 37-41, 128-134).

Inspired by Brunswik and Tolman, New Look psychologists Jerome Bruner, Neil Postman and others took issue with the view, prevailing in both behaviorism and orthodox Gestalt theory, that perception is essentially a passive process, in which the data imprint themselves on the perceptorium. Bruner and his colleagues argued that perception is an active process, in which the perceiver's personality and past experience affect what he sees. In the course of experience people form concepts of reality and categorize new stimuli as instances of different conceptual categories, preexisting in the mind by virtue of earlier learning processes. Perception therefore involves an act of categorization, the placement of an event in a category on the basis of a few perceptual cues.

The accessibility of categories depends upon two sets of factors, according to the New Look psychologists. First, existing needs, values and attitudes of the person increase accessibility of those categories that relate to their gratification or fulfilment. Conversely, basic needs and central values may reduce the sensitivity of the perceptorium to percepts that threaten these needs and values, a phenomenon labelled as perceptual defense. Acknowledging the logical problem that one cannot avoid perception of some object and perceive that object at the same time, New Look adherents proposed the possibility of perception at different levels of consciousness, including subliminal perception.

A second factor determining accessibility has to do with the probabilistic texture of the environment, in which perception must be attuned to the likelihood of environmental events, i.e. to the learned expectation about what normally goes with what in society. To give one example of both factors, a hungry man will be alerted to signs of restaurants and snackbars, which means that the conceptual category 'restaurant' has become highly accessible for him. At the same time he looks for and expects to find restaurants at street level and not at the top of trees, an expectation developed on the basis of earlier learning (Bruner 1958: 94; see further Bruner 1957, and Bruner et al. 1956: 182ff).

4.4 The rise of cognitive science

Outside the realm of psychology, the rise of cognitivism in general originated in the advent of the computer in and after the second World War, which gave rise to a whole new field of inquiry, Artificial Intelligence (AI). The fact that computers, properly programmed, could perform many tasks that previously were held to be the exclusive domain of humans, led many researchers to believe that in due time human thinking could be fully emulated by a computer. Researchers of AI consequently developed models of human thinking that could be simulated in the computer, while at the same time the old students of thinking, the psychologists, increasingly turned to the computer analogy in their approach to psychological processes (Atkinson et al. 1983: 600; Leahey 1991: 295ff).

While computer simulation of thought processes failed to live up to the initial expectations, the computer analogy proved to be a forceful tool in psychological theorizing. It was both tempting and easy to conceive of humans as information-processing devices, receiving input from their environment (perception), processing the input (thinking), and converting it into output (action, decision). Consequently, the information-processing image spread rapidly over the psychological community. By the end of the 1960s the computer analogy had acquired a dominant position in mainstream psychology, and ten years later it had found application in all domains of psychology (Leahey 1991: 328).

Part of the success of the information-processing approach was due to several developments in the field of behaviorism in the 1950s and 1960s. First, under the influence of Tolman and Hull's conception of intervening variables, most behaviorist psychologists had abandoned Watson's radical environmentalism and more or less adopted a mediational form of S-R theory, in which observable S-R chains were thought to be mediated by various organismic processes (O). The most far-reaching effort in this respect was social learning theory, an application of learning principles to social situations outside the laboratory, first developed by Yale psychologists Miller and Dollard and further elaborated by Bandura, Rotter, and others (Barker 1994: 296-297; Dollard & Miller 1964).

In principle social learning theorists adhered to the behaviorist principles of conditioning and reinforcement, but they also followed Tolman in emphasizing the importance of latent (or observational) learning. In most fields of experience, especially those far removed from daily life, behaviors are learned by observing the behavior of models and its consequences in terms of social reward and punishment, rather than by direct reinforcement (Atkinson et al. 1983: 320-321; Deaux & Wrightsman 1988: 15-20). The same reasoning was applied to the acquisition of behavioral dispositions (like attitudes), which, probably even more than behaviors, are observationally learned, since many people do not have direct experience with

attitude targets (Deaux & Wrightsman 1988: 164-167; Lott & Lott 1972; for reviews of attitude learning, see Kiesler et al. 1969: 89ff; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975: 22ff).

These principles of direct and observational learning, however, were increasingly combined with other cognitive and motivational variables. For example, observational learning presupposes cognitive processes like attention, retention, motor reproduction and anticipation of reinforcement; various reinforcements are differently valued by persons, depending upon their own motives and the specific situation; reinforcement may occur through internal sources, like self-evaluative standards of conduct. In a theoretical sense, social learning theory thus came close to more cognitive accounts of behavior.

Second, behaviorism had come under severe attack in the 1960s, most notably through Noah Chomsky's fundamental critique of the behaviorist account of language learning, the demise of logical positivism under the influence of Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts, and through the discovery of marked instinctive constraints in animal learning. In the face of these problems, information-processing theory promised to be an attractive alternative to disenchanting social and mediational behaviorists, and in a few years a majority of them effectively had become cognitive psychologists (Atkinson et al. 1983: 392-394; Fiske & Taylor 1991: 7-9; Leahey 1991: 307-330, 339-341).

As it has been finally codified in the textbooks, cognitive psychology refers to 'the study of knowledge and how people use it' (Glass & Holyoke 1986: 2), or to the study of 'mental processes of perception, memory, and information-processing by which the individual acquires knowledge, solves problems, and plans for the future' (Atkinson et al. 1983: 9). In its application to social phenomena, social cognition is concerned with 'how people make sense of other people and themselves' (Fiske & Taylor 1991: 14). Although the diversification of current cognitive approaches makes it difficult to provide a description comprising all aspects, Hastie (1986: 17-30) provides a useful summary of seven characteristic features of information-processing theory.

First, the fundamental material in information-processing is information, which is represented as lists of features (or attributes) of objects and persons. This attribute-list approach is semantic; it cannot properly deal with non-semantic types of information (emotions, sensory experiences like tastes or melodies, impressions of works of art, etc.).

Second, information is stored in memory in the form of cognitive structures, usually referred to as 'schemata'. Perception of an event activates a schema, which subsequently serves as a vehicle for the encoding of the incoming information, providing relationships among disparate elements of the perceived event and filling in missing links. Schemata thus preserve and organize information about events in learning situations.

Third, information stored in memory becomes available as a result of spreading activation processes that are prescribed and constrained by the schemata. Such activation may be stimulus-driven or goal-focused.

Fourth, the process of thinking involves the transformation of symbolic information from one representation into another, in a mode strongly analogous to computer program functions and operators.

Fifth, the information-processing system is controlled by an executive monitor that operates on a hierarchically structured series of goals and plans. This feature gives cognitive theory an active, planful character that was absent in older accounts of learning and problem solving.

Sixth, the information-processing system is composed of different component locations, referred to as independent memories: sensory registers, short-term memory

and longterm memory. Shortterm memory is limited in its capacity, being unable to store more than five to nine items at one time. Longterm memory is assumed to be extremely capacious and capable of storing a diverse variety of schemata. Complex cognitive operations (like thinking) are, as a consequence of this organization in different memories, typically organized into a series of temporally ordered discrete stages.

Seventh, the information-processing system performs under principles of limited mental energy and representational capacity, showing a general tendency to use a minimal amount of time, processing resources and memory capacity in achieving its goals. This feature is also referred to as schematic processing: incoming information is quickly matched to existing knowledge structures in longterm memory, which enables humans to filter, organize and process large amounts of information swiftly and economically. Especially in situations in which information cues are complex and ambiguous, however, schematic processing may easily result in storing stereotypes or incorrect causal attributions.

4.5 The cognitive approach to voting action

Cognitive psychology drew the attention of mainstream voting analysts largely as a result of the belief system debate, shortly alluded to in Chapter 3. The reader will recall that the Michigan researchers held that the mass public exhibited little cognitive constraint in their political thinking (Converse 1964; 1975). Later replications of this research, however, implied that public political thinking had become more structured during the 1960s. Probably as a result of the startling events of that decade, the American voter had become more interested in politics and more aware of ideological differences (Nie et al. 1976). An alternative explanation of this increase was offered by Achen (1975): not so much the roaring sixties, but changes in the wording of survey questions and response formats accounted for the differences in constraint levels recorded by Converse and Nie et al. In a number of subsequent studies this dilemma was solved by exposing subjects to both the Converse question formats and the later formats at the same time. The outcome was that the apparent change in the cognitive structure of the mass public's thinking was an artifact of the change in questionnaire stimuli and not a result of genuine change among the public (Bishop et al. 1978; Luskin 1987; Sullivan et al. 1978).

The dependency of responses on the format of survey questions raised some fundamental questions about the attitudinal model underlying mainstream voting research. On the one hand, in those psychological experiments in which the overt behavior could be observed apart from the attitudes which supposedly gave rise to that behavior, correlations between the two were practically zero (Wahlke 1979). This fact was cogently illustrated in the 'obedience to authority' studies, in which the social setting, surveillance and scientific authority invoked in the experiments induced a majority of the subjects to administer 'lethal' shocks to fellow humans, contrary to those subjects' own attitudes (and the expectations of behavioral experts as well) (Milgram 1974). On the other hand, tailoring attitudinal measurements more closely to the voting response tends to lead to somewhat trivial, if not tautological statements, like 'voters who strongly identify with the Republican party show a strong tendency to vote for that party'. In such cases the 'psychological distance' between independent and dependent variables may become too small, representing two sides of the same dispositional coin (Van Deth 1986: 192-193). An example here may be the application of Fishbein & Ajzen's

theory of reasoned action to voting behavior, in which a causal sequence is posited between the attitude toward the voting behavior, the intention to perform that behavior, and the behavior itself, as reported by the respondent (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980: 174ff).

The most important objections against the Michigan-inspired mainstream research concerned the fact that measurements of attitudes and behavior typically abstained from assessing the context in which attitudes operate, although contextual variation can make a large difference in the ways attitudes are related to behavior. The confusion surrounding the nature of mass belief systems is due to the fact that voters respond differently to different issue formats, which different formats in their turn correspond to meaningful differences in stimuli that voters encounter in real political situations. There is no single, general form for an attitude stimulus, nor is there a single, general procedure for recording an attitude response (Bennett 1981: 75-79). Experiments in the field of behavioral decision-making have firmly established that the way a question is framed influences the response, even if the factual content of the question remains the same (Saris 1997; Tversky & Kahneman 1987; Quattrone & Tversky 1988).

In comparison to these seemingly troublesome aspects of the attitudinal approach, a cognitive model seemed to have two main advantages. First, the cognitive approach is both general and flexible. A voter may have dozens (or even hundreds) of schemata available for representing political situations and for engaging belief processes. Which schemata are activated is dependent upon the voter's perception of the social context of the stimuli and his relationship to that context. The model thus addresses the important question of how people can respond differently and at the same time meaningfully to the same situation. Second, the cognitive approach accounts for variation in individual thinking and action in similar situations over time; subtle differences in context or stimuli can engage different schemata, resulting in a different judgment (Bennett 1981: 164-167; 1982).

The cognitive approach seemed particularly well-suited to address an important question that emerged from the belief systems debate: given the fact that voters generally display such low levels of political sophistication, how do they nevertheless manage to make sense of the political world? Instead of concentrating on absolute levels of conceptualization, the cognitive model focused on the ways voters acquire, process and organize the information available to them (Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Kinder 1983: 413-416; Popkin 1994: 7ff).

Central in most cognitive accounts of electoral decision-making is the concept of schema, 'organized prior knowledge, abstracted from experience with specific instances, that guides the processing of new information and the retrieval of stored information' (Conover & Feldman 1984: 96; see for related definitions Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Fuchs & Klingemann 1990; Hamill & Lodge 1986; Lau & Sears 1986ab; Lodge & Hamill 1986; Lodge & McGraw 1991; Miller et al. 1986). Theoretical equivalents of the schema concept are script (Popkin 1994), heuristic (Sniderman et al. 1991) and stereotype (Rahn 1993)). Politically relevant schemata function as devices to select and organize political information, to 'go beyond the information given' by permitting inferences and to provide shortcuts in voting decisions and candidate evaluations. Further, schemata have a hierarchical structure, with different levels of abstraction and organization. Both within and among individuals large differences may exist in the development and use of schemata.

One of the first tasks the cognitive analysts set for themselves was to identify the various political schemata and assess their relative importance for voting action. Conover & Feldman (1984) conducted one of the first exploratory experiments in this field and concluded that people do organize political information, often in distinct, relatively independent schemata that defy easy classification as liberal or

conservative. They also found schemata to be meaningfully hierarchically organized and plausibly related to specific issue positions.

Subsequent researchers concentrated on more specific schemata. A prime candidate for consideration was the party schema, 'a cognitive structure that contains citizens' knowledge, beliefs and expectations about [political] parties' (Rahn 1993: 474). In univariate tests the party schema was found to be quite influential in political information-processing: not only did partisan sophistication facilitate categorization of public policy statements as either Democratic or Republican, it also significantly contributed to accurate recall of such statements. However, partisan schematics demonstrated a consistency bias, following which policy issue information was restructured in various ways to conform to party stereotypes (Lodge & Hamill 1986; Rahn 1993). Further, when empirically tested with other schemata, the party schema turned out to be most effective in structuring political information (Hamill et al. 1985; Lau 1986).

Another potentially important schema was ideology, the significance of which already had been indicated by Downs (1957). Fuchs & Klingemann (1990: 205) provided the first full treatment of ideology in schematic terms, defining it as 'a means for the reduction of complexity, which serves primarily as an orientation function for individuals and a communication function for the political system'. In order to fulfil these functions, the schema should have the structural properties of symbolic generalization, limitation of meaning elements and binary schematization, all of which were found present among European voters, but less so among Americans. When empirically pitted against the party schema, however, ideology proved to be less effective in structuring political information (Hamill et al. 1985).

A third subject of possible schematic processing concerned the personality of U.S. presidential candidates. On the basis of cognitive theory it could be assumed that voters organize their thoughts about presidential candidates into broad preexisting categories, which direct their attention and assist them in the storage and retrieval of pertinent information. In an empirical analysis of open-ended evaluations, Miller et al. discovered five of such cognitive categories underlying personality comments of candidates: competence, integrity, reliability, charisma and personal traits, all of which proved quite stable in usage over time (Miller et al. 1986; see also Anker 1995; Lau 1986).

Besides discovering specific schemata and specifying their contents, cognitive voting analysts also gave attention to the specific processes in which schemata are brought to bear on voting actions. In several analyses of candidate evaluations, two basic processes were distinguished. First, in a memory-based process, voters are assumed to base their evaluations of candidates on evidence, retrieved from memory, which evidence is supposed to be an accurate representation of the information the voters were exposed to. Second, in the impression-driven (or on-line) process voters are assumed to make a judgment as relevant information is encountered. Newly incoming information is integrated in short-term memory into a 'running tally' of current impression. This tally is then stored in long-term memory, whereby the information originally contributing to the tally is deleted, in accordance with the principle of cognitive economy. In empirical tests it was found that voters as a rule do not rely on specific candidate information in memory. Also, this information is generally non-veridical, due to cognitive and evaluative constraints (stereotyping and projection). Rather, the voters use the on-line tally, forming an overall evaluation early in an election campaign and adapting new information to it (Lodge et al. 1989; 1995; Rahn 1993; Rahn et al. 1994).

Whether on-line or memory-based, the activation of schemata in evaluation processes depends upon the presence of (internal and external) cues, resulting from

contextual variation in terms of candidates, issues and campaign effects. Such cues may elicit the voter's own issue positions, leading to projection or false consensus effects. Other cues (such as candidate characteristics like party, ideology, religion, race, sex) may activate still other schemata, depending upon the political context (Conover & Feldman 1989; McDermott 1997).

By studying the structure and processes of voting decision-making, the cognitive researchers emphasized the ability of voters to make sense of the political world, in spite of their lack of political sophistication, and to behave politically as if they were fully informed. This quasi-rational conception of electoral choice was further supported by adopting Condorcet's logical proposition that, in the aggregate, errors cancel out. Bartels (1996), however, concluded that both positions are overly optimistic in an empirical sense. Relatively uninformed voters do not behave like fully informed voters: although the former perform significantly better than expected on the basis of chance, socio-political cues and informational shortcuts do not fully compensate for the influence of the full information the latter enjoy. Nor do errors cancel out in the aggregate: over six elections the less informed showed a consistent bias in favor of incumbent presidents and Democratic candidates.

4.6 Discussion and conclusions

From the early 1980s onwards the cognitive approach inspired a great deal of electoral research. In terms of publications, the cognitive school is currently competing with the Michigan-inspired 'mainstream' for dominance in the field of psychological voting research. At the theoretical level, cognitive political scientists attempt to explain voting actions with a largely new set of intervening variables: schema, cue, evaluation. As a strategy of explanation, the cognitive researchers have continued to adhere to the causal strategy as defined in Chapter 1, be it that they increasingly have resorted to (quasi)experimental research designs and have made less use of the sample survey analyses, dominant among mainstream researchers.

The psychological antecedents of current cognitive voting research are quite diverse, with footings in Gestalt theory, the New Look, Artificial Intelligence and mediational behaviorism. Regarding the first antecedent, balance and dissonance theories were influential in social psychology in the 1950s, instigating much research, while in the 1960s the attention of psychologists shifted to attribution theory. However, attribution processes were increasingly interpreted in purely cognitive terms, and motivational aspects as well as the specific Gestalt character of the approach vanished into the background. Although some cognitive psychologists have emphasized the holistic origins of cognitive psychology and stressed the significance of Gestalt views on memory and thought processes for modern cognitive theory (e.g., Fiske & Taylor 1991: 3-6, 99-103; Murray 1995: 53ff), the relation between Gestalt and cognitive psychology is generally regarded as tense. Gestalt psychologists have criticized the computer analogy of cognitive science as a 'machine theory' of human thought and action, quite incompatible with principles of dynamic organization (Henle 1985; Zajonc 1983). They have also rejected attempts by information theorists to interpret the tendency toward 'good' Gestalt exclusively in terms of information reduction or minimalization (Arnheim 1986). Second, the New Look movement added the important idea of conceptual categorization, which returned in the schema concept in later cognitive theories. Yet, the direct impact of the New Look movement was eclipsed by developments outside

the field of psychology, in particular in Artificial Intelligence. In its current form cognitive voting research seems to be most influenced by neo-behaviorist schemes, with their emphasis on contextual variation and the rather mechanical linking between stimuli, cues, evaluations and voting decisions.

In a theoretical sense, cognitive voting research has turned out to be somewhat imperialist, seeking to reinterpret and integrate the results of older research in terms of cognitive economy, whereby voters are thought to rely on social and group cues (Columbia), on party cues (Michigan), or on ideological and economic performance cues (Downs)(see, for example, Conover & Feldman 1984; Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Lau & Sears 1986a; Lodge et al. 1989; Popkin 1994: 10ff; Sniderman et al. 1991: 14ff). It remains a point of debate, however, to what extent cognitive psychology has been successful in this attempt at comprehensive reformulation.

First of all, the cognitive approach has been criticized on several grounds. In general it has been charged that information-processing theory does not offer a clear disciplinary matrix or a shared exemplar, around which knowledge can accumulate. The theory is often modelled to the task to be performed, the matrix is too ill-defined to permit rigorous theorizing; instead of a new paradigm, information-processing is nothing but a metaphor. The computer analogy is principally mistaken: people attribute intentionality to the computer, where only mechanistic rules exist (Leahey 1991: 357-358).

The cognitive psychologists who initially explored the field of voting behavior discovered that their approach had some specific disadvantages. First, when the central cognitive concept of schema is not carefully defined, operationalized, and embedded in a specific information-processing model, it is reduced to a non-falsifiable label that adds little theoretical power to existing theories (Hastie 1986; Kuklinski et al. 1991; Lau & Sears 1986b). Second, there is a lack of sophisticated measurement theories and techniques in current cognitive research, making it difficult 'to take a snapshot of a schema' (Hastie 1986: 35; Luskin 1987). Third, a theoretical conceptualization of the role of social setting in the cognitive process is largely absent, in particular of the influence of proximal others and mass media (Bennett 1981; Kuklinski et al. 1991; Lau & Sears 1986b; McCombs & Shaw 1984). Finally, a fuller incorporation of the role of affective and motivational factors should be desirable (Conover & Feldman 1981; Hamill & Lodge 1986; Hastie 1986; Kinder 1983; Kuklinski et al. 1991; Lau & Sears 1986b; Tetlock et al. 1985).

In the light of these criticisms, the claim of cognitive psychology on theoretical dominance in the field of voting action research as yet cannot be sustained. To be sure, the cognitive approach has added useful knowledge to the field, in particular with regard to political perception and cognition. Yet, the fact that the cognitive approach currently is subject to theoretical revisions which already are fully covered in the Columbia and Michigan studies implies that, in its present state, that approach has not developed into an all-encompassing theory of voting action. The strengths and limitations of cognitive psychology were recognized long ago by one of its founders, Ulric Neisser (1967: 305), and his remarks seem still relevant for the present status of this field:

[I]t is no accident that the cognitive approach gives us no way to know what the subject will think of next. We cannot possibly know this, unless we have a detailed understanding of what he is trying to do, and why. For this reason, a really satisfactory theory of the higher mental processes can only come into being when we also have theories of motivation, personality, and social interaction. The study of cognition is only one

fraction of psychology, and it cannot stand alone.

The psychodynamic theory of voting action

5.1 Introduction

The discussion of psychological schools in electoral research in chapters 5 and 6 leads to two groups of researchers, which, while both not schools of voting research in the narrow sense of the word, nevertheless offer important contributions to the study of voting action. One group studies the influence of materialist and postmaterialist value orientations on voting action, from which antecedents may be traced to humanistic psychology. This research direction will be discussed in Chapter 6.

In the present chapter attention will be focused upon the psychodynamic school of electoral research, in essence a combination of Freud's theory of unconscious motivation with an analysis of social, economic and political forces in society. Since the principal authors of this school were concerned with the rise of Fascism and National Socialism in the late 1920s and 1930s, the thrust of their inquiries was directed at authoritarianism, a constellation of personality characteristics, ideology and socio-economic conditions believed to have facilitated the rise of Fascism in Central Europe. The largely theoretical explanations offered by the prewar analytical social psychologists gained empirical relevance through a joint German-American research effort, resulting in *The authoritarian personality*, and a massive amount of political research performed in its wake.

This chapter starts with a short outline of Freud's psychoanalytical theories (5.2). Second, the adaptation of Freud's views by a number of analytical social psychologists is discussed (5.3), whereafter its empirical translation in *The authoritarian personality* (5.4) and in subsequent research is being followed to the present time (5.5). Finally, conclusions are drawn regarding the first three research questions, guiding the research in this book (5.6).

5.2 Freud's theory of unconscious motivation

For Freud all human behavioral and mental activity was ultimately motivated by a few basic drives, divided in two categories: sexual (including self-preservation) and aggressive drives. These drives (or instincts) possess psychic energy, and are capable of producing a state of psychic excitation (or tension) which impels the person to activity. Objects and persons at which this energy is directed are said to be cathected ('besetzt') by the drives, i.e. charged with energy: the greater the cathexis ('Besetzung'), the more psychologically important the object or person is. For example, in the early infant years the mother is an important source of instinctual gratification for the child, and consequently the mental image of the mother in the child's mind is highly cathected (Brenner 1973: 15-18). The actions with regard to cathected persons and objects should lead to a cessation of tensions, or in more subjective terms, to a gratification of needs ('Lustprinzip')(Freud 1955: 10-14).

Against this continuous flow of drive energy in the individual Freud contrasted the prohibitions and inhibitions which the external world imposes on a free and unrestricted gratification of sexual and aggressive needs ('Realitätsprinzip'). Due to these parental and societal prohibitions, the free expression of drives becomes repressed or 'sublimiert', i.e. banned from consciousness. The drives remain active as unconscious motives, though, slipping through in dreams, slips of speech, and in symptoms of mental illness. It is the development of the basic drives and their adaption to the demands of the external environment that is the central object of psychoanalysis. The continuous conflict between 'Lustprinzip' and 'Realitätsprinzip' lends human thought and action an outspoken psychodynamic character in the Freudian view (Freud 1955: 71ff).

In order to account for the ways in which the individual masters internal forces and external demands Freud posited the existence of a three-layer psychic appara-

tus, which develops itself in the course of the individual childhood and adolescence (Freud 1955: 6-10). The first layer, the Id ('Es') represents the drives in their pure form, and is present from the beginning of life. The second layer, the Ego ('Ich') gradually grows out of the Id, as the infant child becomes interested in his environment and increasingly seeks control over it. The Ego mediates between the pressures of the drives and the rules of the external world, determining which needs are to be satisfied and which are not. The Ego is the 'executant of the drives', and remains dependent upon the Id for its psychic energy (Brenner 1973: 37).⁴

The development of the third layer is closely related to the interaction between the child and his parents. In late childhood, according to Freud, the child develops the largely unconscious wish to become sexually involved with the opposite sex parent, but at the same time fears the power of the parent of the same sex. The resolution of the resulting Oedipus complex lies in a strong identification of the child with the same sex parent, which in turn leads to the formation of the Superego ('Über-Ich', or 'Ideal-Ich'): 'The original nucleus of the Superego is the demand that the individual repudiate the incestuous and hostile wishes that comprised that individual's Oedipus complex. This demand persists throughout life, unconsciously of course, as the essence of Superego' (Brenner 1973: 113). The Superego represents the moral functions of personality, the person's internalizations of moral concepts like good and bad, reward and punishment, and repentance and appraisal. It is important to note here that from the beginning Freud conceived of psychoanalysis as being simultaneously 'Individualpsychologie' and 'Sozialpsychologie', whereby the same laws of psychic functioning apply to single individuals as well as individuals in groups or societies. Although Freud did not acknowledge such phenomena as 'Sozialtrieb' or group instinct, at the same time he recognized that in its concern for the individual human being '[Die Individualpsychologie]...nur selten, unter bestimmten Ausnahmebedingungen, in die Lage [kommt], von den Beziehungen dieses Einzelnen zu anderen Individuen abzusehen' (Freud 1967: 9).

5.3 Analytical social psychology and authoritarianism

Freud's views received an important extension from the hands of a number of clinical psychoanalysts, who, being trained in the Freudian system, sought to connect psychoanalytical insights with a, sometimes Marxist oriented, analysis of societal conditions, in order to find an explanation for the rise of Fascism in the 1930s. The most important of these (psycho)analytical social psychologists were Erich Fromm and Wilhelm Reich, while Abraham Maslow also contributed an influential article (for a background sketch of Fromm's and Reich's work, see Jay 1973: 86ff, and Sharaf 1983: 160ff). Elaborating on Freud's equalization of individual and social psychology, they posited as a central thesis that the development of the individual's drives and their adaptation to societal conditions is dependent upon the social and economic structure of society, in particular the

4 Later extensions of psychoanalytic theory have accorded Ego a far more independent role vis-a-vis the Id and the external world. Neo-Freudians like Hartmann, Rapaport and Kris conceived of the Ego as a generalized mode of cognitive control, able to anticipate and regulate environmental contingencies in relation to drive wishes and moral claims. This increasing emphasis on Ego psychology marked the transition of psychoanalysis from a limited theory of psychopathology to a more general theory of psychic conflict and adaptation, not incompatible with certain features of cognitive and humanistic psychology. See Fromm 1970: 32ff, and Klein 1968, for reviews and critical appraisals of Ego psychology in the light of Freud's early work.

organization of the means of production.

The analytical social psychologists dissented from (the later) Freud in that they did not acknowledge the existence of a separate aggressive drive. Following the popular distinction between hunger and love, they posited two general drives, a self-preservative and a sexual one. These drives differ from one another in that the sexual drive is much more flexible than the self-preservative one: whereas the former to a fairly high degree may be repressed, projected, or substituted, the latter drive (like hunger, thirst, fatigue) demands real and often instant gratification (Fromm, 1932: 28-30; Reich, 1934: 10-13).

As a second step, the analytical psychologists considered the degree of satisfaction of needs to be dependent upon the socioeconomic structure of society. Especially the gratification of the relatively inflexible self-preservative needs is directly tied up with the modes of economic production and organization, but sexual needs are curtailed as well by society, which cannot allow uninhibited sexual conduct to intervene with the demands of the economic production system. Since the societal structure is characterized by a sharp economic inequality between the owners of the production means and the working classes, it follows that the latter class has fewer opportunities for drive need satisfaction than the former. Consequently, the proletarians are forced to suppress their needs and wishes far more than the ruling class.

If then the individual is driven by needs, and lives in a society which cannot fulfil all his need wishes and in which opportunities for need satisfaction are quite unevenly divided, the question arises how that individual deals with the repressed needs and how the societal structure holds together, in spite of the sharp class dichotomy. The analytical social psychologists all pointed at the family as the principal controlling institution, linking the development of the child to the development of society as a whole.

On the one hand, the family is the medium through which society instills its specific economic structure on the child, and thus on the adult person: 'Die Familie ist die psychologische Agentur der Gesellschaft' (Fromm 1932: 35; see also Reich 1933: 50ff; 1934: 16). On the other hand, the family creates the psychological preconditions for the existence of the economic structure, i.e. the psychological ties that bind the ruled majority to the ruling minority. The authority of the latter over the former is an extension of the parents' authority over their children, in particular the authority of the father over his son. Through identification with the father and internalization of his commands and wishes, the male person's Superego develops out of his Ego, and becomes invested with moral power. In the course of the person's development a process of reverse identification occurs in that the Superego projects its moral power on those authorities who succeed the parents (like teachers, political and economic leaders, etc.) and who thus take over the moral quality of the parents (Fromm 1932: 51; 1936: 83ff; 1941: 117-118).

The structure of the family is directly determined by the societal economic structure, and the father's authority is a derivative of the authority structure of society; not only do societal authorities replace the father, but the father also represents these authorities in the family. In the end, therefore, the formation of the Ego and Superego is codetermined by the authority structure of society as a whole, which in turn reflects the prevailing socioeconomic conditions (Fromm 1936: 88ff; Reich 1934: 16).

The analytical social psychologists conceived of this formation process as follows. According to Freud, the prime function of the Ego is the coordination between inner drives and the outer world, which function enables the person to act and to control his environment. When, however, the societal structure prohibits the

gratification of many drive needs, the developing Ego is not yet capable of controlling these unsustainable needs, for which task it needs the assistance of the Superego. Since the Superego represents an emotional tie to the parents (and by extension to the societal authorities), its influence is very strong: the unwanted drive wish is radically banned from consciousness and becomes suppressed. The repressed drive needs remain active in unconsciousness, though, and continue to press for gratification. They force the Ego to a continuous diversion of energy to their suppression: the stronger these wishes are suppressed, the more Ego energy their suppression will take. The assistance of the Superego thus has its price in the fact that the Ego becomes entangled between Superego and Id (Fromm 1936: 98ff). This constellation of personality forces results in what the analytical psychologists have called the authoritarian-masochistic character. The weakly developed Ego and the strong, externalized Superego lead to an excessive dependence upon authority and to a deep-seated need to obey and submit oneself to the authorities. The term masochism (used here in a nonpathological sense) indicates that the authoritarian character finds 'Lust' in his submission, lying in a liberation from anxiety through protection by a powerful authority, and in a satisfaction of its own longing for power by totally identifying with the persons who wield power. With masochism, however, goes sadism: both are part of the same character structure, whereby the second trait compensates for the first. The hostility that the authoritarian person feels toward the authorities (and his parents) is suppressed and displaced on less powerful groups or persons, which the authoritarian despises and hates. If therefore society is structured in such a way that the authoritarians can submit to a higher authority and at the same time unleash their sadist tendencies on designated out-groups and minorities, the societal authority structure will remain intact. The sado-masochistic character is the 'psychological glue' that binds the ruled masses to the ruling few, and which maintains the unequal socio-economic structure in society (Fromm 1936: 110ff; 1941: 157ff; Maslow 1943: 408ff; Reich 1933: 218ff).

5.4 The 'authoritarian personality'

While these analytical social psychological explanations for the rise of Fascism were theoretically well-founded, they generally lacked empirical operationalization and corroboration. An early research attempt included a large survey among German white and blue collar workers, held in 1929 under Fromm's supervision at the Frankfurt 'Institut für Sozialforschung', of which Fromm was a senior member. The survey constituted a first effort to obtain empirical evidence on the psychological character of the working class and its possible receptiveness to authoritarian ideologies. Due to the forced emigration of the Institute to the United States in 1933, during which half of the survey questionnaires were lost, and increasing discord between Fromm and other leading Institute members, the results of the survey were not published until half a century later (Fromm 1984; see also Jay 1973: 147ff).

It remained the task for a joint research team of European and American scholars to combine the Freudian-Marxist insights with the modern psychological measurement techniques, developed in the United States. In 1943 the American psychologists Nevitt Sanford and Daniel Levinson started a study on antisemitism. The study was refunded and extended to a broad assessment of the relationship between personality and prejudice, and the researchers were joined by the analytical psychologist Else Frenkel-Brunswik, a former assistant to the Bühlers in Vienna.

As the work proceeded, additional funds became available from the American Jewish Committee, through the intervention by Max Horkheimer, the exiled director of the 'Institut für Sozialforschung'. This made it possible for the social philosopher Theodor Adorno to join the research group. The search continuously widened as more general aspects of antisemitism and prejudice were uncovered, finally leading to the conception and publication of *The authoritarian personality* (1950); the title indicates that the final results of the investigations had come close to Fromm's, Reich's and Maslow's earlier conclusions (Jay 1973: 219ff; Levinson 1968b: 24-27; Sanford 1973: 139-143; Smith 1997).

The concern of Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford was with discovering the potentially fascist individual, 'one whose structure is such as to render him particularly susceptible to anti-democratic propaganda' (Adorno et al. 1950: 1). In their analysis of this structure the authors distinguished two important concepts, ideology ('the organization of opinions, attitudes, and values') and personality ('a more or less enduring organization of forces within the individual')(Adorno et al. 1950: 2,5). The forces of personality are primarily needs (in the Freudian sense), and since opinions, attitudes and values are influenced by these needs, it follows that personality is a determinant of ideology. The development of the individual's personality occurs under the impact of its social environment, first and foremost of the family in which the individual grows up. Family relations in turn are profoundly influenced by societal conditions, like the economic organization and the existence of ethnic and religious groups (Adorno et al. 1950: 6).

The structures of personality and ideology in the individual have mainly potential significance; they indicate a certain degree of readiness to perform certain actions. The authoritarian personality structure implies a high degree of readiness to engage in Fascist actions, yet the question whether and how such action will really occur depends upon the situation of the most powerful economic interests, i.e. upon the question whether they see the use of antidemocratic propaganda as a necessary means to maintain their dominant status (Adorno et al. 1950: 7).

The authoritarian character structure could be typified by ten interrelated dispositions. Highly authoritarian persons rigidly adhere to middle-class values (conventionalism); they feel an emotional need to submit themselves (authoritarian submission), whereby hostility towards parents and authorities is displaced on out-group persons (authoritarian aggression); they reject a free emotional life (anti-intracception), shift responsibility for their lives to external, mystical forces (superstition), and think in rigid, black-and-white categories (stereotypy); they display contradictory tendencies toward power, at the same time searching and fearing it (power and thoughtness); they rationalize their conscious aggression by attributing it to all humans (destructiveness and cynicism); they tend to project their repressed impulses onto out-groups, which are consequently believed to engage in evil plots, conspiracies and sexual excesses (projectivity); finally, they display strong inhibitions in the sexual sphere, showing much moral indignation over others' sexual behavior (concern with sex). In addition, the authoritarian person has often experienced a relatively strongly disciplined childhood, characterized by a harsh application of rules in agreement with conventional values, applied in a family setting with a stern, dominating father and a submissive mother (Adorno et al. 1950: 222ff; Sanford 1973: 143ff).

These empirical results partly resulted from the application of new measurement techniques. The best-known of these is the F (prefascism) scale, a 38-item scale intended to measure potential Fascism in the individual. The scale purports to measure underlying dimensions of personality through projective items, which seemingly have nothing to do with Fascism, thus attempting 'to make depth-psychological processes amenable to mass-statistical treatment' (Sanford 1973:

152). Besides the F-scale, Adorno and his colleagues devised E(thnocentrism) and PEC (Political-Economic Conservatism) scales, and also drew their empirical information from other sources, like clinical interviews, projective tests and surveys among selected samples.

5.5 Authoritarianism and voting action

Subsequent research on authoritarianism and political behavior has tended to contribute to the integrated socio-psychological scheme of *The authoritarian personality* (in which social events, personality forces and behavior were considered inextricably linked to one another) in three different, but not always complementary ways. One group of researchers adopted a historical-sociological approach, inquiring into the social bases of authoritarian voting behavior without much further reflection on intervening psychological variables. A second group regarded authoritarianism, as measured by (different versions of) the F-scale, as the dependent variable, searching its determinants in social characteristics or in related psychic dispositions without explicitly taking account of voting actions. Still other analysts, finally, studied authoritarianism as an independent variable, i.e. as a possible predictor of voting for known right-wing extremist parties or other related political actions, with no further research of sociological factors. These three research directions will be summarily reviewed below.

The historical sociologists were interested in uncovering the social bases of prewar European Fascist and National-Socialist movements. In the absence of (reliable) survey data, they resorted to official election statistics and other aggregate level data in order to arrive at ecological inferences about the political behavior of groups and individuals (see Visser 1994e for a discussion of methods and pitfalls of ecological inference).

Theoretically, the sociologists pointed at historical developments at the societal level and their impact on the position of certain groups and classes in society. One such development is social displacement, in which a social group gradually becomes socially, economically and culturally marginalized by other societal groups. It is widely acknowledged that, as a result of processes of industrialization and modernization in Western European countries during the late 19th and early 20th century, the lower middle class of little shopowners, peasants, artisans and craftsmen increasingly became overshadowed by the rising working class on the one hand and the (industrial and rural) upper classes on the other. Traditionally, the 'petit bourgeoisie' had turned to liberalism as an appropriate ideology to defend their interests against the emerging labor unions and industrial cartels, but in times of acute economic crisis their already smoldering feelings of social and emotional insecurity made them quite susceptible to the claims of rightextremist parties. Besides social-psychological insecurity, low levels of sophistication also increased their receptivity to rightist propaganda, whereby lack of sophistication results from little formal education, low levels of social and political participation, a general lack of interest in public affairs and occupational isolation. Theoretically speaking, small entrepreneurs and farmers in rural, small town communities should be most inclined to vote for rightwing extremist parties (Lipset 1981: 127-137; Linz 1976: 87ff).

In the country most extensively researched by the sociologists, Germany, these theoretical expectations were largely confirmed. From a number of ecological election studies it appeared that the typical Nazi voter in 1932 was a middle-class, self-employed Protestant, who lived either on a farm or in a small community in a peripheral area strongly affected by market fluctuations and economic crisis, and

who had previously voted for a centrist or regional political party ardently opposed to the power and influence of big business and big labor. The Nazi vote as a whole seemed to have been largely won at the expense of a 'bloc' of Protestant, non-Marxist parties, while relatively little votes appeared to have been gained from the Socialist and Communist parties and the Catholic 'Zentrum' (Linz 1976: 88; Lipset 1981: 148; Shively 1972: 1220-1222).

Furthermore, ecological inferences on the levels of sophistication of the National-Socialist electorate also seemed to support theoretical expectations, but in more subtle ways than originally conceived. At first sight, the upsurge in Nazi votes between 1928-1933 coincided with a large influx of previous non-voters and first-time voters in the German electorate, which coincidence quickly became established as a causal connection. More refined analyses, however, showed that certainly in the elections between 1928-1932 the Nazis did not attract disproportional support from previous non-voters. Only when the Nazi party developed into a full mass movement which, by virtue of increasing control of government and mass media, was able to spread its extremist views to all parts of Germany, did it succeed in winning a large part of the former non-vote. The same development could be observed for other relatively unsophisticated groups of voters, i.e. women and rural voters. Initially, they lagged behind in moving to the Nazis, due to a lack of exposure to new political information. When the National-Socialist propaganda pervaded the country, however, the female and rural voters quickly made up for their initial lag, in the end surpassing male and urban voters in Nazi allegiance. The fact that the Nazis were able to secure the mass support of these unsophisticated groups of voters did not solely reflect their communicative skills, though; it was first and foremost a result of the severe economic depression of the 1930s (Converse 1964: 252-254; Lipset 1981: 138-152; Shively 1972: 1209-1216).

A second group of researchers directed its research at authoritarianism as a dependent variable, looking at group differences in F-scores without further inquiry in voting actions. The best known example here is the case of working class authoritarianism, first (and most authoritatively) stated by the American sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset in the late 1950s. On the basis of survey evidence from various Western democracies, he noted that, while the lower social classes were more liberal (or leftist) than the middle classes on economic issues, the latter were decidedly more liberal or tolerant in non-economic matters, such as support for civil liberties and parliamentary democracy (Lipset 1981: 92-97).

Besides the factors contributing to authoritarianism in general, Lipset discussed a number of factors particular to the phenomenon of working class authoritarianism. A prime source of authoritarian dispositions could be found in the 'typical' working class family situation. Unlike most middle-class families, family life in the lower strata tended to be spatially and temporally unstructured, failing to inculcate a sense of past and future in the average working class person and thus restricting his cognitive abilities to concrete, proximal and present-day activities and events. In line with this observation, working class families were often characterized by authoritarian child-rearing patterns, in which rewards and punishments were meted out in an arbitrary fashion and in which aggression and violence were rather commonplace (Lipset 1981: 101-112). Lipset (1981: 115) concluded:

All of these characteristics produce a tendency to view politics and personal relationships in black-and-white terms, a desire for immediate action, an impatience with talk and discussion, a lack of interest in organizations which have a long-range perspective, and a readiness to follow leaders who offer a demonological interpretation of the evil

forces (either religious or political) which are conspiring against him.

Lipset's thesis ignited a lively debate in various countries, which at first concentrated on the propriety of using F-scales among working class respondents, given the influence of cultural differences between the social classes. To elaborate one national example, in the Netherlands it was found that the F-scale is a reliable instrument for comparison between classes, showing no cultural bias against the working man (Dekker & Ester 1987).

As a second step, various hypotheses and factors which Lipset had proposed were empirically tested on a number of national probability samples of the Dutch population. The results provided mixed support for the case of working class authoritarianism. First of all, a consensus emerged among researchers that, although working class respondents scored comparatively high on the F-scale, they did not show the highest score in absolute terms; this top notch was reserved for the small retailers and independent farmers.⁵ Second, from almost all analyses education appeared as the single most important determinant of authoritarianism, the F-scores consistently dropping with increasing levels of formal education (Dekker & Ester 1987; Middendorp & Meloen 1989; Scheepers et al. 1989, 1992; Van Snippenburg & Scheepers 1991; see also Lipset 1981: 476ff). Third, it was found that membership or participation of workers in labor organizations (like trade unions), amount of newspaper reading and measures of status anxiety showed either non-significant effects on F-scores or effects contrary to Lipset's expectations (Dekker & Ester 1987; Scheepers et al. 1992).

Interpretations of these results pointed at the insecure economic position of small retailers and farmers, resulting from the economic crisis of the early 1980s, the increasing competition from large supermarkets and warehouses and, for farmers, the growing influence of restrictive environmental and distributional measures. Workers were found to be cynical about government policies, leading to political distrust and apathy. Furthermore, both retailers and workers showed low levels of social and geographical mobility, leading to a strongly localist orientation with little tolerance of 'outgroups' (Billiet et al. 1992; Scheepers et al. 1989, 1992; Van Snippenburg & Scheepers 1991; on the relation between political and economic anxiety and authoritarianism see also Feldman & Stenner 1997).

Finally, besides inquiring into authoritarianism as a dependent variable, some researchers have also used it as a independent variable, a potential predictor of voting for right-wing extremist parties without further reference to social factors. This type of research has recently been flourishing in the Netherlands and Belgium as a result of electoral developments. For many decades after World War II in the Low Countries extremist right parties had led a marginal and haunted life, until suddenly in the 1980s the Dutch Center party (CP) and the Belgian-Flemish 'Vlaams Blok' achieved some unexpected electoral results.

5 This finding was somewhat dependent upon the class conceptualizations of the analysts involved. Class 'proxies' like income, subjective class identification and interviewer rating of a household's socioeconomic status all showed a linear and monotone negative relationship to authoritarianism, the F-scores declining with rising class positions. A neo-Marxist class scheme, inspired by Wright, produced rather mixed results regarding working class authoritarianism, while hinting at the importance of small shopowners (Dekker & Ester 1987; Middendorp & Meloen 1989). A third class measure, the Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero stratification scheme, consistently indicated the high F-scores of retailers, followed by those of the manual workers (Billiet et al. 1992; Scheepers et al. 1989, 1992; Van Snippenburg & Scheepers 1991). See further Nooij 1969, for an early account of authoritarian tendencies among Dutch farmers.

In the aftermath of these elections, in the Netherlands a number of consecutive surveys were conducted among high school students (age 16-18 years), among whom potential CP-voters were identified and their preferences analyzed with the aid of the F-scale and many other scales. The CP-adherents invariably turned out the highest F-scores, significantly higher than conservative and moderate rightist students. Furthermore, the F-scale correlated highly with ethnocentrism and racism scales, thus reconfirming its validity after 40 years (Hagendoorn & Janssen 1983: 65ff; Meehan et al. 1988). In a more recent test on a national probability sample authoritarianism again was found to correlate highly with ethnocentrism (Billiet et al. 1992). However, a more comprehensive research attempt to measure authoritarianism in conjunction with other aspects of right extremist ideology besides ethnocentrism (i.e., nationalism, racism, xenophobia and anti-democratic attitude) backfired on methodological grounds (Meijerink et al. 1995). In Belgium, voting for the extremist 'Vlaams Blok' seemed to be mainly effected by a negative attitude toward African and Mediterranean migrants in Belgian society. Although in multivariate tests this negative attitude in its turn could be related to low levels of education, high levels of political powerlessness and high F-scores, it did not appear to be related to other aspects of right-wing extremism, like ultranationalism or biological racism (Billiet 1993; Billiet et al. 1992; De Witte 1996; Maddens 1994: 291ff).

5.6 Discussion and conclusions

The psychodynamic approach enriched the existing literature on voting with some important insights. While employing various intervening variables already introduced in the Columbia and Michigan works (such as opinion, attitude, identification and perception), an important intervening variable was added in the concept of need. Following the lead of Freud, Fromm and Reich, these needs were conceived of as largely unconscious forces, pressing for gratification while controlled by the person's adaptation to reality (Ego) and his moral inhibitions (Superego). As an intervening variable, needs were regarded as psychological correlates of physiological drives like sex, aggression and self-preservation (hunger, thirst, fatigue). Given their basic constitutional nature, the needs were also regarded as determinants of the other, more consciously experienced, intervening variables of opinion, attitude and perception.

Regarding the strategies of explanation, discussed in Chapter 1, the psychodynamic approach originally started as an exclusively functional endeavor, in which individual clinical cases were intensively followed over several years. With the application of psychoanalytic insights to mass behavior, several survey instruments were developed and tested, finally culminating in the F-scale. This scale enabled voting researchers to adopt a causal strategy, linking F-scores to antecedent forces and voting actions.

This transition has not gone uncontested, though. Several follow-up studies initially criticized *The authoritarian personality* on methodological grounds. It was contended that the formulation of all items on the F, E en PEC scales in a positive direction made them vulnerable to a 'acquiescence response set', a general tendency of respondents to agree with an item regardless of its content. Furthermore, the sampling of respondents had not occurred in an a-select way, which made generalizations to larger populations impossible (Smith 1997).

Yet, as research using these scales proliferated, much of this criticism quickly became obsolete. The F-scale, for example, was applied to a large number of subjects of different national, ethnic, social and occupational backgrounds, either

in quota samples or in national probability samples. None of these applications came to results incompatible with those of the original research, and often they found the F or E scale related to other attitude scales or overt behaviors in ways consistent with theoretical expectations in *The authoritarian personality*. The validity of the F-scale gradually became well-established, as over the years consistent high scores on the F-scale were ascertained among such rightist groups as British fascists, American ultranationalists, former German SS-members and white segregationist students in South Africa, where most other groups attained significantly lower scores. All in all, the correlations and expectations established in *The authoritarian personality* tended to be (re)confirmed, 'strengthening the argument in favor of a central and relatively deep-seated personality structure, which helps to determine behavior in a wide variety of situations' (Sanford 1973: 156; see further Levinson 1968b: 25-27; Meloen 1986; 1997).

A second strand of critique offered objections of a theoretical nature. When research in the wake of *The authoritarian personality* showed that education was an important empirical factor, this inspired a cognitive critique by Milton Rokeach and others on the psychodynamic theory underlying the investigations of authoritarianism. By distinguishing between content and structure of an ideology, Rokeach attempted to find an explanation for right-wing as well as left-wing extremism. While not denying the importance of affective factors, his conception of belief systems and ideology closely resembled Festinger's and Heider's in holding that cognitive organization occurs mainly along lines of belief congruence (Rokeach 1960: 398ff; more recent cognitive analyses of political extremism include Moskowitz & Stroh 1994; Sniderman et al. 1991: 244ff; Tetlock et al. 1985).

The analytical psychologists, however, were strongly opposed to the Gestaltist conception of belief systems and its emphasis on cognitive structure. One of the members of the Berkeley team, Nevitt Sanford, argued that a cognitive approach cannot explain *why* certain dispositions go together, and others not. While he acknowledged that Rokeach and the neo-Gestaltists offer a more general view of ideology, he found it lacking in depth and content (Sanford 1973; Smith 1997; see further Chapter 7).

In spite of the large amount of research performed so far, the empirical picture of voting actions is still far from complete. As already indicated in the previous pages, students of electoral authoritarianism as a rule have shown little interest in the voting choices of lowly authoritarian voters (Feldman & Stenner 1997). They also have tended to concentrate their research efforts on the sociological and ideological correlates of authoritarianism, rather than the electoral ones. Furthermore, as far as voting action has been involved, researchers often have switched dependent and independent variables, measuring F-scores among known right-extremist party followers instead of determining differences in voting patterns among different scoring persons on the F-scale. Given these lacunas, the value of the psychodynamic approach for the study of voting actions is assessed in the next chapters in relation to the humanistic approach.

The humanistic theory of voting action

6.1 Introduction

Like the analytical social psychologists in the previous chapter, students of societal values apply their theories to a wide array of political and social phenomena, of which voting behavior is one, be it an important, segment. Focal point of this 'school' is Ronald Inglehart's theory of materialist and postmaterialist value orientations, which in the last two decades has found applications in most of the world's developed industrial states. Psychological antecedents are to be found in humanistic psychology in general and in Abraham Maslow's theory of the need hierarchy in particular. Maslow in his turn was strongly influenced by the neurologist Kurt Goldstein, a somewhat independent member of the Berlin school who devised a Gestalt theory of personality. Another important influence came from the Vienna Psychological Institute, especially from the work of Charlotte Bühler in developmental and clinical psychology.

In order to attain an adequate view of this approach and its psychological antecedents, this chapter opens with a further inquiry into the Vienna school, already encountered earlier in this book (6.2). Next, the discussion moves to the ideas of Goldstein (6.3), followed by an exposition of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (6.4) and its subsequent translation in Inglehart's theory of values (6.5). The applications of Inglehart's scheme to the study of voting action are discussed, whereafter the chapter closes with discussion and conclusions on the basis of three research questions (6.6).

6.2 The Vienna school and humanistic psychology

The reader will recall how in 1922 the German psychologists Karl and Charlotte Bühler founded the Psychological Institute of the University of Vienna, teaching and supervising the diverse research activities of students like Paul Lazarsfeld, Egon Brunswik and Else Frenkel, until forced by the Nazi 'Anschluß' of 1938 to emigrate to the United States.

The Böhlers concentrated their own research efforts on the field of developmental psychology. Following his insistence on an unitary action scheme (including experience, behavior and results), Karl Bühler turned to child psychology to study the origins and development of the mature human capacity of creative action. He distinguished three consecutive steps in mental development, i.e. satiation, play and achievement, with three corresponding levels of activity: reflex action, learning by trial and error, and creative intelligence. Charlotte Bühler supplemented this scheme by distinguishing three main goal areas toward which the activities of satiation, play and achievement could be directed: things, people and 'cultural' objects (denoting ideas, norms and institutions). In the 1930s she further elaborated the idea of goal-directed development by introducing the concept of 'Erfüllung', translated as fulfilment or self-determination, indicating the individual's striving toward some self-selected goal. Underlying this process of fulfilment, Charlotte Bühler posited a psychobiological process of maturation, based on the biological constants of growth, reproduction and decline (Lazarsfeld 1972: 60-63).

In the classic study *Jugend und Beruf*, partly discussed in Chapter 2, several tenets of Charlotte Bühler's scheme became apparent. First, the approach of the study was phenomenological, following which the occupational choices of Austrian youth were studied by inquiring into their subjective 'psychologische Umwelt, jener Ausschnitt aus dem objektiv Gegebenen, der psychisch zur Wirksamkeit kommt' (Lazarsfeld et al. 1931: 29). Second, a developmental view of human life can be traced throughout the whole volume. In fact, one of the main themes of *Jugend und Beruf* is the stultifying effect of early industrial employment on the psychological growth of adolescents. The lack of freedom and the physical exertion

on, resulting from heavy mechanical labor, arrest the development of puberty and other functional stages, necessary for a full growth of personality.

In order to ascertain the consequences of industrial working conditions for the 'psychologische Umwelt' of the young proletarian laborer, Charlotte Bühler proposed that youngsters generally have four major needs, i.e. sexual needs, achievement needs, social needs, and the more general need of 'Erfüllung', here defined as 'Befreiung von Gefühlen der Unrast und Unbefriedigung...zu [welchen] Äußerungen und Schwärmereien des Jugendlichen, seine künstlerische Produktion und verschiedene weniger präzisierten Formen seiner Phantasietätigkeit gehören' (Lazarsfeld et al. 1931: 66-67). Not surprisingly, it is the latter need which is curtailed most among the young workers: their phantasies are ill-developed and reality-bound, their ideas practical and close-to-home.

Following her forced emigration to the United States and accompanying occupational and personal problems, Charlotte Bühler did not return to the study of human development until the late 1940s (Bühler 1965). In the decade thereafter her own thinking increasingly became related to that of other psychologists in the humanistic direction, in several aspects.

In the first place, obtaining a full developmental view of a human requires that that person be considered as a whole individual, whose life strivings and needs can be best understood by employing the phenomenological method of 'Verstehen' (or understanding) on the one hand, and by studying biographical material (like diaries and letters) on the other. As a second aspect, Charlotte Bühler elaborated on the concept of 'Erfüllung' as an end goal of four basic strivings of human life, i.e. pleasure-need (satisfaction in sex, love and Ego-recognition), self-limiting adaptation (fitting in, belonging, security), creative expansion (self-expression, creative accomplishments), and integration (maintenance of inner psychic order). These basic strivings are all present from the beginning of life, but each plays a prominent role in a different phase. As an end goal, fulfilment represents the attainment of something the person believes in, which requires the balancing of expansion and adaptation, satisfaction and internal order in the course of the person's life. When a person fails to pursue his end goal of life, i.e. fails to realize his potentials, this may lead to psychological problems of conflict, anxiety and guilt, the curing of which is the main area of humanistic psychotherapy. As a final point, Charlotte Bühler emphasized the importance of creativity in the healthy person. Already in child's play, the pleasure of mere functioning ('Funktionslust') can be readily observed, and for the mature human being creativity in self-expressive activities builds up a healthy tension, which enables further creative actions (Bühler 1962: 103ff; 1971; Bühler & Allen 1972: 35ff).

Its members having contributed to many disparate fields of psychology, the theoretical and empirical relevance of the Vienna school as a whole is probably most clearly visible in the field of humanistic psychology. As Charlotte Bühler (1965: 195) states it:

Unsere Wiener Schule als solche war neben vielem anderen hauptsächlich auf den Gebieten der Wahrnehmung, der Entwicklung, der Sprach- und Sozialpsychologie interessiert, mit Betonung der Ganzheit und der Zielgerichtetheit des Menschen, die heute in der humanistischen Psychologie als Hauptgesichtspunkt herausgestellt wird.

6.3 Goldstein's Gestalt theory of personality

Another important formative influence on humanistic psychology came from

Gestalt psychology, in particular from the work of Kurt Goldstein (1878-1965). Trained as a neurologist, Goldstein held medical positions at the universities of Königsberg, Frankfurt and Berlin, before being forced to emigrate to the United States in 1933. In Frankfurt, where Wertheimer was a colleague, and in Berlin Goldstein underwent the influence of the emerging Gestalt movement and he became one of the editors of the Gestalt-oriented *Psychologische Forschung*. In the United States his interests gradually shifted towards humanistic psychology, and two years before his death he participated in the establishment of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, along with Charlotte Bühler, Maslow and others (Ash 1995: 275ff; Mandler & Mandler 1969: 408-409; Simmel 1968).

Goldstein's conception of the organism rests on a few basic principles. The nervous system of the organism is an unit that always functions as a whole and always remains in a state of excitation, under the influence of continuously impinging environmental stimuli. These stimuli bring about changes that effect the whole organism, but such excitation is not randomly distributed. Stimuli have most impact on the bodily parts near the entrance of the stimulus (spatial or local near effect) and on the body parts most receptive to that specific stimulus (functional near effect). Following the fundamental organization of organismic functioning in figure and ground, spatial and functional near effects are regarded as the figure process, while the excitation of the rest of the nervous system constitutes the ground process. Figure-ground processes are inherent in all organismic excitation and performance processes, in which definite configurations are formed. For example, raising an arm (figure) requires a certain definite position of the rest of the body (ground)(Hall & Lindzey 1970: 302-304; see also Chapter 3).

Figure and ground are intrinsically related, and a change in one immediately alters the other as well. In the normal organism a stimulus, repeated under identical conditions, produces approximately identical neural figure-ground configurations, and consequently fairly identical reactions, even in spite of the fact that the stimulus at the same time produces a change in the physical substratum, thereby changing its receptability to similar future stimuli. This relative constancy of the organism in its reactions (ordered behavior) is due to a process of equalization or centering, in which the differences in excitation between near and distal bodily parts cancel out after a short period of time (Goldstein 1940: 11-15).

The significance of the process of equalization lies in the fact that the organism returns to its average state of excitation (or tension), whereby an appropriate reaction to a stimulus corresponds to an excitation pattern falling within this average zone of excitability. The maintenance of action constancy (or ordered behavior) thus requires that the organism is normal (i.e. not suffering from pathological conditions) and that the external stimulus is adequate, or suited to the organism involved. Under normal conditions, the organism does not react to inadequate stimuli. However, in these cases in which the organism is in some pathological state, either organic or psychiatric, or when inadequate stimuli are very strong and force themselves upon the organism, such stimuli may lead to disordered or catastrophic behavior, whereby sick and abnormal organisms are much more sensitive to inadequate stimuli than healthy and normal ones. The term 'catastrophic' indicates that the existence of the organism is endangered, since the catastrophic reaction inhibits all behavior, even that necessary for survival. Fear of catastrophic reactions is a prime source of anxiety in the organism (Goldstein 1940: 87-91).

The vulnerability of sick and abnormal organisms to the catastrophic reaction is a direct effect of disturbances in the equalization process. For example, psychiatric and neurological patients often suffer from abnormal tensions in single fields, isolated from the whole and excluded from the equalization process. In such single

fields, reactions to stimuli are abnormally strong and enduring, and bound to the stimulus in abnormal ways. The patient will anxiously attempt to remove these tensions by avoiding dangerous situations and by rigidly clinging to activities and routines, adequate to their preserved capacities. In the healthy individual, on the other hand, the normal equalization process leads to maintenance of a certain level of tension, which makes further ordered behavior possible. The normal organism, therefore, does not seem to be governed by separate drives or tensions in single fields, but by

only one drive: self-actualization. Normal behavior corresponds to a continual change of tension, of such a kind that over and over again that state of tension is reached which enables and impels the organism to actualize itself in further activities, according to its nature (Goldstein 1939: 197).

This tendency towards self-actualization overcomes the anxiety inducing, potentially catastrophic effects of coming to terms with the outside world, through the joy of mastery and belongingness to the world the normal person experiences (Goldstein 1940: 15ff, 91ff; Hall & Lindzey 1970: 305-308).

Goldstein's organismic conception implied a critique of Köhler's notions of fields and equilibria in physical Gestalten. According to Köhler, the occurrence of physical Gestalten depends upon the topographical boundaries of the physical whole under consideration, and therefore always represents an equilibration (or equalization) of tensions which is bound by the topography of the whole, but which at the same time takes place independent of the nature of that whole. In living organisms, however, equalization signifies a return to a definite state of tension, corresponding to both the situation and the nature of the organism. This nature is determined by the organism's pattern of self-actualization, which constitutes in a qualitative sense the topography of behavior. Only from this pattern of self-actualization, Goldstein (1939: 380ff) argues, it becomes intelligible that a certain state of tension may also represent a state of equilibrium.

The dependence of topography upon the nature of the organism has important implications for the concept of field, as elaborated by both Köhler and Lewin. Goldstein (1939: 371, 374) regards their experiments in perception, action and thinking as artificial and isolated events:

[The] good Gestalt...represents a very definite form of coming to terms of the organism with the world, that form in which the organism actualizes itself, according to its nature, in the best way...The Gestalten, which are given in perception through one sensory organ, are Gestalten which belong to a very definite condition of the organism, namely to an isolated stimulus utilization in one part, while the rest of the organism is artificially kept relatively constant.

Good Gestalten in one such field can be easily changed into bad ones through different kinds of sensory, motor, and other changes in the organism. The tendency toward good Gestalt must therefore be interpreted as an organismic phenomenon, primarily manifested in a tendency toward preferred behavior, which is 'a special expression of the general tendency to realize optimal performances with a minimal expenditure of energy as measured in terms of the whole' (Goldstein 1939: 378; 1940: 171ff; see further Chapter 7).

Although thus nominally belonging to the Berlin school, Goldstein's approach is not in all aspects similar to orthodox Gestalt theory. An important difference lies

in the fact that for Goldstein the term 'Gestalt' always refers to the whole organism, and not merely to the introspective experiences into which the Gestalt psychologists inquire. The tendency toward 'Prägnanz' appears as the tendency towards self-actualization of the healthy person, i.e. an inclination to develop oneself as fully as the internal and external conditions permit. This idea proved to be extraordinary influential for the development of humanistic psychology, as the discussion of the approach of Abraham Maslow in the next section will attest.

6.4 The hierarchy of needs

In Chapter 5 an influential contribution of Maslow to the analysis of the authoritarian character structure was mentioned (Maslow 1943). While the research team of *The authoritarian personality* further inquired into the cognitive, emotional and behavioral tendencies of this personality type, Maslow took a fundamentally different turn and concentrated on the opposite type: the *democratic* personality. In this endeavor, he was influenced by a number of prominent psychologists, assembled at various universities in New York City in the late 1930s. The most important inspiration came from Goldstein, then at Columbia University, to whom Maslow dedicated his two major books. Wertheimer and Koffka at the New York School of Social Research were also influential, as were psychoanalysts David Levy, Abram Kardiner, Karen Horney and Erich Fromm. Later influences included Gordon Allport, Heinz Werner and humanistic psychologists Carl Rogers and Charlotte Bühler (Maslow 1954: ix-xiv; 1968: iii-xiii). The resulting theory of human motivation stood, according to Maslow (1954: 80), 'in the functionalist tradition of James and Dewey,...fused with the holism of Wertheimer, Goldstein, and Gestalt psychology, and with the dynamicism of Freud and Adler'.

In this theory Maslow distinguishes five basic needs, appearing in a definite order. At the first level reside the physiological needs, some of which may be characterized as homeostatic (e.g., bodily maintenance of a constant state of the blood stream), but other certainly not (sexual desire, sleepiness, activity, sensory pleasure ('Funktionslust')). These needs have a clear somatic base and are the most prepotent of all: they dominate the whole mental and behavioral functioning of humans until satisfactorily gratified. At the same time, severe and prolonged deprivation of these needs is relatively rare in normally functioning Western societies, and consequently they should not be regarded as general motivational forces, as one might conclude from animal experiments or extreme situations. Once these physiological needs are satisfied, other (and higher) needs emerge, which then come to dominate the organism until satisfied, after which still new needs emerge, and so on: 'basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency' (Maslow 1954: 83). It is implied that a need gratified is no longer an actual need, becoming insignificant in the current dynamics of a person's behavior. Second, when physiological needs are fully satisfied, the safety needs come to the fore. These needs probably can be most clearly observed in small children, who depend on their parents to organize a safe, orderly and predictable world for them, in which they are protected from pain, suffering and overly difficult situations. Similarly to the physiological needs, regular functioning Western societies offer sufficient order and protection to their citizens for their safety needs to be generally gratified (although this general observation might be different for the lowest economic and social strata of certain countries, and for individuals under near-pathological conditions, like authoritarian personalities or obsessive-compulsive neurotics). Otherwise, safety needs only may become active in case of emer-

gencies, war, epidemic disease, natural disaster or societal desintegration. Third, when both physiological and safety needs are satisfied, the belongingness and love needs emerge, concerning love, affection, belongingness and social relationships. Blocking of these needs is the most common cause of maladjustment and psychopathology in Western society. The fourth layer of needs consists of the esteem needs, with self-respect on the one hand (strength, achievement, adequacy, and competence) and the esteem of others on the other (reputation, prestige, recognition). Satisfaction of these needs leads to self-confidence and feelings of capability and usefulness; dissatisfaction produces feelings of inferiority and weakness (Maslow 1954: 84-91; 1968: 152-154).

Finally, the need for self-actualization appears upon prior gratification of the physiological, safety, love and esteem needs. In its initial formulation, this need is taken to refer to man's desire for self-fulfilment, 'to become everything that one is capable of becoming' (Maslow 1954: 92). In later publications Maslow (1968: 97) links self-actualization to other concepts of psychological growth, treating it less as 'a kind of all-or-none pantheon into which some rare people enter at the age of sixty', and more as

an episode, or a spurt in which the powers of the person come together in a particularly efficient and intensively enjoyable way, and in which he is more integrated and less split, more open for experience, more idiosyncratic, more perfectly expressive or spontaneous, or fully functioning, more creative, more humorous, more ego-transcending, more independent of his lower needs...more truly himself, more perfectly actualizing his potentialities, closer to the core of his Being, more fully human.

In addition to those five needs, Maslow also distinguished two other categories of needs, which cannot be clearly assigned a place in the hierarchy. The first of these are cognitive needs, the desire to know and understand. Although mainly instrumental in furthering safety and self-actualization needs, some clinical and experimental evidence suggests that continuous frustration of the cognitive needs may have psychopathological effects. The second category includes aesthetic needs, i.e. for order, beauty, symmetry, system and closure, which are related to cognitive, behavioral and even some neurotic needs in what might be considered a general need for a 'good' Gestalt (Maslow 1954: 93-98).

Further characteristics of the need hierarchy involve the following. First, the order of the hierarchy is not definitely fixed, but emerges as a regular pattern from observation of clinical cases. Some exceptions in the order have been ascertained, as when innately creative people exert their creative needs even in spite of physiological deprivation, or when levels of aspiration are permanently lowered as a result of continuous deprivation, like in cases of chronic unemployment (Lazarsfeld 1971; Lipset 1981: 87ff). Second, lower needs do not have to be completely satisfied for higher needs to appear: it is probably most accurate to state the hierarchy in terms of increasing percentages of satisfaction as one descends the hierarchy of prepotency. The appearance of a new need must therefore be viewed as a 'gradual emergence from nothingness' (Maslow 1954: 101).

As a third point, on the average the needs in the hierarchy are more often unconscious than conscious, and have their place amidst other determinants of behavior, which may reside in the external stimulus-field or in unconscious factors, extraneous to the need pyramid. Finally, the need hierarchy is emphatically about human motivation, and is not derived from the study of infrahuman subjects. It follows that a healthy man is primarily motivated by the need 'to develop and actualize his fullest potentialities and capacities', whereas less healthier persons

are plagued by chronic activity of lower needs (Maslow 1954: 105; in his later work Maslow refers to the self-actualization need in terms of growth motivation, and to the lower needs as deficiency motivation (Maslow 1968: 21ff)). Part of the difference lies in the individual's history of gratification: the strong, healthy person may endure deprivation of lower needs better than the less healthy person, because the former has been so long satisfied in his basic needs that they have become autonomous, i.e. functionally independent from the gratifications that initially sustained them, and cease to play a role in adult life.

Although predominantly based on clinical cases, Maslow's conception of the need hierarchy and its relation to the democratic personality found support in a number of empirical studies. A clearly positive relationship was found between increasing mental health (in terms of advancement on the need ladder) and commitment to freedom and democracy. For example, deprivation of physiological needs was found to lead to depoliticization: securing basic physiological needs replaces all other, 'higher' interests, ideas and actions, a fact emerging from starvation experiments with political activists, effects of concentration camps, studies of prolonged unemployment, and from cases of willful deprivation by totalitarian regimes. Frustration of safety needs is directly related to political obedience and subservience, while deprivation of the love and affection needs is conducive to hostility, prejudice, autism and social distrust in general (Davies 1963: 1-30; Lane 1973: 111-112).

Further, a field study on several non-probability samples clearly showed negative correlations between increasing mental health and increasing authoritarianism, while high levels of political efficacy and participation were positively related to high levels of mental health. It was concluded that 'Maslow's basic needs are indeed 'basic' politically as well as psychologically because their frustration produces a variety of undemocratic attitudes and behavior, while their fulfilment provides the minimal condition for contributory citizenship' (Knutson 1972: 246; 247ff; Davies 1991: 406ff).

The most influential application of Maslow's theory to the realm of political behavior, however, may be found in the work of the American political scientist Ronald Inglehart and other students of the materialist-postmaterialist value dimension, the discussion of which will occupy the next section.

6.5 Needs, values and voting action

Inglehart started his research in the late 1960s by observing a 'silent revolution', a slow but nevertheless general process of intergenerational change in value orientations in advanced industrial societies which seemed to result from two decades of unprecedented economic prosperity and the absence of large-scale warfare among those societies (Inglehart 1971; 1977: 21ff). In order to interpret these processes of value change, Inglehart advanced two hypotheses.

The first hypothesis stated that individuals pursue goals in a hierarchical order, i.e. in terms of relative need deprivation: they attach high priority to needs that are relatively unfulfilled. Clearly inspired by Maslow's need hierarchy, but without much further reflection on theoretical antecedents, Inglehart developed a twelve-item survey question in order to permit a mass scale measurement of its basic tenets. In this operationalization he combined Maslow's third and fourth layer in one 'belongingness & esteem' category, while also assigning the cognitive and aesthetic need a top notch in the pyramid, together with (but in fact as an operationalization of) the need for self-actualization.

The resulting hierarchy and corresponding survey items appear in Table 1 on the

next page. For survey purposes the twelve items in Table 1 were ordered in three clusters, each containing one item of the four need categories. Respondents were asked to name one top priority in each cluster, followed by a question to point out the two most important and one least important items out of the whole list of twelve (Inglehart 1977: 40-43).

In later publications Inglehart revised the first hypothesis. Although still acknowledged as a 'complementary concept [that] helped shape the design of the questionnaire items', the idea of need hierarchy was replaced by the concept of marginal utility in economic theory. Consequently, this hypothesis was rephrased in terms of scarcity: people place the greatest subjective value on those things that are in relatively short supply. As a further consequence, needs and values were no longer considered as hierarchical, but as dichotomous: 'materialist' needs (corresponding to the safety and sustenance needs in Table 1) were posited against 'postmaterialist' needs (the belongingness, esteem, cognitive and aesthetic needs in the table)(Inglehart 1981; Van Deth 1983abc).

Inglehart's second, or socialization, hypothesis asserted that a person's basic values reflect the conditions prevailing during that person's pre-adult years. Once his character has been formed during childhood and adolescence and his basic value priorities established, the individual tends to retain that set of values throughout his adult life. On the basis of both hypotheses it may be expected that those generations raised during the economic depression of the 1930s and the second World War will give priority to the sustenance and safety needs, while the generations born after 1945 will adhere to the postmaterialist values, given their upbringing in a time of prosperity and peace. Since the postwar generations will slowly but steadily replace the prewar generations, a gradual shift of society as a whole in the direction of postmaterialism may be predicted (Inglehart 1971; 1977; 1981).

In the last two decades Inglehart's hypotheses have been empirically tested in a large number of industrial countries. Initial results favored the theory of the 'silent revolution'. In a 1970 survey in six countries the postmaterialist type was significantly more found among respondents born between 1946-1954 than among all preceding age cohorts, a finding persisting when controlled for occupation, education and parental background (Inglehart 1971). Later replications tended to confirm this trend: during the economic recession of the 1970s the immediate post-war generation continued to become more post-materialist, while the generation born after 1955 tended to move in the materialist direction, reflecting the adverse economic conditions of that decennium (Dalton 1988: 77ff; Inglehart 1981).

With regard to voting action, Inglehart and his co-researchers found a fairly clear picture in the various countries they researched. As a rule, postmaterialist voters favored leftist parties by a wide margin, especially environmentalist parties (like the German 'Grünen' or the French 'Écologistes'), the rationale being that rightist parties are mostly associated with economic traditionalism and 'law & order', issues low in the value hierarchy of postmaterialist voters. Furthermore, post-materialist value voting was stronger among the younger voters than the older ones, a fact signifying a potential longterm impact of value changes. In spite of these facts, the researchers remained doubtful of the real political impact of postmaterialist value change, especially its capacity to replace old social and religious cleavages. Postmaterialism seemed to lack the firm demographic base and the well-developed forms of mass organization, characteristic of the traditional cleavage-based parties (Dalton 1988: 169ff; Inglehart 1971; 1990).

Table 1 *Inglehart's need hierarchy and survey items*

Need: aesthetic & cognitive

Items: Trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful
Progress toward a society where ideas are more important than money
Protecting freedom of speech

Need: belongingness & esteem

Items: Progress toward a less impersonal, more humane society
Seeing that people have more say in how things get decided at work or in their communities
Giving the people more say in important government decisions

Need: safety

Items: Making sure that this country has strong defense forces
The fight against crime
Maintaining order in the nation

Need: sustenance

Items: Maintain a stable economy
Maintaining a high rate of economic growth
Fighting rising prices

More recent findings on value change in industrialized Western nations between 1973-1990 have tended to confirm this mixed trend. In most countries the electoral impact of (post)materialist value orientations has increased over the years, but not uniformly so. When compared to other, traditional cleavage-based value orientations, postmaterialism does not consistently rank first in all nations. Especially in countries with a long history of segmented pluralism the older cleavages remain influential with regard to voting choice (Knutsen 1995; Knutsen & Scarbrough 1995).

The Netherlands are a particular interesting case in this respect. Once known as the archetypical example of pillarization (or segmented pluralism), in the 1970s it became a showcase of the 'silent revolution', consistently ranking first or second in percentages postmaterialist respondents among Western industrialized nations. Research in the mid-1970s revealed that postmaterialist value orientations predominated among the younger, higher educated respondents from socially advantaged backgrounds, who showed relatively little identification with the societal status quo and were highly tolerant of deviant life styles (Van Deth 1983ac; 1984: 126ff). With regard to voting action, on the average seven out of every ten postmaterialist voters chose one of the generally acknowledged Dutch leftwing parties (PvdA, D66, CPN, PSP and PPR), while only close to four in ten materialist voters did so. Looking at party profiles, it was found that only the smaller leftist parties had an overrepresentation of postmaterialists, with the main social-democratic party (PvdA) and other parties all showing solid materialist majorities among their electorates. Since, however, the emergence of postmaterialism as a politically relevant factor coincided with the breakdown of the traditional 'politics of accommodation' in the Netherlands, Inglehart and his co-researchers predicted an increase in postmaterialist value voting and a decrease in voting on the basis of religious, class and ideological considerations, which until then had determined the choice of left- or rightwing parties (Inglehart 1971; 1990; Van Deth 1984: 181ff). Although this prediction was partly rebuffed in subsequent research, in which the relative impact of postmaterialist value orientations and left-right ideology on voting actions was directly assessed (Van der Eijk & Niemöller 1987), it was empirically shown that postmaterialism increasingly gained relevance as a

source of political ideology. Gradually replacing the traditional socioeconomic concerns, non-economic issues came to provide an important alternative interpretation of voting behavior along left-right ideological lines (Van Deth & Geurts 1989).

If prospects initially looked bright for postmaterialist values in the Netherlands, more recent research has cast doubts on the emergence of this new value cleavage. First of all, the aggregate number of postmaterialists did not rise during the 1980s and early 1990s, but declined instead: from about a fifth of the Dutch electorate in 1979 to one in seven voters in 1994. Further, although empirical evidence on value change showed an increase in libertarian values regarding moral issues (like abortion, euthanasia), no such rise could be discerned with regard to more social issues (such as permissiveness regarding drugs use and sale or tolerance of abuse of social benefits), a finding inconsistent with Inglehart's prediction of a fundamental culture shift. Finally, regarding party choice, postmaterialist voters still turned out to favor leftwing parties over rightist ones by a two-to-one margin, while materialist voters in six out of ten cases selected rightwing parties. However, given the receding number of postmaterialists among the electorate, the influence of their value orientations on voting behavior as a whole has gradually waned over the past ten years (Tillie 1995: 112-113; Thomassen & Van Deth 1989; Van Deth 1995a).

6.6 Discussion and conclusions

Although the predicted 'silent revolution' has largely remained dormant, Inglehart's theory has added important insights on the motivation of voting action to the literature. To the existing stock of intervening variables in voting research (opinions, attitudes, perceptions) he added the concepts of value and need. Although the exact relationship between these concepts has been left somewhat unspecified by Inglehart and his co-workers, the concepts seem to share common ground: 'Values are discussed in the language of philosophy and anthropology, needs in the language of psychology...They are not reciprocal, for although every need seeks a value, values do not always reflect needs - partly because values include both what is desired (needed) and what is desirable (preferable but not necessary preferred)'(Lane 1973: 111; see further Smith 1991; Van Deth 1984: 66-77; 1995b; Van Deth & Scarbrough 1995).

With regard to the strategies of explanation, outlined in Chapter 1, Inglehart's survey questionnaire marked the transition from the functional, case-by-case approach of Bühler, Goldstein and Maslow to the causal strategy of large-scale surveys among Western electoral masses. There are, however, some peculiarities in this transition, which have hampered a full empirical test of the relevance of Maslow's theory for voting actions and which require some additional discussion. It was already noted in the previous section that Inglehart combines Maslow's third and fourth level in the pyramid in one 'belongingness & esteem' category, and that he uses the extra-pyramidal cognitive and aesthetic needs as a rough operationalization of the self-actualization need. Far more problematic, though, seems to be his acceptance of the idea of marginal utility and the dichotomization of the hierarchy in materialist and postmaterialist needs, despite the fact that the wording and selection of his survey items are fully determined by Maslow's ideas. This theoretical eclecticism poses interpretational problems of the following order. When a predominant materialist value orientation is empirically found among older cohorts of a population, in Inglehart's scheme this finding either must be due

to the fact that satisfaction of material needs was lower than gratification of postmaterialist needs in these cohorts' early years (in line with the scarcity hypothesis), or it must be ascribed to the fact that those cohorts, faced with the choice between material and non-material needs at the same time, decided to gratify the material needs first (conform the need hierarchy). In the first case Inglehart must prove that immaterial needs were relatively more satisfied than material ones during the first decades of this century (a fact contradicted by a large body of socioeconomic historical evidence), or he has to apply a hierarchy: 'The rise and fall of the Maslowian background of Inglehart's work cannot mask the fact that some idea of a hierarchy is essential for his explanation' (Van Deth 1983a: 77 n.2; 1984: 84ff).

More fundamentally, Inglehart's operationalization neglects the basically developmental nature of Maslow's approach. By positing a rather strict socialization hypothesis, according to which a person's basic values reflect the conditions prevailing during that person's pre-adult years, the possibility of individual growth and development in the course of a person's life is practically postulated into oblivion. While thus a central element of humanist psychology is missing, in a more narrow sense the socialization thesis has also come under recent scrutiny. In recent theory and research on political socialization it has been acknowledged that opinions and attitudes are not immutably formed during the adolescent's impressionable years, but that they are susceptible to important change during all stages of a voter's life (lifelong openness)(Gemmeke 1995: 84-89; Sangster & Reynolds 1996; Wittebrood 1995: 5-7).

Other empirical inquiries, presented in this chapter, tend to show a positive correlation between advancement in Maslow's pyramid and commitment to political freedom and democracy, expressed in rising levels of political interest, efficacy and participation and decreasing F-scores (Davies 1963, 1991; Knutson 1972). With regard to voting action, a similar complementary pattern seems to emerge, with highly authoritarian persons tending to vote for (extreme) right-wing parties and voters scoring high in terms of Maslow's need hierarchy overwhelmingly favoring parties of the left. The patterns are not complete, though, because authoritarianism, need hierarchy and voting action have never been systematically related in an empirical or theoretical way. The theoretical part of this matter will be taken up in the following chapter.

The humanistic theory of voting action

Converging theories of voting action

The humanistic theory of voting action

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the distinct features of five schools of voting action have been described. Each of these posited its own set of intervening variables to account for voting action, and each could show more or less impressive empirical credentials. As Table 2 (next page) summarizes, the Columbia school introduced the intervening variables of perception, opinion, attitude and identification. The Michigan group added the variables of evaluation and cognitive structure, which were further developed by the cognitive school, along with the intervening variables of cue and schema. The three schools all employed causal strategies of explanation, researching differences in perceptions, attitudes and voting actions among mass electorates and relying on the sample survey as a main source of data. Approaching from a different direction, the psychodynamic and humanistic schools made an important addition in terms of the needs and values of the voting person, in conjunction with which the variables of perception, attitude and opinion should be analyzed. Both schools arrived at this point initially on the basis of functional inquiries, but in both cases survey instruments were developed that permitted a causal strategy of research and explanation. The origins of the various intervening variables have been traced back to their antecedents in psychological theory, which endeavor included a significant part of the history of psychology as an independent science.

It remains the task of this chapter, then, to address the fourth research question, i.e. to what extent and in which ways theoretical convergences between the intervening variables may be discerned. In order to answer this question, this chapter starts with a critical discussion of Lewin's field theory, from which a distinction between static and dynamic field conceptions emerges (7.2). The chapter continues with a discussion of the nature of needs, from which an essentially developmental need concept results (7.3). In the next section (7.4), convergences between these conceptions and distinctions are sought in a more general model of voting action. Pursuing the implications of the fourth research question somewhat further, in section five these convergences are related to the causal and functional strategies of explanation. Finally, the chapter (and the book) closes by revisiting the 'behavioral persuasion' and sketching various avenues for further research.

7.2 Field conceptions

At the end of Chapter 3 it has been argued that the Columbia and Michigan approaches show many theoretical similarities, while some of their major empirical findings are also quite compatible. Yet, in one important aspect the two schools are different, which aspect reveals itself from a critical discussion of Lewin's field theory by Lazarsfeld (1972: 67-76).

At the level of theoretical antecedents, Lazarsfeld acknowledges many similarities between his own and Lewin's approach. Like Lazarsfeld's attempts, Lewin's early action research in Berlin covered all aspects of the action sequence, holding out a promise of an integrated theory of goals, intentions and occasions. Lazarsfeld's emphasis on implementation, 'the way in which more or less vague dispositions, intentions and interests...may lead...to the performance of a specific act like buying a car, going on a trip, or voting for a candidate' is equivalent to Lewin's notion of locomotion through psychological space (Berelson et al. 1954: 278-279; Lazarsfeld et al. 1948: 163 n.2).

Table 2 *Schools of voting research and intervening variables*

School: Columbia

I.V's: perception; opinion; attitude; identification

School: Michigan

I.V's: perception; opinion; attitude; identification; cognitive structure; evaluation

School: cognitive

I.V's: (cognitive structure); evaluation; schema; cue

School: psychodynamic

I.V's: perception; opinion; attitude; identification; need

School: humanistic

I.V's: perception; opinion; attitude; need; value

Despite these similarities, Lazarsfeld also criticizes Lewin's field theory, which critique bears upon Michigan's funnel of causality as well, since the funnel constitutes the application of field theory to the realm of voting behavior (Campbell et al. 1960: 33-36). He points out that Lewin is at several occasions ambiguous about the relationship between needs and valences. Although the interpretation given in Chapter 3 (needs induce valences, valences excite forces, forces steer behavior) is supported, in particular differences in Lewin's field theoretical conceptions of person and environment are discerned, which are not combined in one coherent view of the life space. Lazarsfeld regards the interplay of needs and valences over an extended timeperiod as the central problem of any theory of action, yet he maintains that Lewin has not solved it properly, because he did not explicitly include a time dimension in his approach (Lazarsfeld 1959: 11; 1972: 69-73; for similar critiques see Allport 1955: 159-162, Heckhausen 1991: 115-124, and Heider 1960: 160-166).

In the funnel of causality the interplay over time between field factors is likewise absent, which is clearly visible in the notion of (statistical) recursive causation, which constitutes the methodological basis of the funnel. This logic of causation, to which the Michigan researchers adhere, leads to a static conception of the field, in which the genesis of attitudinal forces can be traced back to extraneous developments, but in which no dynamic relationships between field forces themselves are posited (see, for example, Miller & Shanks 1982; 1996: 3ff, 189ff; Shanks & Miller 1990; 1991).

A less static view of field processes is inherent in the Gestalt-inspired balance and dissonance theories, discussed in Chapter 4. According to these theories, a person's opinions and attitudes toward some object (e.g., a political party) are dynamically interrelated over time (see, for example, McCann 1997; Shaffer 1981; Visser 1994d). Here an interesting convergence may be noted between these theories and Lazarsfeld's discovery that, during the campaign, voters have a tendency toward increasing social and attitudinal consistency (Berelson et al. 1954: 283-285). This finding, antedating the major works of Heider and Festinger by several years, did not result from Lazarsfeld's immersion in Gestalt theory, but manifested itself in his repeated observations of voters during the time of the campaign. For Lazarsfeld, therefore, this tendency towards consistency should not be explained as an independent, autonomous trend toward good form, but as a function of the action-in-progress. When a person is burdened by too many cross-pressures, he will not be able to act at all; a certain reduction of conflict among warring forces is a

prerequisite for action.

Arguably, the combination of dynamic field theories and the panel methodology would have been a fruitful step in the development of a general theory of voting action, yet electoral research took a different turn. Due to Michigan's intellectual, organizational and institutional resources, their static field conception became dominant in American and European voting research, while research on the dynamic development of fields, as undertaken in the Columbia studies and implied in balance and dissonance theories, largely disappeared from the electoral research agenda.

7.3 Need conceptions

The psychodynamic and humanistic schools contributed the intervening variables of need and value to the study of voting action. From Chapters 5 and 6 it appears that there are important differences between the two regarding the proper nature and number of needs. The psychological theories in the humanistic direction allow for a great variety of different motives and needs in the mature human individual: adaption versus expansion (Bühler); an anxiety-reducing tendency toward order and continuity versus an inherent desire for new experiences and activities (Goldstein); deficit motives versus growth motives (Maslow). Furthermore, while the idea of self-actualization or fulfilment is central to all humanistic approaches, the form and content of the growth process is not abstracted in a preconceived scheme: the uniqueness of individual development is recognized as a fundamental rule and can only be approached as an empirical phenomenon (Allport 1961: 219ff; Maslow 1968: 21ff; see also Visser 1994c).

This flexible explanatory scheme seems to differ from orthodox psychoanalysis. Here all human activity is ultimately motivated by a few basic drives, which induce needs in the person that are constantly pressing for gratification. Humanistic psychologists have raised three objections to this theory. First, although some tissue-deficient drive-needs (like hunger, thirst, sex, fatigue, oxygen-need) may be quite plausibly related to individual motives, it remains to be empirically shown, instead of just asserted, that all complex adult motives can be reduced to only a few basic drives. Second, psychoanalysis is mistaken in assuming an exclusively genetic approach to the analysis of human thinking and behavior: motivation and conflict are always contemporary events, inherent in the present condition of the experiencing individual. Finally, the humanists have criticized psychoanalysis for its predominant adherence to pathological cases, which in a qualitative sense they deemed principally different from normal, healthy ones. On the other hand, the general validity of the Freudian approach to such pathological cases has not been fundamentally questioned: most humanist psychologists have accepted the notions of unconscious motivation and the pathogenesis of psychic disturbances in early youth (Allport 1961: 206-208; Bühler 1962: 95ff, 211-215; Goldstein 1940: 150ff; Maslow 1968: 5-7).

Although thus partly contradictory, partly complementary in a theoretical sense, in empirical practice the explanations of political behavior, offered by psychodynamic and humanistic researchers, turned out to be quite complementary. The research on authoritarian personalities provides a good case in point. Approaching from the psychodynamic side, in part II of *The authoritarian personality* Else Frenkel-Brunswick arrived at a rough typology of extremely high and low scoring individuals on overt ethnic prejudice on the basis of clinical interviews (Adorno et al. 1950: 291-486). While the highly prejudiced subjects show various dispositions which are also part of the more encompassing authoritarianism syndrome (such as

tendencies toward repression, externalization, conventionalism, power orientation, and rigidity in external adjustment), the low scorers come quite close to democratic personalities in Maslow's sense. They are aware of unacceptable impulses and weaknesses in themselves, instead of repressing such tendencies. Relations to significant others are based on genuine feelings of companionship, friendship and affection, and far less on conventional values and a yearning for power and dominance. The low scorers are emotionally and cognitively far more flexible and adjusted to environmental contingencies than the high scorers. Most significantly, however, the less prejudiced subjects display

a more closely knit integration within the individual and a more internalized and more intensive, though not conflict-free relation to others. The low scorer also tends to be oriented...toward real achievement, toward intellectual or aesthetic goals, and toward the realization of socially productive values. His greater capacity for intensive interpersonal relationships goes hand in hand with greater self-sufficiency. He struggles for the establishment of inner harmony and self-actualization...(Adorno et al. 1950: 475)

From the humanistic perspective, the authoritarian personality syndrome is conceptualized in terms of deficiency motivation. It is considered as a particular result of prolonged frustration of the safety needs, inducing feelings of obedience and submission, and the love and affection needs, bringing feelings of social prejudice, hostility and distrust, in the course of a person's life history (Maslow 1943, 1954: 88-91).

The research on authoritarian and democratic personalities thus shows complementary conceptions and results, according to which increasing political activity, interest and efficacy positively correlate with growing self-actualization. Below a certain degree of gratification of physiologically-induced needs, no significant political interest or actions may be expected. Persons whose self-realization is stultified by frustration of their safety and social needs tend to be more politically cynical, passive and prejudiced than the average voter, which tendency among a small number of voters may lead to authoritarian thinking and acting. People whose self-realization is relatively undisturbed by deficiencies in the physical, safety and social spheres are more apt to be politically involved and active and to adopt a relatively tolerant view of the democratic process and the participation of social and ethnic minority groups therein. At the same time, ascendance in the need hierarchy seems to correlate with an increasing voting preference for left-wing over right-wing parties, although the empirical picture is still incomplete in this matter.

Analogous to the previous discussion on static and dynamic field conceptions, it is concluded here that needs are not static phenomena, but are subject to distinct interpersonal differences as well as intrapersonal development. This conclusion comes closer to the humanistic than the psychodynamic perspective and is in its developmental aspect congenial to the general idea of a time-line in political research. It takes account of the empirical observation that in the course of their lives persons (in non-pathological conditions) grow and develop both biologically and psychologically, whereby the direction of self-actualization and fulfilment is different for each individual and whereby voting actions may be understood as a function of those strivings.

The developmental conception of needs is related to a dynamic field conception in a way, indicated in Goldstein's critique of Köhler's and Lewin's 'isolated' field concepts (Chapter 6). Goldstein argues that field forces cannot be defined solely in terms of the fields themselves, or even in terms of larger fields, embedding the

smaller one initially under consideration. In reality fields vary constantly according to varying situations, and since there is no logical limit to the introduction of field factors in relation to a given task or action, such variation would necessitate the continuous addition of new forces to single fields.

This argument may be extended to the early cognitive theories of Heider and Festinger. Tendencies towards balance and consonance are not autonomous, but depend upon artificial boundaries of the aspects taken under consideration. Experimentally constructed states of balance continuously may be upset by adding new factors, which, of course, in non-experimental situations always play a role. The occurrence of balanced configurations as 'good' Gestalten is only comprehensible in terms of the whole experiencing organism, and thus can only be understood in relation to the whole physiological and psychological state of the experiencing human. Therefore, the organism itself should be considered as a 'chief determiner of field forces' (Goldstein 1939: 390), and although supra-individual wholes may readily be recognized, it is for the purpose of psychological investigation satisfactory to consider the individual as a preliminary whole.

7.4 Convergences toward a general model of voting action

The partial convergences and interrelations, implicit in the previous conceptions of need and field, may be generalized to a more abstract level as follows. As a general principle, voting action is determined by a totality of factors, and it is this whole of elements, rather than each element in isolation, that should be subject of electoral research. There is a constant interaction between the various elements steering the voting decision, and the influence of one element can only be understood in its relation to the other elements. This idea of interconnectedness is aptly expressed in the Gestalt view of field, defined in Chapter 3 as 'the totality of coexisting facts which are conceived of as mutually interdependent'. Consequently, the vote may be conceived of as a field determined action. Since the field exists of the person and the environment as he sees it, it becomes crucial to uncover the person's subjective experience of both himself and his surroundings.

In this field determining voting action cognitive and motivational variables continuously interact. Elements must be perceived and cognized in order to be part of the field, but once they are in the field, these elements are evaluated as well, 'charged' with positive or negative energy. Thus the field, on the one hand, has a certain cognitive structure, depending upon the number of elements in the field which the voter cognizes (differentiation) and upon the number of connections he discerns between these elements (integration), whereby degrees of differentiation and integration tend to be related. As elements of the socio-political field one may consider party leaders and candidates, issue positions, party images, party performances in government or opposition, and elements of the person's social environment with significance for his voting choice (political actions and opinions of groups to which the voter belongs or identifies himself with).

On the other hand field elements exert forces on the person, depending upon their attracting or repelling qualities. Elements that are positively evaluated by the person exert a force on him to approach them, elements which are negatively evaluated make the person want to avoid them. The evaluation of field elements is expressed in attitudes, defined as specific action tendencies or action orientations toward the field elements. The consummatory move that terminates voting action

conforms to the resultant of the different action tendencies, or, in other words, conforms to the resultant force in the field.

The needs of the voter are related to field forces in two ways. First, they serve as directional component of field processes, whereby needs determine attitudes, which in their turn direct action. More precisely, needs represent generalized tendencies to approach or avoid certain types of goal objects, which are made cognitively concrete in attitudes, the action tendencies towards those field elements which constitute the subjective representation of (one of) the goal objects. Needs 'charge' objects outside the person with positive or negative 'energy', depending upon the consummatory value of the objects for satisfying the particular need involved. The consummatory movement of action reduces the need-tension in the person, leading to the reestablishment of a temporary equilibrium of forces in the field.

Second, needs demarcate the cognitive structure of the field: its differentiation, integration and the occurrence of conflict and consistency among its elements. Regarding the first two structural characteristics, those elements must be part of the field that are significant for need gratification, and hence for survival of the organism in the long run. Put somewhat differently, the whole of the person's subjective experience must enable him to handle reality in such ways that his endurance as a living entity is secured. This coping with reality as a field process not only implies a mirroring of external reality, but also a necessity to fulfill those needs, pertinent to the stage of personal development the person finds himself in the process of self-actualization.

With regard to conflict and consistency, the different factors which determine the ultimate vote are often in conflict with one another. A voter is lured to one party for its attractive program, to another party for its strong leader, while his religious ties may urge him to vote for still another party. Conflicting forces may lead to tensions inside the person, depending upon that person's need state and the resulting psychic tolerance of such conflict. The voter who experiences conflicting pressures needs to come to terms with them in order to arrive at a voting decision, or else he might end like the proverbial ass of Buridan, which, permanently unable to choose among two equally attractive haystacks, finally starved to death. In other words, the conflict-ridden voter needs to impose a certain degree of consistency upon his diverging cognitions, attitudes and intentions, in order to be able to act at all.

7.5 Convergences and strategies of explanation

Having identified major convergences in psychological theories of voting action, it remains an important task to relate these convergences to the causal and functional strategies of explanation, as outlined in Chapter 1 and mentioned throughout the book. This endeavor serves to sort out different ways in which convergences may be brought to (empirical) light and to assess the assets and liabilities of the two strategies in this respect.

A direct confrontation between the causal and functional strategies is visible in the debate between Robert Lane and Philip Converse on the nature of ideologies and belief systems. According to Lane (1973: 91, 102-103), Converse's survey-based analysis of belief systems independent of personalities, his emphasis on constraints and the use of unidimensional left-right or liberal-conservative continua presents a far too simple picture of ideologies:

[Converse's analysis] gives up...the complex intrapersonal considerations that help to explain the resolution of conflict in an individual. [It fails] to take into account [his] predispositions, his private 'decision rules', the personal foundations of a belief for his ongoing life strivings...[T]he healthy person has multiple values, and he finds them often in conflict; his health is revealed in his toleration of the conflict and the means he chooses to reconcile the conflict, not in the way he makes all policy recommendations serve a single value.

Ideology cannot be separated from personality, and can only be comprehended in terms of the internal and external functions it serves in the individual's psychic economy.

In his own clinical explorations of the personal ideologies of fifteen working and lowermiddle class men in Eastport, Connecticut, based on individual in-depth interviews, Lane discovered an absence of coherence in ideological reasoning. The Eastport working men show a tendency to 'morselize', i.e. to keep their cognitive conceptualizations of the external world narrow, isolated from contextual events and close to personal experience. Idea systems are not very differentiated and organized, due to insufficient information, emotional blockage, or remoteness from their central beliefs and values (Lane 1962: 346ff).

Despite their different strategies of researching belief systems, many political scientists have noted the similarity in conclusions of Lane and Converse on morselizing tendencies and mass ideological unsophistication, respectively (see, for example, Bennett 1981: 77ff; Converse 1975: 84-87; Kinder 1983: 399-400; Nie et al. 1976: 139ff). Lane, however, has emphasized the importance of political reasoning over mere constraint, and has maintained the functionalist position that ideological thinking and reasoning is inextricably tied to the psychic state of the reasoning person (Lane 1973: 98-105; for an identical approach to personal reasoning processes in matters of distributive justice see Hochschild 1981).

More in general, it has been difficult to ascertain the exact causal nexus between needs, perceptions and attitudes in the practice of electoral research. For example, although the Michigan and Columbia researchers included sets of personality variables (like the F-scale or projective questions on style issues of race and international relations) in their surveys, these variables did not have any significant direct effect on voting choice, in this case the differential preference for Democrats and Republicans. Furthermore, while both research groups did find moderately positive correlations between high F-scores (or related measures) and issue positions indicating some degree of hostility towards minorities and foreign-born persons, these issue positions in their turn discriminated very weakly between Republican and Democratic party voters (Berelson et al. 1954: 189-192; Campbell et al. 1960: 499-515).

Naturally, effects of such personality variables should be more pronounced in party systems hosting right-extremist parties, but, as noted in Chapter 5, surprisingly little research has been conducted on the causal relationship between different F-scores and voting choice. On the other hand, the relation between post-materialism, issue opinions and party vote has been empirically documented in greater detail, but here it remains open to theoretical debate whether Inglehart's approach may be considered a proper operationalization of Maslow's theory to the same degree that the Berkeley F-scale constitutes an appropriate operationalization of Freud's insights.

When compared to the causal strategy, the functional approach seems to offer promising additional insights into theoretical convergences. Perceptions, opinions and attitudes are regarded as functionally related to needs, whereby several schemes of internal and external functions are distinguished. Besides Lane's work, four other

instances of a functional approach may be cited here. First, from a number of studies on the nature of belief systems among healthy and psychiatric respondents, Milton Rokeach concluded that all beliefs, whether extremist or moderate, delusional or realistic, seem to serve two opposing functions, 'to understand the world insofar as possible, and to defend against it as far as necessary' (Rokeach 1960: 400; 1964).

Second, a clinical analysis by Smith, Bruner & White of the opinions of ten American men on Russia and international communism, based on depth-interviews and psychological tests, revealed three broad categories of functions. A first category is object appraisal, whereby incoming stimuli are scanned and evaluated in the light of a person's motives, goals, values and interests and with the help of that individual's existing stock of opinions and beliefs. Second, the functional category of social adjustment is distinguished, following which beliefs play a role in facilitating, disrupting or maintaining the person's relations to significant others and positive or negative reference groups. Finally, on the internal side the category of externalization (or ego defense) is recognized, according to which responses to external stimuli are colored by the individual's unresolved inner problems. External events are treated as symbolic substitutes for inner ones (Smith et al. 1956: 39-44; Smith 1969: 14ff, 69ff).

A third instance of the functional approach has centered on the functional consequences of deficit motivation (in Maslow's terms), i.e. the cognitive correlates of a psychic fixation on the lower needs. The work of Else Frenkel-Brunswik on the cognitive and perceptual aspects of authoritarianism is significant here, since it represents a rare attempt to interrelate systematically insights from Freudian psychoanalysis and Gestalt theory (Allport 1961: 269-274; Festinger 1957: 266-271; Levinson 1968a; Rokeach 1960: 16-17).

As a part of her investigations in the authoritarian personality project (Chapter 5), Frenkel-Brunswik inquired into the spill-over of psychological phenomena in the emotional sphere to the perceptual and cognitive spheres. To account for these spill-over effects, she developed the concept of 'intolerance of ambiguity' as an elaboration of the cognitive consequences of a weak Ego development. According to Frenkel-Brunswik, an Ego which must continuously divert energy to the repression of unwanted drive needs loses control and oversight over the external world. It tends to become rigid and defensive, placing 'a simple, firm, often stereotypical, cognitive structure [on reality, in which] there is no place for ambivalence or ambiguities' (Adorno et al. 1950: 480).

Put more specifically, highly prejudiced subjects show a tendency to perceive Gestalten as prematurely closed, isolated events, rigidly structured against possible disturbing external evidence. Field elements which naturally belong together are artificially separated and elements not belonging together are fused in processes of (unconscious) externalization, through which repressed sexual and aggressive tendencies are displaced onto political leaders, minority groups, foreign nations, etc. Gestalten of this isolated nature, however, are inherently unstable, i.e. susceptible to sudden reversals in figure-ground constellations. Such reversals are potentially anxiety-inducing events in the psychic make-up of the prejudiced person, and rigidity of thought and action, accomplished through avoidance of emotional and perceptual ambiguity and ambivalence, serves to ward off imminent catastrophic reactions. It is this, seemingly contradictory, combination of rigidity and chaos in the authoritarian personality which accounts for many of its distinct cognitive and sociopolitical features (Frenkel-Brunswik 1949: 132-134; 1952; recent discussions of the cognitive consequences of authoritarianism include Durrheim 1997; Feldman & Stenner 1997).

With the concept of intolerance of ambiguity a near-pathological state of cognitive fixation is characterized, which, as indicated in Chapter 6, has functional significance in lives lacking basic trust and safety. However, opinions and beliefs do not mainly serve ego-defensive functions, but also more positive functions like value expression and reality testing. As a fourth and final example of a functional strategy, Maslow and others have related these functions fruitfully to the need hierarchy, whereby increasing reality-seeking, search for meaning and tolerance of, probably even yearning for ambiguity all tend to correlate positively with ascendance in the need pyramid. Exploration of reality may be a function of the safety need or the cognitive need, but since the lower need is prepotent, such reality testing reveals itself most clearly in safe, non-anxious situations (Maslow 1968: 60ff; see Smith et al. 1956: 45-46 for largely identical conclusions). In his own clinical research on self-actualizing persons and peak-experiences among average people, Maslow (1968: 71ff) rejected the view, inherent in the New Look experiments and psychoanalysis, that cognition must be motivated by needs, fears and interests, organized around the ego of the experiencing person. At the highest stage of self-actualization, perception and cognition can be relatively ego-transcending, unmotivated, desireless and un-needing, leading to a more efficient, clear and comfortable relationship of the individual to his surrounding reality.

7.6 The behavioral persuasion revisited

The discussion of theoretical convergences and the different contributions of the causal and functional strategies of explanation gives rise to a number of concluding arguments and possible avenues for further research. In Chapter 1 it was sketched that, following the 'behavioral persuasion', electoral research in the past decades has been predominantly nomothetic in nature, seeking to establish causal explanations in the form of general laws of voting action. This endeavor has been judged by many observers as less successful. In their opinion, five decades of voting research has brought significant advances in data collection, measurement techniques and statistics, yet failed to establish a generally adopted theoretical framework, around which knowledge could have accumulated.

In order to address some of these concerns, this dissertation was written with the research purpose of describing, analyzing and uncovering convergences between different existing psychological theories of voting behavior at the individual level, both with regard to their structure and to various strategies of explanation. This search for convergences has led to a general model of voting action, in which a dynamic field conception has been combined with a developmental conception of needs. Regarding strategies, it appeared that the functional approach could provide important (empirical) insights into convergences, in addition to the dominant causal strategy.

In revisiting the behavioral persuasion, these findings lead to two major concluding arguments. First, it is argued here that, at this point in the development of electoral research, the functional strategy will constitute a useful and valuable addition to the causal strategy, currently dominant among voting analysts. In Chapter 1 it has already been observed that these two strategies cannot be sharply contrasted in electoral research, given the nature of voting actions, the data and the electoral situation. Furthermore, the relatively few instances of functional political research, cited in the previous section, offered significant advancements in theoretical development and empirical research that no behavioral political scientist should ignore.

Second, it is argued here that further progress in a theoretical sense may be gained

if such a functional analysis would be applied along the lines of humanistic psychology. In general voters may be supposed to be psychologically healthy people, who during the course of their lives strive for self-actualization and fulfilment. Field processes and voting actions may be fruitfully analyzed as a function of these strivings. Although the humanistic approach has sometimes tended to sacrifice scientific verification for immediate human relevance and significance (Child 1973; Valentine 1992: 182-184), it has lent itself quite well to empirical political research, as the different research efforts, mentioned in Chapter 6, attest.

The research preferences, implicit in these arguments, by no means exhaust the possible means of electoral inquiry, however. On the basis of these preferences and previously registered lacunas in existing voting research three broad avenues of future theoretical development and empirical research may be outlined, ranging from less to more incisive.

The first avenue should serve to redress an imbalance, resulting from the long-standing dominance of the Michigan model in causal voting research. Earlier it has been noted that, as a result of intellectual, organizational and institutional factors, Columbia's panel-based voting action studies quickly were overshadowed by Michigan's survey-based field approach. The latter's widely applied research design, based on two-wave national surveys with different questionnaires per wave, has the advantage that respondents may be interviewed about a wide and varied range of topics, which may result in a fairly accurate picture of the force field determining voting action. The design, however, is static; it is not very suited to detect shortterm change in voting preferences, because it neglects the process through which the voter arrives at his voting decision. Knowledge of this process seems to become more important, since much more than in earlier times voters in Western democracies tend to change their votes between elections and waver in their voting intentions during the election campaigns (Dalton 1988: 13ff; Maddens 1994: 19ff; Visser 1997b).

Reintroducing panel methodology in electoral research not only enables voting analysts to follow these shortterm fluctuations in voting choices more closely, it also permits a more comprehensive analysis of causes of such change. In particular it could be tested whether tendencies toward balance and consonance play a role in bringing about change, and to what extent social and campaign processes are influential in this respect (for differing views, compare Van der Brug 1996: 149ff, and Visser 1994d).

A second avenue of research should shed more light on the causal relationships between authoritarianism, need hierarchy and voting action than is afforded by existing investigations. In Chapter 5 it has been observed that, in spite of the massive amount of research using F-scales, the exact relationship between different F-scores and voting choice has never systematically been tested on national probability samples. Small groups of right-wing extremists in different countries have often received most research attention, while voting actions of moderately or lowly authoritarian voters were considered less important. Furthermore, given the theoretical convergences in authoritarian and democratic personality conceptions, these inquiries into F-scales and voting would gain significance if combined with measurements of Maslow's need pyramid. As a first approximation of the latter, Inglehart's postmaterialism index could be applied in combination with the F-scale, whereby statistical relationships between F-scores, materialism-postmaterialism and voting actions should be systematically researched on national survey samples.

In line with the second concluding argument above, the third avenue of further re-

search should be directed at a further elaboration of Maslow's need hierarchy for the purpose of political research, in two steps. First, the need pyramid should be related to electoral choice in a functional way, similar to the inquiries of Lane, Smith, Bruner & White, and others. Through intensive interviewing and psychological testing of (small groups of) respondents the development of needs in the course of a person's life may be related in a qualitative sense to developments in that person's voting action and in the determining field of socio-political forces. In particular it should be researched whether ascendance in the need hierarchy correlates positively with increasing 'tolerance of ambiguity', and thus with an increasing ability to cope with imbalance and dissonance among various field elements.

In the second step, the results of these functional inquiries could be used to develop a 'Maslow-scale', suited for mass-scale survey research in a causal vein. Such a scale should improve upon Inglehart's index by explicitly incorporating the developmental and multiple nature of the need pyramid and by taking account of earlier measurements of democratic and lowly authoritarian personalities. The construction of such a 'M-scale' could also profit from experiences in other areas of social science: in organizational psychology, for example, different work motivation questionnaires have been developed on the basis of Maslow's ideas (e.g., Luthans 1992: 333-335). In electoral research this 'M-scale' then could be used in panel and two-wave designs in order to establish empirical links between needs on the one hand and political cognitions, attitudes and voting action on the other, as well as links between needs, the occurrence of consonance and balance processes and their joint influence on shortterm change in voting intentions and choices.

The history of the 'behavioral persuasion' and the various possibilities of future research reveal that the avenues of electoral inquiry always have had and will have at least two lanes. In the end, a true understanding of voting action requires both nomothetic and idiographic knowledge, attained through both causal and functional strategies, applied to both electoral masses and single voters.

Dutch summary

De studie van kiesgedrag

De studie van het kiesgedrag is binnen de politicologie een populaire tak van wetenschapsbeoefening, welke de aandacht trekt van zulke diverse disciplines als de (politieke) sociologie, psychologie en economie. Deze multidisciplinaire aandacht heeft bijna logischerwijs geleid tot een grote theoretische en empirische versnippering van het verkiezingsonderzoek. Elke discipline brengt haar eigen wetenschappelijke 'Weltanschauung' mee en past deze toe op het gedrag van de kiezers. Hoewel een verscheidenheid aan benaderingen soms kan leiden tot een verfrissende nieuwe kijk op oude problemen, kan als belangrijk nadeel van een dergelijke diversiteit gelden dat zelden wordt voortgebouwd op reeds bestaand onderzoek en dat kennis aldus weinig accumuleert. De neiging bestaat telkens opnieuw het wiel uit te vinden, zij het steeds onder een andere benaming. In verschillende overzichten over veertig jaar electoraal onderzoek wordt daarom gepleit voor een grotere integratie van het gebied.

Deze dissertatie wil een bescheiden aanzet daartoe leveren met betrekking tot het psychologisch georiënteerde verkiezingsonderzoek. Het doel van dit boek is het beschrijven en ontleden van en (waar mogelijk) het zoeken van convergenties tussen vijf verschillende psychologische theorieën van stemgedrag, waarbij in het bijzonder aandacht wordt geschonken aan interveniërende variabelen, theoretische structuur en verklaringsstrategieën. Aan de hand van een beschrijving en analyse van achtereenvolgens de Columbia, Michigan en cognitieve scholen en de psychodynamische en humanistische benaderingen van kiesgedrag ontstaan de contouren van een handelingstheoretisch model van stemgedrag, welke als volgt kunnen worden geschetst.

Een handelingstheoretisch model van kiesgedrag

Centraal in een psychologisch georiënteerde benadering van stemgedrag staat het principe dat gedrag een functie is van de persoon en van de omgeving zoals die voor hem bestaat. Er is een continue wisselwerking tussen de innerlijke predisposities van de persoon en door hem waargenomen elementen uit zijn omgeving, waaruit een bepaald gedrag resulteert. Deze wisselwerking wordt tot uitdrukking gebracht in het begrip veld, gedefiniëerd als 'het geheel van gelijktijdig optredende gebeurtenissen, welke worden beschouwd als wederzijds afhankelijk'. Aangezien gedrag wordt bepaald door het geheel van veldfactoren (in plaats van door elke factor afzonderlijk), dient de verklaring van gedrag dan ook te beginnen met een onderzoek van dit geheel.

Het is verder van belang het ruime begrip gedrag nader te preciseren. De term kiesgedrag heeft betrekking op een zeer specifieke gedraging, namelijk het uitbrengen van een stem op de verkiezingsdag. Indachtig het psychologisch relevante onderscheid tussen gedrag en handeling, zal stemmen worden opgevat als een handeling of actie, gedefiniëerd als 'een als eenheid op te vatten reeks van gedragingen, gericht op het doel van het bepalen van een electorale voorkeur, welke eindigt met een afrondende kiesbeweging ten faveure van een politieke partij (of kandidaat)'. De combinatie van beide definities resulteert in een conceptie van stemmen als een veldgestuurde handeling.

Een goed begrip van veldgestuurde handelingen vereist dat de subjectieve beleving van de persoon van zichzelf en van zijn omgeving centraal komt te staan. Veld-elementen met de potentie handelingen te kunnen sturen spelen alleen een rol in zoverre de persoon zich van deze elementen bewust is. Een adequaat beeld van het veld vereist derhalve een nauwgezette beschrijving van de persoon's subjectieve waarnemingen, wensen en strevingen.

In een beschrijving van het veld kunnen cognitieve en motivationele aspecten wel onderscheiden, maar niet gescheiden worden. Aan de ene kant dienen elementen waargenomen en cognitief verwerkt te worden teneinde deel van het veld uit te

kunnen maken. Het veld heeft derhalve een cognitieve structuur, welke afhankelijk is van het aantal elementen dat de persoon herkent en opneemt (de differentiatie van het veld) en van het aantal verbindingen dat hij legt tussen deze elementen (de integratie van het veld), waarbij tussen mate van differentiatie en mate van integratie een nauw verband bestaat. Als elementen van het veld dat de stemhandeling stuurt kan men beschouwen politieke elementen (partijen, partijleiders en -kandidaten, opvattingen over strijdpunten, waargenomen 'issue' posities van partijen, optreden van partijen in regering of oppositie) en sociale elementen (politieke meningen en acties van groepen waarvan de persoon deel uitmaakt of waarmee hij zich identificeert). Omdat beide groepen van elementen op elkaar inwerken, kan worden gesproken van één sociaal-politiek veld dat de stemactie bepaalt.

Aan de andere kant worden elementen, gelijktijdig met hun opname in het veld, gewaardeerd, voorzien van een affectieve lading. Deze waardering wordt uitgedrukt in attitudes, gedefinieerd als handelingstendensen of handelingsoriëntaties. Elementen welke door de persoon positief worden beoordeeld oefenen een kracht op hem uit om deze te naderen; dergelijke elementen hebben als het ware een uitnodigend karakter. Elementen welke de persoon negatief beoordeelt oefenen daarentegen een afstotende werking op hem uit; hij zal deze trachten te vermijden. Attitudes op hun beurt vinden hun oorsprong in de behoeften van de persoon, welke, wellicht met uitzondering van sommige fysiologische behoeften, normaliter geen deel van het veld uitmaken. Deze behoeften ontwikkelen zich in de regel in een als pyramidaal op te vatten richting. De mens die gedurende de loop van zijn leven voldoende bevredigd raakt in zijn fysieke en sociale behoeften (als voeding, verzorging, veiligheid, liefde) kan zich richten op minder stoffelijke behoeften als kennis, esthetiek en zelf-ontplooiing. Een dergelijke ontwikkeling impliceert noodzakelijkerwijs een verschuiving in cognities en attitudes over tijd, en daarmee veranderingen in het sociaal-politieke veld.

De kern van het model van veldgestuurde handelingen nu is dat de uiteindelijke 'afrondende kiesbeweging' gestuurd wordt door de resultante van de verschillende handelingstendensen, of anders gezegd, door de resulterende kracht in het veld. De stemkeuze komt dus tot stand vanuit een veld waarin verschillende sociale en politieke elementen krachten uitoefenen op de kiezer, welke krachten deels convergent, deels divergent kunnen zijn.

Divergerende krachten kunnen echter spanningen in de kiezer teweegbrengen, welke als min of meer onplezierig zullen worden ervaren. Afhankelijk van zijn psychische tolerantie van deze conflicterende krachten zal de persoon streven naar een oplossing van de spanning; hij zal, met andere woorden, streven naar evenwicht in het sociaal-politieke veld. Een dergelijk streven is synoniem met tendensen naar cognitieve consonantie, balans of congruentie, en gaat ten laatste terug op de stelling dat velden tenderen naar een zo 'goed' mogelijke organisatie onder de gegeven omstandigheden.

Empirische toepassingen van het model

Stemgedrag kan worden onderzocht door middel van twee strategieën, welke in deze dissertatie als causaal en functioneel worden gekarakteriseerd. De binnen het verkiezingsonderzoek gangbare causale strategie is gericht op de verklaring van kiesgedrag, waarbij met behulp van grootschalige enquêtes gezocht wordt naar statistisch te bepalen wetmatigheden in dat gedrag. De functionele strategie is gericht op het begrijpen van kiesgedrag en onderzoekt daartoe op meer diepgaande

wijze het politieke gedrag en denken van enkele of kleine aantallen kiezers. Binnen de causale strategie is het hierboven geschetste model op twee manieren onderzocht, welke ruwweg kunnen worden getypeerd als statisch en dynamisch. In de statische toepassing, momenteel dominant binnen de causale aanpak, gaat het om het analyseren van de motiverende kracht van het sociaal-politieke veld op één bepaald ogenblik. Het doel van het onderzoek is hier de kracht vast te stellen van het geheel van de verschillende handelingsoriëntaties en zo te komen tot een verklaring (of voorspelling) van de resulterende stemhandeling.

Bij de dynamische toepassing staat het proces centraal waarin de kiezer tot de stemhandeling komt, waarbij het de vraag is of en in hoeverre het krachtenveld tendeert naar een toestand van evenwicht. Deze toepassing, gebaseerd op de panel-methodologie, is momenteel enigszins ondergesneeuwd geraakt in het causale verkiezingsonderzoek, maar kan interessante perspectieven bieden op de verklaring van korte termijnfluctuaties in stemgedrag en de mogelijke rol van evenwichtstendensen daarin.

In tegenstelling tot de causale strategie is de functionele aanpak slechts op bescheiden schaal toegepast binnen het electorale onderzoek. De beschikbare onderzoeksresultaten hebben echter belangrijke inzichten met betrekking tot het handelingstheoretische model van stemgedrag opgeleverd, met name inzichten in de invloed van de behoeften op cognities en attitudes en op de conflictdynamiek van veldprocessen. Dergelijke bevindingen rechtvaardigen de stelling dat een ruimere toepassing van de functionele strategie een belangrijke bijdrage kan leveren aan verdere theoretische convergentie op het terrein van het psychologisch georiënteerde verkiezingsonderzoek.

Dutch summary

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Biography

Max Visser (1963) obtained Dutch academic degrees in public administration and American studies from the University of Groningen and a Masters' degree in political science from the University of Kansas. From 1990-1996 he worked at the Department of Public Administration of the University of Twente as a research associate in the fields of political psychology, electoral behavior and public policy. In 1996 he switched to private business, currently holding the position of project manager at PAO-BB in Utrecht, a post-academic institute organizing programs, workshops and seminars for senior practitioners in the fields of public management and business administration. His articles, as far as referenced in this book, include the following:

- 1993a. Group identifications and voting behavior. The Dutch case. *Politics and the Individual* 3:57-73
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