



DISSERTATION

Titel der Dissertation

„A Part or Apart? Participatory In/equality within
Changing Political Action Repertoires“

Verfasser

Mag. phil. Florian Walter

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Doktor der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)

Wien, 2013

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 092 300

Dissertationsgebiet lt. Studienblatt:

Politikwissenschaft

Betreuerin / Betreuer:

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Sieglinde Rosenberger

Acknowledgments

Saying thank you is a thankless task. Any attempt to appreciate the efforts through which so many different people contributed in so many different ways – scientifically, emotionally, physically – to the completion of an opus that has taken years to become what it is now, necessarily remains selective and incomplete just like the work itself. Although, therefore, the challenge of drafting these acknowledgments appears unaccomplishable, so has the challenge of finishing this dissertation appeared to me for a very long time. And just like I decided to meet the latter, I will now try to rise to the former.

First of all, I would like to thank all the people who accompanied me at the University of Vienna through this seemingly endless process. Thank you Leila, Petra, Teresa, Aleksandra, Jakob and Iris for your willingness to share your office space with me; thanks also to all the other current and former members of the research group INEX – Alexandra, Anna, Astrid, Carla, Ilker, Jeremias, Judith, Julia, Kristina, Oliver, Philipp, Sarah and Ursula: I am grateful to have been given the chance to meet you as wonderful colleagues and, even more, to be able to consider you as friends.

Secondly, I also want to say thank you to my family, especially my parents and my sister plus husband and kids, as well as my friends, especially Boris, Konzi, Sebi and Vroni, for your continuous support and distraction in times of need. You know what you all mean to me.

Last not least, I want to express the greatest gratitude to my supervisors Sieglinde Rosenberger and Gilg Seeber. Thank you Gilg for being uncomplicated, prompt, and so nice and helpful with every concern I ever bothered you with. Sieglinde, I cannot thank you enough for your permanent professional support regarding not only my dissertation but also all the projects we worked on together. I learned a lot from your analytical and clear perspective on political and social processes and tried to absorb as much of it as possible during the past eight years (yes, it has been that long!). Thank you also for your humaneness, understanding and forbearance in difficult times, which contributed fundamentally to finally bringing this work to an end. I cannot say more but without your supervision, this dissertation would never have been written.

And, finally, to all those I probably forgot: thanks for being you, it is the only right thing to do.

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1 INTRODUCTION: PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY WITHIN CHANGING POLITICAL ACTION REPERTOIRES

During the past decades the term “political participation“ has undergone periodic stages of attention in public and scientific debates. Speaking in an unfamiliar choir of mutual consent, politicians, activists, journalists, and academics unanimously highlight the importance of political participation – broadly defined as being involved in political processes of opinion formation and decision-making – as an indispensable precondition of democratic governance. Scholars discussing the major democratic functions of political participation repeatedly confirm that, on the one hand, participation contributes to the legitimization of collectively binding decisions made by political elites (Verba 2003, Niesen 2007) and strengthens the social cohesion within the political community (Putnam 1994, 2000). In this case we speak of the systemic functions of participation. On the other hand, political participation also ensures the protection of individual interests (Dahl 1998, Goodin 2004, Teorell 2006) and provides opportunities to personal self-determination

(Pateman 1970, Barber 1984, Warren 1992) on behalf of the participants. To the latter we refer to as individual functions of participation.

In recent years, political analysts have regularly stated a decline in political activism: Traditional political institutions and actors are confronted with a massive decline of trust and support on behalf of citizens (Norris 1999, Pharr/Putnam 2000, Dogan 2005, Torcal/Montero 2006, Hay 2007), turnout levels have been sinking in nearly all elections in Western Europe (Siaroff/Merer 2003, International IDEA 2004, de Nève 2008, Hadjar/Beck 2010) and both political parties and trade unions grapple with an immense loss of active and passive members (Visser 2006, Scarrow 2007, Scarrow/Gezgor 2010, Whiteley 2011, van Biezen et al. 2012). A simplified focus on these forms of participation truly suggests an overall decline of political participation. As a more detailed investigation reveals, this is however not the whole story of the development. Although we can undoubtedly observe a decline in some forms of participation such as voting, party activism and campaign work all over Western Europe, political involvement in other areas – especially around the nascent new social movements (e.g. the feminist, civil rights, environmental, peace, anti-nuclear or, more recently, the occupy movement) – has even increased. In Europe, activities like signing petitions, taking part in demonstrations or buying/boycotting certain products for political, social or environmental reasons show a general trend of increase in involvement that is documented in the respective literature (Inglehart 1998, Inglehart/Catterberg 2003, Norris 2002, 2007, Dalton 2008). Given the fact that, at the outset of the 21st century, much more people than just a radical minority has experience in using these forms of participation, they can nowadays rightly be considered to be part of the general repertoire of political activism (Stolle/Hooghe 2011).

Against the background of the transformations outlined above two different problems regain scholarly attention. Firstly, questions about the desirable form and aspired amount of political involvement arise. To what extent shall the population participate in democratic processes? In which areas (topics and policies) shall the population be included in the preparation, coordination and implementation of decisions? And how shall this inclusion be effected in order to achieve the best possible results? These important questions are discussed within a broad strand of empirical and, first and foremost, theoretical literature which was recently dominated by the debate about deliberative forms of democratic

participation¹ (e.g. Habermas 1994, Bohman/Rehg 1997, Elster 1998, Fishkin 1991, 2009, Dryzek 2000, 2010, Gastil/Levine 2005). Secondly, and this is where the dissertation at hand jumps in, also the problem of political equality and its connection to democratic participation comes to the fore in the light of the sketched developments: How is the normative claim that all citizens should be granted equal opportunities to participate in democratic opinion formation and decision-making processes affected by the empirical changes of political activism? Or, turned into a more empirical question: **How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires?**

To answer this question, I arranged my study in four parts. Part I (chapter 2) comprises definitions of the main concept *participatory in/equality*, a compact review of literature, notes on research design, outline of guiding questions and a short outlook on results. It lays the groundwork for the examinations I want to carry out within this study and acts as a foundation for a refined discussion of the specified problem. Part II of this thesis introduces the contextual background and theoretical framework that form the basis of the further empirical analysis. Within this part II, chapter 3 is dedicated to a more detailed definition of the term “political participation” that, in contrast to most of the established definitions, allows us to capture the multidimensionality and thereby also the dynamics of the concept, i.e. the indicated changes of political action repertoires during the past three decades in a more detailed and comprehensive way. However, to avoid the pitfall of “producing” these developments as artifacts of my research instead of just “discovering” them as a result of scientific observation (a risk referred to by Gabriel/Völkl 2005: 558), I differentiate between constant elements of activism, that form the *conceptual* basis of a general definition of political participation, and variable elements of activism, which allow me to *empirically* illustrate the developments in political action repertoires along various dimensions of change.

Thereafter, the following two chapters are devoted to the theoretical aspects of participatory in/equality. As already indicated above, chapter 4.1 discusses the normative

¹ The first known use of the term “deliberative democracy” traces back to an article by Joseph M. Bessette published in 1980.

preconditions of the topic and outlines under which theoretical perspective inequality in political participation must be considered a problem while participatory equality is to be considered a desirable goal. Here, I not only discuss three different normative approaches that provide adequate answers to these questions and explain why one of these approaches – procedural pluralism –, which highlights the protection of interests as the major function of political participation, is best suited as a basis for the analysis of participatory in/equality. Additionally, this discussion also answers the question *what* should be equal in political participation in order to be justly labeled democratic.

Based on these remarks, chapter 4.2 tries to establish a conceptual bridge between the mentioned normative debate and the analytical considerations to follow in chapter 4.3. In chapter 4.2, I therefore discuss in more detail the social roots of interests and establish the major social group – a group that is constituted on the basis of its members' socialization experiences which in turn determine their common interests through their shared habitus – as the central unit of analysis. This argument enables me to state that the concept of participatory in/equality can only be assessed empirically when political participation is conceptually linked to social stratification.

Chapter 4.3 brings in different theories of stratification, introducing the most important and most recent approaches. In particular, three different approaches are presented: new class models like the ones presented by Erik O. Wright and John Goldthorpe, which claim the continuing relevance of vertical aspects of stratification such as occupation, income and education; intersectional models that enhance vertical class models by horizontal dimensions of stratification like gender, generation and ethnicity; and socio-cultural models stating that socio-economic and socio-demographic factors have lost their relevance for individual life chances and that nowadays social groups are rather constituted along socio-cultural factors like cultural preferences and value orientations. At the end of this chapter, a framework for the empirical analysis of participatory in/equality based on these three different contemporary approaches to social stratification as well as several presuppositions structuring the interpretations about the current state of participatory in/equality are presented.

Part III of this study comprises two chapters. Chapter 5 presents the main operationalizations of the variables used to investigate participatory in/equality, that is:

political participation and social stratification. It shows, which measures of the ESS 2006 can be used to grasp the various forms of political activism and how these forms can be summarized into the two distinct types of participation, institutionalized and non-institutionalized, empirically. Furthermore, it reveals how the theoretical stratification models discussed in chapter 4.3 evolve when applied to the survey data. It appears that class, intersectional as well as milieu models all yield utilizable results that can be further examined in the following. Chapter 6 eventually covers the main empirical analyses of in/equality in political activism with reference to group membership in various classes, intersectional groups or milieus. Here the results of the contingency table analyses and analyses of variance are presented and discussed in very general terms before they are interpreted by linking them to the presuppositions introduced in the concluding statements of part II, chapter 4.

In part IV, I briefly summarize the conceptual, theoretical and empirical findings of this study before I discuss the broader implications that come with the transmission and reproduction of social inequalities in(to) the arena of political decision-making, namely participation and representation. In conclusion, I provide an outlook to a research agenda by formulating questions that should be tackled in future projects and studies within the sphere of political sociology in general and inequality-sensitive participation and representation research in particular.

PART I
SCRUTINIZING IN/EQUALITY IN
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

2 CONTEXTUALIZING THE PROBLEM: CONCEPT, STATE OF THE ART, RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter seeks to spell out how exactly the dissertation at hand purposes to further elaborate on the tasks associated with the research question: How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires? In the following section 2.1, I therefore devote some space to the discussion of the components of the main concept of this study: participatory in/equality. As a start, this discussion comprises some preliminary definitions of both its constitutive terms, political participation and in/equality. Over and above, however, also the most fundamental meaning of the concept itself, especially its relationship to legal preconditions and factual results of participatory in/equality (as I use the term), has to be put straight. In section 2.2, I then introduce the standard of knowledge concerning the subject of participatory in/equality. In doing so, I on the one hand intend to highlight what can be regarded as established findings about the topic of this study. Additionally, I also want to lay bare some serious gaps in the academic exploration of participatory in/equality from which I will deduce some more detailed research questions as well as some preliminary answers to these questions and hints about how to get to these answers (research design) in section 2.3.

2.1 WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY? A PRELIMINARY DEFINITION

In the process of defining the concept participatory in/equality I must fulfill two consecutive tasks. First, I have to clarify the meaning of the terms participation and in/equality and distinguish it from related concepts. Etymological and semantic aspects are of paramount relevance in this first terminological approximation. Secondly, I have to understand the specific content of equality when it is related to the phenomenon of political participation. At this stage of the dissertation, mainly the delimitation of the concept of participatory in/equality as a procedural as opposed to a legal or substantial phenomenon is essential.

2.1.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The term participation is etymologically composed of the Latin phrases *pars* (= part) and *capere* (= catch; take, have) – “to participate” can therefore be translated as “to take part” or, alternatively, “to have a part” in something. Hence, political participation² could be vaguely described as “taking and having a part in politics”. But as convenient as this specification might be in terms of brevity and compactness, it cannot fulfill the criteria of a scientifically applicable concept.

A strategy to deal with these shortcomings in the conceptual work is to consider established definitions stemming from seminal empirical studies of political participation. In an early analysis Lester Milbrath defines political participation as „behavior which affects or is intended to affect the decisional outcomes of government“ (Milbrath 1965: 1). A decade later Verba and Nie (1972: 2) describe political participation as “those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take” – a definition which Verba and his colleagues also adhere to in their later works (Verba et al. 1978, Verba et al. 1995).

² In the research on “political participation“ this becomes especially obvious with reference to concepts like “civic engagement”, “civic participation” or “civic voluntarism”, which are often used synonymously but have entirely different meanings as regards content. As Campbell (2006: 29f.) notes, civic in contrast to political participation does not refer to influencing politics and highlights the public spiritedness of the activity in contrast to the aspect of protecting one’s interests. I will illuminate the meaning of political participation in contrast to this civic approach in more detail in chapter 2.

Similarly, Max Kaase describes as political participation „all forms of activities of citizens that they engage in alone or in cooperation with others aiming to influence political decisions“ (Kaase 2003: 495; translation FW). One can clearly identify the strength of these established conceptual classifications stemming from empirical analyses: they are short, clear and appropriate to operationalization. Nevertheless, these empirically inspired definitions also suffer from a severe but rather basic weakness: they are insensitive for political and societal changes. This is a severe point, since any conceptual framework must also account for the dynamics which affect the content and applicability of a definition.

Thus, more recent studies dedicated more endeavor to the development of a more comprehensive definition of political participation. Pippa Norris opens her definition up for activities outside of the realm of government by describing political participation as “any dimensions of activity that are either designed directly to influence government agencies and the policy process, or indirectly to impact civil society, or which attempt to alter systematic patterns of social behavior“ (Norris 2001: 16). Similarly, Laura Morales speaks of political participation as “the acts by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and the actions they take, including new issues on the agenda, and/or changing values and preferences directly linked to political decision-making“ (Morales 2009: 24). Although these newer definitions are more open in terms of their sensitivity to social change, they nevertheless do not cover all relevant aspects of the concept satisfactorily. Who are the “private citizens” mentioned in these definitions? What distinguishes “activity” from other dispositions like attitudes, opinions, or engagement? And how can we summarize the different areas of political action listed in these definitions conceptually? These questions, together with the aspect of the already suggested changes in the repertoires of political activism, will be tackled in section 3.1. For the time being, the definition to be taken along from these first preliminary considerations perceives political participation as individuals taking part at some stage of the collective opinion formation and decision-making process.

2.1.2 IN/EQUALITY

The term equality semantically refers to a set of related entities (objects, ideas, persons, groups, etc.) that are indistinguishable in terms of a certain feature. By contrast, the indistinguishability of a set of related entities in terms of *every* feature would be labeled ‘identity’ whereas the *marginal* distinguishability in a certain feature would be called ‘similarity’ (Menne 1962, Krebs 2000). So while equality clearly means more than objects, ideas, persons, groups, etc. just being similar, the conception of the term in separation from identity inherently requires at least some difference between the things compared. Moreover, equality is also a normative and therefore contested concept (Dworkin 2000). Although it is possible to apply the term as an analytical tool to describe, explain and understand phenomena in a comparative manner (descriptive use), e.g. person A and person B are of the same height, its use commonly expresses a more or less desirable societal goal (prescriptive use), e.g. the equal right to own property (Westen 1990: 33). In fact, and hardly recognized by the vast amount of literature on the topic, equality most frequently becomes a topic in social and political science studies when the normative assumption of the desirability of equality is violated. Thus these studies actually do not only deal with equality but with inequality – a term that is usually used to underline the normative desirability of the equal status. Using the given examples one would not speak of inequality in height when one person is taller than the other, because there is no reason in terms of social desirability to prefer being tall to being short. On the other hand the right to own property historically was a highly contested good (and still is for some groups in many countries of the world), so if there were some people who possess this right while others do not, it would be justified to speak of inequality in this case (Gosepath 2004). The use of the term inequality in empirical studies is furthermore justified by the fact, that equality can be imagined as the fictitious endpoint in the struggle for overcoming perceived inequalities which cannot be reached in real life, while inequality describes a continuum which may be realized in varying degrees and is therefore – in contrast to equality – empirically accessible (Blackburn 2008).

In this study, I intend to express awareness of the ambiguous denotation of the concept in both theoretical and empirical terms by intentionally writing about participatory in/equality,

that is: using a slash to both detach the prefix from and simultaneously connect it to the actual main expression. If, however, the term is used to refer to a certain branch of research that uses one of these two variants almost without exception (e.g. the literature on social inequality), I decided to adopt the diction of the respective research tradition for the sake of clarity.

2.1.3 PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY

If we now turn to the task of combining the two terms to the concept of participatory in/equality, this initially implies a discussion of the “feature” in terms of which a certain entity is indistinguishable. In political philosophy such and similar discussions are summarized under the term „equality of what?“ debate as they seek to clarify what exactly should be equal in order for the theorist to be able to speak of equality in participation with certain justification.³

For scholars concerned with the question about what should (or should not) be equal in political participation in order to be able to speak of participatory in/equality, it seems reasonable to delve into any further considerations starting from the broader concept of political equality. As a normative concept, political equality is at the heart of virtually every theoretical conception of democracy and is therefore perfectly suited as a point of departure for conceptual considerations. Participatory equality, nevertheless, is more limited in scope and covers just some aspects of political equality. The concept of political equality can hence be broken down into three distinct analytical components (see figure 1):

- 1) We speak of *legal* political equality when all members of the people are entitled to become politically active. The feature of equality in this case are the rights that permit its bearers to, for example participate in local, regional or national elections.
- 2) *Procedural* political equality, on the other hand, stands for actual equal activism in political processes. Here, the feature of equality are the actions of individuals that they

³ Admittedly, the „equality of what?“-debate in political philosophy (e.g. Sen 1980, Dworkin 1981, 2000, Cohen 1993) focuses more on matters of distributive justice than on equality of political participation in a narrower sense. Its underlying puzzle, however, provides a useful framework for further considerations about what should be equal when it comes to the topic of political activism. Therefore the reference to this debate appears to be appropriate for all intents and purposes.

perform in order to take part in collective opinion formation and decision-making processes.

- 3) Finally, *substantial* political equality denominates the fact that the concerns of all people are considered in final decisions. In this instance, the feature of equality is the relative impact of a person's participation in political decision-making, we can also speak of the person's equal voice (Verba et al. 1995, Schlozman et al. 2012).

Figure 1: The three dimensions of political equality

POLITICAL EQUALITY		
LEGAL	PROCEDURAL	SUBSTANTIAL
EQUAL RIGHTS	EQUAL ACTIONS	EQUAL VOICE

Source: own illustration following Verba 2003

Although they might exist independent of each other, these three components are evidently interrelated. Surely, a person can possess political rights but for whatever reason not participate in elections or other forms of involvement and might therefore not be able to exert direct influence over decisions. Similarly, a person can participate without possessing any formal rights – for example as part of a resistance movement in totalitarian regimes or out of a condition of lacking political rights in democratic systems (Lister et al. 2007: 42). Finally, a person's interests can be considered without either having the rights to participate or having actually participated in the process of opinion formation and decision-making. However, for some obvious reasons it appears more plausible to treat the three components of political equality as cumulative. In this sense, equal participation rights are deemed to be an unconditional precondition of full political equality. In the cumulative approach, the role of actions is to make sure that in the long run rights lead to voice.

Similar to the study of, for example, Russell J. Dalton, Susan E. Scarrow and Bruce E. Cain (2004)⁴, I tend to build the analyses of my dissertation on the cumulative approach.

⁴ Dalton, Scarrow and Cain (2004) use a slightly different terminology when they speak of the legal dimension as 'equality of access' and the procedural dimension as 'equality of usage'. Their terminology indicates that they build on a cumulative idea of political equality.

Although people can also become politically active without possessing the relevant rights, the will to gain basic participation rights is the incentive and goal of most of these forms of activism. This would not be the case if political rights, actions and voice could actually be treated as independent aspects of political equality in real life. Moreover, while equal voice might be possible without participation, e.g. by a benevolent government or dictator (this is basically how many leaders of non-democratic regimes argue), it would be plainly pointless to study political participation if I considered it irrelevant for equal voice.

So what do these commitments imply for the study of participatory in/equality in general and for the further arguments of this thesis in particular? The fact that equality of rights is a basic prerequisite of equal political participation has already been mentioned. Without the availability of at least basal participation rights (like the franchise) the question of the transformation of these rights into actions or voice does not even arise. However the idea that legal equality alone cannot lead to participatory equality is nowadays widely accepted within the academic discourse. As Nancy Fraser put it in an interview about her concept of ‘participatory parity’⁵:

“Today ... it is no longer thought sufficient merely to accord everyone equal formal rights. Increasingly, rather, people believe that equality should be manifest ... in real social interactions. ... Participatory parity, then, is the emergent historical ‘truth’ of the ideal of equal freedom.” (Hrubec 2004: 887)

The main objection to a rights-based conception of participatory in/equality is its insensitivity to the factual exercise of these rights. Furthermore, although the aspect of legal entitlement may be relevant when it comes to electoral turnout (usually as a question of formal citizenship status), it does not play a significant role as regards most of the other forms of participation that are scrutinized in studies of political activism like party and campaign work, contacting politicians, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and the like. Conversely, an exclusive focus on the component of equal voice neglects that not all articulated interests can be considered in decisions, for example when diametrically contradictory interests exist with regard to a problem that must be solved.

⁵ Although Fraser uses the term “parity” (2001: 25) instead of “equality“ of participation, it seems obvious that with her concept she refers to the egalitarian idea and thereby to equality as such in her works (Armstrong 2003).

In this dissertation, I therefore decided to focus my analyses on equal actions instead of rights or voice. This also means that I do not discuss in detail the preconditions of legal entitlement to participate in politics or what democratic theorists label “the problem of inclusion“ (Dahl 1998), „the problem of constituting the demos“ (Goodin 2007) or the “boundary problem” (Whelan 1983, Song 2012). What I do, however, is that I discuss how the debate about the “feature” of equal participation (equal action) relates to the discussion about its equal “entity” or what is also part of the “equality of whom?” debate (Young 2001) in political philosophy in chapter 3.

2.2 A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.2.1 THE SEMINAL WORKS: AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM?

Participatory in/equality has already been subject to discussion for several decades in American political science. It is mainly rooted in the early works of Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet (1944) about voting behavior conducted in the United States after the end of World War II, who already analyzed differences in individual turnout related to the socio-economic status of voters and non-voters. Although the findings in their influential book *The People's Choice* merely confirmed a moderate effect of gender and no direct effect of socio-economic factors on turnout, especially education and income proved to be robust indirect predictors of turnout via their impact on political interest and knowledge, which in turn affected participation in elections significantly (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944). In the first half of the 1960s scholars like Seymour M. Lipset (1960), Lester Milbrath (1965), and Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) further promoted political participation research, not least by expanding the scope of possible forms of involvement to activities linked to the institutional system of elections and political parties. Henceforward not only the cast of a ballot, but also the engagement in an election campaign, attendance of political meetings, and voluntary party work were treated as forms of political participation and scrutinized accordingly. The findings of these works basically reproduced the results of earlier studies, namely that status is closely related to political engagement and activity. As

Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner put it in their 1964 book *Human Behavior*: "...[T]he higher a person's socioeconomic and educational level – especially the latter – the higher his [or her] political interest, participation, and voting turnout." (Berelson/Steiner 1964: 423)

The first books and articles that did not just devote attention to socio-economic characteristics as explanatory factors of political activity, but explicitly focused on the relationship between social structure and political participation were published in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The research team around Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (Verba 1967, Verba/Nie 1972) did not exclusively aim at explaining why some people got involved in political decision-making while others remained outside of these processes, they also considered the consequences of skewed participation on the output-side of the political system. The question they were devoted to was: will the needs and preferences of the inactive be considered by policy-makers? Besides an empirical, behaviorist intention their research was therefore, at least implicitly, driven by a normative reference to the democratic virtue of political equality. Since the early 1970s many studies on the topic of participatory in/equality were released in the US and also the UK. Especially the 1990s can be considered the heyday of research on participatory in/equality in the Anglo-American area, generating seminal works such as Verba, Schlozman and Brady's (VSB) *Voice and Equality* published in 1995⁶ (and consecutive publications based on VSB's Civic Participation Study, e.g. Brady et al. 1995, Schlozman et al. 1999, 2005, Verba et al. 2004), Rosenstone and Hansen's 1993 *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* or the 1992 study *Political participation and democracy in Britain* by Parry, Moyser and Day. These studies cover different forms of activism such as voting, attending political rallies, working for and making donations to political parties or candidates, or contacting politicians or government officials and are based on a rather broad understanding of in/equality accounting for factors like education, income, occupation, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and "social involvement" (Rosenstone/Hansen 1993: 80). Other publications focus on inequalities within specific forms of participation and/or the influence of particular

⁶ Recently, Verba, Schlozman and Brady have published a study very similar to *Voice and Equality* titled *The Unheavenly Chorus. Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy* (Schlozman et al. 2012). This book mainly summarizes the research the authors conducted between the mid-1990s and the late 2000s and provides some newer data on participatory in/equality in the US.

in/equality factors. A cursory review of the literature on the topic of participatory in/equality published throughout the past three decades in the US reveals a clear bias towards turnout as the most frequently considered activity as well as indicators such as income, education, and occupation as the most commonly used inequality factors (e.g. Wolfinger/Rosenstone 1980, Leighley/Nagler 1992, 2006, Shields/Goidel 1997, Freeman 2004). Altogether, a considerable amount of knowledge about participatory in/equality in the United States exists, at least as far as class inequalities in turnout are concerned.

But what about Europe? Is there any research about participatory in/equality on this side of the Atlantic Ocean? While the approaches and methods of electoral research had spilled over to the European continent soon after the seminal US studies of the 1940s, the debate about participatory in/equality seems to be largely restricted to the United States down to the present day (Gallego 2007, 2010, Stolle/Hooghe 2011). In the first comparative study on the topic – a book about political participation in Austria, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the United States, and Yugoslavia published by Sidney Verba, Norman Nie, and Jae-On Kim under the title *Participation and Political Equality. A seven-nation comparison* in 1978 – the authors thus already noticed that the awareness for the problem as well as the research focus had developed differently in Europe than it had in the US. To validate their judgment Verba, Nie and Kim argue that, due to its traditionally high turnout rates as well as the integrative and balancing power of its pluralist party and welfare systems, far more egalitarian patterns of political participation developed in Europe than in the United States.

This argument is worth being further elaborated. First of all, the relationship between the level and the representativeness of electoral participation has to be clarified. From empirical studies we know that countries with low levels of abstention also exhibit low levels of turnout inequality, while high abstention rates also imply a highly skewed electorate (Lijphart 1997, Lutz/Marsh 2007). Since, with the exception of Switzerland, turnout levels have been comparatively high in (Western) Europe by the time research about participatory in/equality developed, the topic of electoral in/equality simply did not occur on the agenda of European political science. Additional to the level issue, also the alleged integrative and balancing power of European party and welfare systems demands some attention. Kaase (1981: 369) refers to Verba, Nie and Kim when he points out the

relevance of institutional systems with high cohesive power for the level and in/equality of electoral participation. In his view the potential positive effect of strong institutional systems (parties and unions) on the representativeness of turnout can take two distinct forms. First, they might reduce the participation levels of unaffiliated citizens below the levels one would expect due to their endowment with individual resources; secondly, they might increase the participation rates of those affiliated above the levels one would expect due to their endowment with individual resources. No matter which mechanism proves to be more appropriate, one can assume that both effects lead to a higher degree of participatory equality. Since in a weak institutional system like the US the positive effects of party affiliation and organizational involvement were much less pronounced than in the comparatively strong systems in the “old world”, it seems clear that the topic of participatory in/equality was discovered earlier on the North American continent. In a similar manner, Jens Alber and Albert Kohler (2010) argue that the characteristics of the European Social Model⁷ affect the political systems’ potential for inclusion by (a) granting not only equal political but also equal social rights to its citizens and by (b) setting up a “second distributive sphere” besides the market that decides on its members’ opportunities in life and thus makes all, and not just the richest citizens, subject to relevant political decisions. The integrative power of the European welfare state therefore also plays a role in not having made participatory in/equality a topic in political participation research in Europe for a long period of time.

The empirical analyses following Verba, Nie and Kim’s seminal study from 1978 basically confirmed the humble impact of inequality factors on political participation in Europe. Richard Topf (1995: 48), analyzing data from the *Beliefs in Government* study conducted in the early 1990s, found that “in Western Europe ... there is no significant correlation between educational attainment and electoral turnout”. Using ISSP data from 1996, Pippa Norris (2002) further extends Topf’s findings for voting to party membership, which is also not connected to socioeconomic status. Given the fact that a significant effect of in/equality factors on political participation could not be found in European studies at

⁷ Note that some authors argue that there is no such thing as a uniform European social model (Esping-Andersen 1990, Lessenich 1994, Dräger 2007).

least until the mid-1990s, it seems reasonable that scholars speak of unequal participation as an almost unique American phenomenon (Abramson 1995: 918).

Several developments of the past 15 years, however, suggest some reconsideration of the findings concerning participatory in/equality in Europe presented so far. As outlined above, turnout rates have dropped, trust in political institutions has declined and the number of active members in parties and unions has decreased severely during the past decades. Beyond that, European welfare states have undergone extensive transformations by turning away from a mode of regulation based on unconditional benefits towards an “enabling” or “activating” workfare regime (Jessop 1993, Pierson 1994, 2001, Esping-Andersen 1996, Korpi/Palme 2003, Gilbert 2004). This has led to a burgeoning of some first empirical investigations of unequal turnout (Blais et al. 2004, Kittilson 2005, Alber/Kohler 2010) and an alleged “academization” of party activism (Biehl 2006, Micus/Walter 2007, critically: Klein 2006) in Europe. Nevertheless, the European state of research on what I call participatory in/equality in this thesis, that is: the number of studies dealing with the active participation of individuals in different types and forms of political opinion formation and decision-making processes from a perspective of un/equal access to these processes, is still very limited. In the following literature review I want to shortly present the most recent attempts to grasp this topic.

2.2.2 STUDYING PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY IN EUROPE: GAPS IN EXISTING RESEARCH

The goal of this literature review is (a) to identify the burning issues in the study of participatory in/equality and (b) to specify the rather broad research question mentioned in the first part of this introduction (How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires?). To this end, I focus on the most recent literature on participatory in/equality in Europe, which is mainly comprised of journal articles and contributions to anthologies. The presentation of these works is not ordered chronologically but with regard to content.

In an article published in 2010 entitled *Class Inequalities in Political Participation and the ‘Death of Class’ Debate* Miguel Caínzos and Carmen Voces make use of an adapted Eriksson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (EGP) class scheme in order to scrutinize

occupational inequalities in political participation in Europe. Drawing on data from the first wave of the European Social Survey (ESS 2002) for 20 countries the authors begin their remarks by criticizing previous studies for their exclusive focus on electoral forms of participation and therefore include a wide range of political activities such as voting, attending demonstrations, signing petitions, joining boycotts and participation in “conventional” activities (contacting politicians, working for a political party, working for another kind of civic association) in their analyses. As Caínzos and Voces’ study is not based on precise hypotheses, their article contains only implicit assumptions that guide their research. One of these assumptions refers to the so called ‘Death of Class’-Debate which indicates that inequality of political participation should decline given the ongoing “destratification” (Pakulski 2005) or “individualization” (Beck 1992) of society. A different way of reasoning opens up two further assumptions. Although inequality in participation generally declines, a certain level of stratification remains. The remaining participatory inequalities could either be similar for all activities or take different forms for traditional and emerging forms of activity. Contrary to the first assumption, the findings presented in the article reveal a significant effect of class in all observed countries and for all forms of participation (Caínzos/Voces 2010: 407). Additionally, protest activities like demonstrations, petitions, and boycotts are found to be no less, but even more unequal than traditional forms of participation like voting and “conventional” activities. More specifically, so called “socio-cultural professionals” – i.e. people with high cultural but low economic capital⁸ – are significantly overrepresented in protest activities, while “other professionals and managers” with higher economic and lower cultural capital show a tendency towards conventional activism. Clearly the virtue of Caínzos and Voces’ article lies in the connection of literature on political participation and social inequality as well as their inclusion of different forms of activism beyond conventional participation. However, they neither consider stratification factors besides class in their analysis nor do they make use of longitudinal data to account for their dynamic assumptions.

From a slightly more comprehensive perspective, Aina Gallego explores data for 24 countries from the ESS 2004 with regard to the explanatory effects of social stratification

⁸ For the definition of the term „capital“ cf. Bourdieu or below chapter 3.3.2.1.

factors on political activity in her 2007 article *Unequal Political Participation in Europe*. Gallego accounts for the influences of different dimensions or, as the author herself calls it, “sources” (Gallego 2007: 10) of inequality – gender, age, social class, education, income, ethnicity, working status – on four particular activities: voting, party work, demonstrations, and boycotts. Her findings reveal negligible effects of gender and ethnicity (measured by minority status and citizenship), while age, education and class are relevant analytical factors for most activities. Generally, the results indicate that social disadvantages play a more significant role for the explanation of electoral and conventional forms of participation than for protest and consumerism. Although Gallego’s article unambiguously increases existing knowledge about participatory in/equality by examining both traditional and emerging forms of activism in their relation to various stratification factors in Europe using multivariate statistical methods, her analyses still reveal a significant weakness: instead of simply trying to explain political participation with some randomly selected factors like gender, age, education and the like, she could have used the opportunity to base her considerations on a more theoretically informed model of in/equality. Her already interesting contribution to the state of the art could have benefitted particularly from this strategy.

In a quite similar way, Michael Smith deals with the same topic in his 2009 article *The Inequality of Participation: Re-examining the Role of Social Stratification and Post-Communism on Political Participation in Europe*. Also drawing on ESS 2004 data for 23 countries (all but France) the author accounts for the role of education, occupation, and gender in explaining participation in different activities like voting, contacting, party work, other organizational work, wearing or displaying campaign badges or stickers, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and boycotting products. Two assumptions guide Smith’s approach to the data: First, he believes that new forms of participation reduce political inequalities that are known to exist in traditional activities; secondly, he hypothesizes that participatory inequality should be higher in post-communist than in the rest of Europe because lower status citizens in the East are more likely to feel distant to the political system than in the West. The author finds out that the emergence of new forms of activism at least does not decrease participatory inequalities in general and that social stratification factors exert stronger impact on participation in the East than in the West.

While Smith adds another dimension to the analysis of participatory in/equality by accounting for regional (macro) effects, his results shows deficits similar to Gallego's when it comes to the lack of a theoretical foundation of the used in/equality factors.

Also Sofie Marien, Marc Hooghe, and Ellen Quintelier (2010) scrutinize the stratification of political activity with a special focus on what they label “non-institutionalized” forms of participation in an article titled *Inequalities in Non-institutionalized Forms of Political Participation: A Multi-level Analysis of 25 countries*. Using data from the 2004 International Social Survey Program (ISSP 2004) for 25 countries they, pretty much like Smith, ask whether new forms of participation can compensate the predominance of privileged groups in electoral activities or whether, to the contrary, existing inequalities are even intensified by new forms. The results presented in Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier's conclusion are ambiguous: while non-institutionalized forms of action seem to be able to counterbalance inequalities related to gender and age, they even boost inequalities related to class, especially as far as education is concerned. Again, the general lack of a theoretical model has to be considered the major limitation of this article.

Much like Gallego, Smith and Marien et al., Jan Teorell, Paul Sum and Mette Tobiasen analyze participatory in/equality in their 2007 article *Participation and political equality. An assessment of large-scale democracy*. Using a dataset from the Citizen, Involvement, Democracy (CID) study directed by Jan van Deth, they investigate the effect of gender, age, education, and locality on five forms of participation (voting, party activity, contacting, protesting, consumer participation). The authors base their analyses on a normative framework differentiating between a consequentialist (or outcome-oriented) and a procedural interpretation of political equality. The consequentialist interpretation demands an examination of differences in people's preferences (attitudes) and needs (related to social characteristics), as these should enter the political process equally. On the other hand, the procedural interpretation scrutinizes whether the political process is sensitive to endowments (resources like income, human and social capital and internal efficacy) or ambitions (motivations like political interest, satisfaction with democracy, frequency of political discussions, media exposure, and partisanship). The authors find that (1) attitudes have only moderate impact on participation; (2) social characteristics, especially education, do influence a person's propensity to become active with the

exemption of voting; (3) resources and motivations also both have an effect on political participation, especially those of women and persons with a low level of formal education; (4) higher levels of participation correspond with lower participatory inequality, because both seem to be causally correlated with economic and democratic stability measured by GDP and age of democracy respectively. In total, Teorell, Sum, and Tobiasen present convincing results of an original study designed exclusively for the purposes of their article, a unique feature in the state of research of European literature on participatory in/equality. Moreover the fact that both normative and analytical theories are considered in the article at hand lets it stand out among similar contributions. Nonetheless, also some problems have to be mentioned: the empirical analyses partly seem overly complicated in relation to the purposes of the argument and the operationalizations are at least questionable (why is income an “endowment”, but education a “social characteristic”?).

The to my knowledge only substantial effort to contribute to the contemporary debate on participatory in/equality by using longitudinal data has been made by Dietlind Stolle and Marc Hooghe in a recent article titled *Shifting Inequalities. Patterns of exclusion and inclusion in emerging forms of political participation*. The question whether the “presumed rise in emerging forms of participation lead[s] to more political inequality” (Stolle and Hooghe 2011: 8) is posed by the authors with reference to gender, age, and education as stratification factors as well as two conventional (party work, contacting) and three unconventional (petitions, boycotts, demonstrations) forms of activity. Datasets used are the Political Action Survey of 1974 (PAS 1974), the ESS 2002, and the Dutch Election Study 1971-1998. The findings of Stolle and Hooghe prove that gender as a stratification factor loses much of its explanatory power for participation over time and is even reversed for newer forms of participation while the effects of education remain constant for different activities over time. Although new forms of activism still provide opportunities for young people to become active when compared to party work or contacting, they nevertheless become increasingly dominated by the middle age group of 30 to 60 year olds. Stolle and Hooghe’s article has to be credited for providing the only longitudinal study of participatory in/equality in the literature so far. However, also here the authors refrain from any effort to put the concept of participatory in/equality on a sound theoretical basis which, in turn, has an impact on the quality of their findings.

What does this review tell us about the state of research, particularly with regard to the most prevalent shortcomings in the scholarly literature about participatory in/equality? And where are the research gaps that the dissertation at hand intends to fill? Until recently, the literature about participatory in/equality has clearly been dominated by US studies of turnout inequality focusing mainly on stratification factors related to social class, especially education and income. Only in the past few years, several articles have breached the dominance of American literature on the alleged “class bias in turnout” and discovered not only new forms of political participation, but also different dimensions of social stratification. However, still two obvious shortcomings of the existing state of research stand out: First, although some of the most recent contributions like the ones by Teorell et al. (2007), Gallego (2007), Marien et al. (2010) or Stolle and Hooghe (2011) account for a greater number of political acts in their analyses (besides traditional acts like voting, contacting and active party or union membership also demonstrations, petitions and boycotts are considered), still a bulk of recent works about un/equal participation focuses on traditional activities in general and voting in particular (e.g. Anderson/Beramendi 2008, Solt 2008, Nevitte et al. 2009, Alber/Kohler 2010, Gallego 2008, 2010, Seeber/Steinbrecher 2011). This fact embodies not only a narrow conception of what is considered as part of politics – i.e. as “political” in a more system-related sense – in these publications. Moreover, it also inhibits a more dynamic perspective on the phenomenon that accounts for the changes in political action repertoires described at the outset of this introduction.

Secondly, and this is probably the crucial shortcoming of the available body of literature, also the theoretical basis for the selection of those characteristics through which in/equality in political participation shall be made measureable is always weak and mostly completely unreflected. As the above literature review shows, existing studies usually test how accurately factors like income and education – on rare occasions also gender, age and other factors are considered – can explain an individual’s participation in political opinion formation and decision-making processes, instead of trying to connect the theoretical concept of in/equality to the world of participation and, in doing so, to understand the complex normative and analytical foundations of the concept of participatory in/equality in democratic and social theory. As a consequence of the mere intention to find the best

statistical model, that is: the model comprising the largest effect sizes and/or coefficients of determination, to explain political participation instead of explicitly dealing with *in/equality* in political participation in the first place, these models are commonly, if at all, rooted in arbitrary and often diffuse concepts of democratic participation and social stratification (Weischer 2011: 378).

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND SOME OUTLOOK ON RESULTS

This dissertation wants to fill the two research gaps resulting from (a) the lack of consideration of the changing nature of political participation and (b) the missing theoretical foundation of the concept of participatory in/equality. It deals with these weak spots in the state of research by examining the normative and analytical approaches to the topic comprehensively and making them accessible for empirical inquiry. I develop concepts, theoretical frameworks and operationalizations and then test the applicability of my findings by conducting an analysis of participatory in/equality aimed at answering the outlined empirical research question: How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires?

Given the above examination of gaps in existing research, I will now break down this guiding question into some more refined research tasks and anticipate some summarized results. Specifically, this study is guided by three of such tasks – one being conceptual, one theoretical and the third empirical in nature. In order to deal with the *conceptual* task, I must examine in detail the already suggested changes in political activism and try to categorize different types of participation based on the results of these analyses. In that part of the thesis it is crucial to draw conclusions about the developments of individual involvement in democratic opinion formation and decision-making processes or, put differently to find out *which kind of changes can be observed in the field of political participation*. As regards this conceptual question, my analyses will reveal that there are constant and variable elements of political participation. Constant elements constitute the

invariant aspects of participation that are indispensable for any form of activity to be classified as political. Three elements of political participation are constant:

- Every form of political action needs a *protagonist* who is an individual, not an abstract group or organization. Also, participation has to be inclusive, that is, the number of participants must not be formally restricted from the outset.
- Political participation implies some form of *activity*, attitudes and intentions to act do not count as participation. Furthermore, political participation must be the result of a conscious will to act (intentionality) and has to relate to other persons or organizations (transitivity).
- The *political* in participation refers to the context of conflictual power relations, in which the activity takes place (if conflict and power are absent, the activity is not political). Additionally, participatory acts need to affect more than just single individuals (broader social concern).

Contrary to these constant aspects, the variable elements of participation change over time along the dimensions target, frequency, regularity, source, style, structure and content. As my analyses reveal, traditional, institutionalized forms of action that are oriented towards the nation-state, bounded by institutional rules, geared to permanent and long-time engagement, enacted top-down, organized collectively and hierarchically, and focused on issues of distribution are in decline. Newer, non-institutionalized forms of action that are oriented towards both state and non-state actors at various levels of governance, institutionally unrestricted, allow for spontaneous, short term, and proactive engagement, are either unorganized or occur within loose networks, and also consider lifestyle and identity issues, on the other hand, seem to enjoy growing attendance during the last couple of years. Both types as well as specific forms of participation (e.g. voting, contacting, petitions, and boycotts) are considered in the empirical analyses of this study.

The *theoretical* contribution of this thesis covers two aspects. First, I want to understand *why participatory in/equality should be considered problematic/necessary for democratic decision-making*. The intention to answer this question implies the accurate use of democratic theory in order to outline the normative aspects of the problem: being able to

determine whether and why unequal participation might be a problem is a task that can be solved exclusively by normative reasoning, not by empirical investigation. The theoretical considerations show that, out of the three pivotal approaches in contemporary democratic theory, only proceduralist pluralism (e.g. Dahl 1989, 1998), which regards equal participation as representativeness of interests, fulfils the necessary preconditions of a normative justification of participatory equality: in contrast to democratic elitism, which limits the concept of participation mainly to periodically casting a ballot, proceduralist pluralism is generally open to different forms of political activities that take place in the context of interest politics; other than participationism, which demands permanent participation of all single individuals, proceduralist pluralism accounts for the individual right to non-participation that legitimizes the dropping out of single individuals for, e.g. motivational or time constraints, without haphazardly treating it as inequality. For pluralists, participatory equality is necessary because democracy (as equal consideration of interests) can only be realized if persons/groups introduce their interests to the political system themselves.

The second theoretical question covers the objective to find out *how participatory in/equality can be assessed adequately in empirical studies*. To answer this question, I have to draw on the normative findings of the first part and find a way to translate them into analytical categories. From the normative perspective of proceduralist pluralism, the definition of interests plays a crucial role for any further considerations about the empirical assessment of participatory in/equality. This is the point at which soci(ologic)al theory comes into play. Based on the works of the leading scholars in the field (e.g. Schmitter 1981, Swedberg 2005), I define interests as individual (as opposed to a concept of general will/public interest) and conscious (as opposed to needs), yet not articulate (as opposed to concerns or preferences) dispositions that guide human action and are mediated by society. As regards these latter two aspects, I refine my thoughts by drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus (of which interests are to be considered the intellectual and "quasi-conscious" dimension) in order to theoretically explain (a) how interests as "structuring structure" organize human activity by constraining the space of likely courses of action, and (b) how interests as "structured structure" are formed by lived experiences that are again mainly determined by a person's position within social structure (her belonging to a

specific social group). Emanating from this idea, I finally present the three main contemporary approaches to the analysis of social stratification that form the basis of the empirical analyses in the third major part of this study: new class models highlighting the persistent relevance of vertical stratification along the lines of occupation (and education); intersectional models stressing the societal importance of non-vertical parameters like gender, generation and ethnicity additional to class; and socio-cultural models emphasizing value orientations as the contemporarily most relevant aspects of societal structuring.

As a consequence of these theoretical considerations I examine, in the third part of this study, the political activism of various classes, intersectional groups and milieus in order to find out more about the current state of participatory in/equality in Europe. Apart from the necessary conceptual and theoretical groundwork, I thus conduct some *empirical* analyses and investigate participatory in/equality in different types and forms of activism in order to find out *whether – and if so, which kind of – participatory in/equality exists in these different types and forms*. Thereby not only differences between the types and forms shall be illuminated but also a certain dynamic of participatory in/equality, which results from the changes in political action repertoires, will be demonstrated.

Methodologically, I build on a quantitative non-experimental design based on cross-sectional data. The decision to use quantitative data is rooted in the consideration that I aim to make comparisons between social groups and draw conclusions from my findings that not only apply to the persons interviewed but can moreover be generalized for European societies at large. One crucial effect of trying to gather findings that are representative for a broader population is that I have to rely on data that has already been collected earlier for purposes different than the one of my own study. This use of existing datasets (so called secondary data) comes with specific advantages as well as some disadvantages that have to be considered in the forefront of any study. One advantage lies in the low costs of using existing datasets (no questionnaire design, pre-tests, or fieldwork). The fact that the basic questionnaire underlying the study has not been generated by the researcher (with regard to her own research question), however, also leads to a major disadvantage of secondary analyses: in her analyses the researcher has to make do with the data resulting from the respective survey she uses as she does not have an impact on the questions and items that

are included in the questionnaire. Secondary analyses therefore also mean to make compromises between economic efficiency and scientific accuracy. This must be regarded in the empirical investigations as well as the interpretation of its results.

Although I want to capture not only the degree and form of participatory in/equality but to a certain extent also its development over time, I decided to draw on cross-sectional instead of longitudinal data for a simple reason: there are almost no international datasets available for various countries and more than one point in time. One of the few examples is the European Values Study (EVS) that has been conducted in many countries in 1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008. However, variables measuring both political participation and social stratification have been collected arbitrarily in the EVS and most of them have not been included in the questionnaires of all survey years. I therefore decided to add the dynamic aspect to my study by distinguishing between declining, institutionalized and emerging, non-institutionalized forms of participation in a cross-sectional survey and chose the European Social Survey (ESS) as the most convenient and sophisticated option. According to the survey program's main website, the ESS can be described as "an academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns of its diverse populations" (<http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org>; 2.8.2012). In addition to general standard questions (substantial and socio-demographic items), that are being asked identically in every round within a so called core module for the purpose of longitudinal comparability, each round also contains two so called rotating modules, i.e. bundles of up to 50 questions and items, through which a special focus of interest is set. The empirical analyses of this study are based on the European Social Survey of the year 2006. Although in the year 2002 the ESS contained a rotating module on "Citizenship, Involvement, and Democracy" which comprised eleven different forms of participation (as opposed to only eight in 2006), I made the decision to use the more up-to-date dataset. More specifically, data from the year 2006 were chosen because (a) it was the most recent available data at the time I started my dissertation and (b) it is until now the last round that includes data for Austria which, as my home country, I wanted to consider in my analyses. The ESS 2006 is the third round of the survey, fieldwork for the third round has been conducted between August 2006 and November 2007. In sum, 43,000 people representative for the populations of 25 countries

have been interviewed in the ESS 2006, in this study 38,561 cases from 21 countries are considered.⁹ Table 1 shows both the raw and weighted number of respondents included in the empirical analyses of chapter 5 below. All data as well as survey documentation and fieldwork documents can be (and were) downloaded from the ESS data website provided by Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) (<http://ess.nsd.uib.no/ess/round3>).

Table 1: Number of respondents per country (raw and weighted^a data)

	Number of respondents (raw data)	Number of respondents (weighted data)
Austria	2,405	695
Belgium	1,798	872
Bulgaria	1,400	667
Cyprus	995	63
Denmark	1,505	441
Estonia	1,517	114
Finland	1,896	435
France	1,986	4,982
Germany	2,916	7,079
Hungary	1,518	852
Ireland	1,800	335
Netherlands	1,889	1,335
Norway	1,750	373
Poland	1,721	3,197
Portugal	2,222	893
Slovakia	1,766	449
Slovenia	1,476	172
Spain	1,876	3,740
Sweden	1,927	749
Switzerland	1,804	627
United Kingdom	2,394	4,963
TOTAL	38,561	33,032

^a Weight applied is a combined measure of population size weight and design weight

Similar to data selection, the choice of adequate techniques to analyze the data is a crucial step in research design. This choice is influenced by two preconditions: one regards research interest and is, accordingly, related to the formulation of the research question; the

⁹ The integrated dataset provided on the ESS website does not include data from Latvia and Romania. Additionally, data from the Russian Federation and the Ukraine were removed because of poor data quality.

other regards theoretical considerations and is related to the use of data – especially when it comes to the variables measuring social stratification. As far as the first precondition is concerned, I first need to mention that the primary purpose of this thesis is not – as it is common in many studies about participation – to find the best possible explanatory model of political activism (in terms of maximizing the proportion of the variation in the outcome variable that is explained by the predictor variables) and in this course, virtually as some kind of side effect, make conclusions about in/equality in participation. Instead, the purpose of this thesis is to *critically examine the relationship between social inequality and political participation both on theoretical and empirical grounds* with the goal of being able to better assess the societal outcomes of the influence the former exerts on the latter. In these terms, also the explanation of participatory in/equality, be it on the micro-level or on the macro-level, is not among the primary research goals here. This dissertation rather resets the state of research and goes back to square one, i.e. to the questions, why unequal participation in politics might be a problem and how in/equality in political participation can be measured with respect to the normative rationale that has been developed in the first part of this thesis. This definition of research objectives obviously also affects the choice of methods. If not explanation but comprehension is the goal, in-depth description instead of strict causal analysis is the path to get there. This means that in this thesis I decided not to employ an approach in which the values of a dependent (or outcome) variable should be modeled as a combination of the values of one or more independent (or predictor) variables. This would be the strategy used by scholars who are mainly interested in predicting future developments based on present day data. Instead, the design of this study is comparative rather than predictive: it contrasts categories in terms of a special attribute and describes what happens at the moment instead of giving hints about what is going to happen in the future.

This idea is also inscribed in the second precondition that affects the choice of techniques employed in this thesis. It refers to the way participatory in/equality has been conceptualized theoretically. As has been said, I consider participatory in/equality a normative problem because the concept implies that the some interests are introduced to the political system improperly while others are voiced disproportionately loud. Interests themselves are socially determined and develop their main differentiations at the level of

major groups in stratified societies. The measures I use for capturing social stratification make these groups empirically comprehensible and are, statistically spoken, categorical variables. This observation has an impact on the choice of methods because certain techniques demand higher level of measurement for independent variables than others. Instead of linear regression analysis, which requires continuous measures on part of both predictor and outcome variables, I therefore decided to make use of techniques such as contingency table analysis (CTA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the purposes of this dissertation. Both techniques have in common that they only demand categorical predictor variables and that they are suited for detecting differences in activism between groups. The foundations of both CTA and ANOVA are well described in the respective literature (e.g. Iversen/Norpoth 1987, Field 2005, Backhaus et al. 2006, Agresti 2007, Tabachnik/Fidell 2007, Bortz/Schuster 2010). Therefore I abstain from making further general comments on these methods here and explain specific procedures and measures when they are applied in the empirical calculations in chapter 6.

The results of this study reveal that inequality plays a role in political activism regardless of which model of stratification is used as the basis of the empirical analyses. In particular, especially institutionalized forms of activism like voting, contacting, party and other organizational work seem to be affected by a person's group membership, if – and this is an important condition and constriction – class or intersectional models are used as the basis of societal stratification. To the contrary, if a socio-cultural model to stratification is chosen, non-institutionalized forms of activism like wearing campaign badges or stickers, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts exhibit a higher degree of social (i.e. participatory) inequality.

If scrutinized in more detail, we find that, when it comes to *class models*, the upper classes (the bourgeoisie or service class) are more active than the middle classes and the middle classes (intermediate classes and petty bourgeoisie) are more involved than the lower classes (working class) as far as institutionalized activism is concerned. However, this strict tripartite class formation, which was labeled “class polarization with middle-class buffer” by Erik O. Wright (2000: 228), does not hold for non-institutionalized forms of participation. Here, the upper and middle classes converge, i.e. they do not differ in terms

of activity levels any more, while the lower classes still (or even more) lag behind. The middle class buffer disappears and the “class polarization” develops into a statistically less pronounced but socially even more disjunctive “pure ideological polarization” (ibid.).

Intersectional models help us refine the findings of class models by enhancing them with variables measuring group membership in terms of gender, generation and ethnicity/immigrant origin. Using an intersectional approach, we find that the higher activity levels of the middle classes in non-institutionalized forms of participation, that lead to a merger with the upper classes and the emergence of a “pure ideological polarization” in the newer type of activism, are mainly caused by the higher level of involvement of young people (under 30), especially young women. Furthermore, the intersectional analyses show that immigrants are much less involved in political activism than natives. This is caused by the low participation rates of young and middle-aged immigrants (under 60), especially young and middle-aged immigrant men.

Milieu models are not suited to enhance the findings of class and intersectional models further. Rather, they introduce new dimensions of stratification to the analysis, revealing that social group membership is defined not only in terms of socio-economic resources and socio-demographic characteristics but also along socio-cultural orientations. Especially when it comes to non-institutionalized activism, universalist and benevolent value orientations – as to be found among the milieus of progressive egalitarians and modest do-gooders – appear to positively affect political participation levels and illustrate participatory in/equality if these groups are compared to other milieus like the more traditional, security-oriented vintage conservatives or the achievement-oriented power-hungry egoists.

After the scientific context of this study has been clarified, I will now turn to the general conditions and trends that form the basis of my further theoretical and empirical research. What are we talking about, when we scrutinize political participation? And how has our understanding of it changed in recent decades? These questions will be answered in the following chapter.

PART II

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3 A NEW ENGAGEMENT?

CHANGES IN POLITICAL ACTION REPERTOIRES

The purpose of this chapter is to straighten out the basis of this study: the changing nature of political action repertoires. Describing and classifying the changes in political action repertoires is important because it allows me to argue that (a) in any further analysis of participatory in/equality various forms of participation must be considered and that (b) there is some form of dynamic already inherent in the cross-sectional examination of these various forms of participation. However, a description and classification of the changes in political action repertoires should build on a definition of political participation that allows to actually see if there are changes or not, that means that already the very basic definition of political participation must be sensitive to variation. The first chapter therefore asks and answers the following questions: What is political participation? What are the constant & variable elements of political participation? In which areas/dimensions do changes take place? What kind of changes take place (diversification)? How can the different forms political participation be classified?

The challenge of this section is to create a definition of political participation and a taxonomy of its constituents that is both open and selective. As I have already mentioned, a

too narrow concept would exclude important aspects of political action and run the risk of neglecting recent societal developments. A premature commitment to established definitions of political participation is unwise, because it means a “legitimization of the status quo” (Trinkle 1997: 47; own translation) and thereby an exclusion of the potentially new. This is especially important because a too narrow conception of political participation is most likely to also lead us to conclusions about its developments that are plainly wrong. Nevertheless a conceptualization must maintain its analytical precision and explanatory value. In contrast to some approaches in social sciences, I therefore do not consider every form of social activity as political. To find a way to consider both arguments in a working definition suitable for the analysis of changes in this area is the major task of contemporary studies of political participation (Hay 2007: 88).

In order to meet the presented requirements the first section of this chapter is devoted to the conceptual problem of what political participation is. This first section therefore provides an analytically appropriate definition of the concept of political participation that is open to changes but similarly avoids to degenerate to a “theory of everything” (Van Deth 2001). Nevertheless this definition does not intend to cover all conceptual variations of involvement in detail but provides a more general account of indispensable preconditions for classification – I also speak of the *constant elements* of political participation. If an activity does not meet these preconditions it cannot be treated as political participation at all. In contrast, the *variable elements* of participation which are outlined in a second section, illustrate a classification of different forms of participation. This classification assigns the different forms of participation to a broader and more reduced scheme of two types of activity which I will refer to as institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation. Section three of this chapter finally describes the developments concerning the repertoires of political action during the past three decades after the “participatory revolution” (Barnes et al. 1979). It treats the specific changes of participation rates in Europe within different forms of involvement in detail and tests whether these forms and changes empirically fit into the theoretical classification scheme elaborated before. The resulting conclusions act as a basis for the following discussion of the implications these changes in political participation have for theoretical considerations about participatory in/equality.

3.1 WHAT IS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION? CONSTANT ELEMENTS

In the introduction of this thesis I have already introduced some established definitions of political participation and criticized them for their insensitivity to change. These definitions offer less a conceptual basis for a flexible description of what can be regarded as political participation than rather a historical snapshot of a very limited and specific notion of involvement. Thus a certain amount of openness is necessary to describe developments without hastily shrugging them off as simple participation deficits (in terms of departing from a norm randomly established at a particular point in time). Within this first section of chapter two I therefore seek to consider if there are constant elements of involvement in politics that have to be fulfilled by an act, independent of time and space, in order to be referred to as political activism. I believe that it is possible to depict these constant elements referring to three dimensions that have already been implicitly contained in the traditional definitions outlined above but nonetheless conceptualized too restrictively in these accounts. These dimensions are (1) the protagonists of participation, (2) participation as a form of social action, and (3) participation and politics. In order to find out more about these basic dimensions of participation this section addresses the questions ‘Who participates?’, ‘How does one participate?’, and ‘When is participation considered political?’.

3.1.1 THE PROTAGONISTS OF PARTICIPATION

Most studies on political activity highlight that participatory acts require to be carried out by persons. *Personhood* in these terms does not stand for individualized actions detached from other persons. Certainly political acts can be carried out collectively and in fact often, if not mostly, they are. Rather the term personhood points at a general *inclusiveness* of participation as such. Accordingly, this study considers only those activities as participation which are, as a matter of principle, open to all people – in the terminology of political science we speak of *non-elites* as opposed to members of the political class or elite (Teorell

et al. 2007: 336).¹⁰ *Inclusive personhood* thus comprises such different activities like voting, public protest or political violence in its definition of the agents of participation. By contrast, so called stakeholder or representative participation, as it is exercised in processes of participatory governance (i.e. elite-level negotiation processes involving interest or lobbying groups at different levels of policy-making), is not part of this definition because it does not meet the criterion of inclusiveness. Processes of stakeholder participation do not aim for overall involvement but request efficient representation and reconciliation of diverging interests, effective problem solving strategies, and cheap expertise. Consequently, also people holding one of the limited political offices are not included in the definition used in this study because they are usually professional politicians and receive financial reimbursement for their engagement.¹¹ Providing a definition of political participation at the end of this section, I therefore use the term “individual” to depict the agent of political participation under the premise of inclusive personhood.

3.1.2 PARTICIPATION AS SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Apart from its need for a protagonist, the term political participation also implies at least some form of activity. In this sense both the mere will to become politically active as well as political opinions and attitudes must be left out of the analysis of political participation because they lack every feature of activity. While demonstration attendance is thus a proper indicator of participation, the mere readiness to take to the streets for an important concern does not qualify as political activity. The same applies for political interest, party affiliation, internal or external efficacy and information about politics (Verba et al. 1995).

So far so good. But how does following political broadcasts and news coverage fit into this scheme? Are they to be included in a concept of political participation? Do private discussions with friends or relatives about political issues qualify as political activity? To

¹⁰ In the relevant literature the term *mass participation* is familiar (Barnes et al. 1979). I try to avoid this term due to the negative connotation of the word “mass” (especially in its German translation) and substitute it with the more positive but maybe also less catchy concept of individual inclusiveness.

¹¹ The omission of non-inclusive forms of professional political activity is well-founded given the problem guiding this study. If we would analyze in/equality within forms of participation that are exclusive and foresee participation in an *a priori* limited range, important results would already be founded in the design of the study. This can be avoided by using the concept of inclusive personhood.

deal with this problem we refer to the sociological differentiation between behavior and action. While Max Weber (1978) subsumes every way of ‘doing’ under the term behavior, he only calls such behavior action that has been enhanced with a certain subjective meaning by the agent. Building on this idea social action means a “behavior shaped by how other people will interpret or respond to that behavior” (Johnson 2000: 158). Concepts of participation thus highlight two aspects: First, political action requires *intentionality* (Warren 1999: 210). “Thoughtless action” (like everyday racism or environmental harm; Segerberg 2005) does not qualify as political participation, so intentionality helps distinguish action from behavior. Additionally, political participation requires *transitivity* (Warren 1999: 211), i.e. it must be directed towards a third party (be it a person, group of people, organization, institution, or even “the general public”) and aims to have some kind of effect on its perceptions and actions. More specifically, this means that – independent of the participant’s intention – an activity qualifies as participation if it is *designed* (i.e. it includes the possibility) to influence the decisions resulting from the participatory act (Sauer 1994). In these terms political participation still has an output (effect on the perceptions and actions of others), but the orientation towards this output is not necessarily part of the motivation (endogenous) but is to be thought of in reference to the design of the activity (exogenous).

If we come back to the initial questions of this section, we can record that following the news coverage in the media is excluded from this analysis because it does not meet the criterion of transitivity. On the other hand political discussions with friends or relatives clearly are directed towards other people. They even comprise the possibility to produce outcomes by having an impact on actions carried out by the targets (friends/relatives) of the activity (political discussions). So why would I still not consider them a form of political participation? The answer to this question will be given in the following section.

3.1.3 PARTICIPATION AND THE POLITICAL

In the beginning of this chapter we have generally defined political participation as “taking and having a part in politics”. But what do we mean by ‘politics’, or maybe more precisely, the ‘political’ as opposed to the seemingly ‘non-political’? This is in fact one of the most

controversial and therefore most important debates in the field of political participation and demands some broader attention.

In its quest for answers this section focuses on the context and scope of political activities. I argue that it is these two features that are appropriate for a general qualification of different activities as political because they represent relatively fixed and in the long run stable preconditions, while other aspects of political acts might change over time¹². Concerning the feature I named *context*, Mark Warren (1999) puts forth the attributes *power* and *conflict*, which in his opinion define the political context adequately although every one of them separately cannot be equated with politics. Warren notes that some scholars equate power relations with institutional state authority thereby neglecting that a society also comprises other forms (besides authority: domination, imposition, and acquiescence) and arenas (besides the state: markets, corporations, churches, and the family) of power (Warren 1999: 212ff.). Others like Michel Foucault conceive politics as coextensive with social relations, thus not only condoning a loss of analytical precision but also ignoring that some seemingly highly politicized social power relations are characterized by even the absence of politics, understood as an open debate about possible alternatives to any present social constellation (see also Lamla 2005, Hay 2007).¹³ Nevertheless it is obvious that power, understood as the opportunity to allocate collectively binding patterns of action, must be a central aspect of any conception of politics.

Alongside the necessity of a differentiated reflection of the concept of power these remarks underline the conflictual quality of the political. But *conflict* is also just a necessary but not a sufficient condition of politics. Conflict is part of society and thereby of any social relationship. As political we regard a conflict if “individuals can avoid the conflict only at the cost of being subject to a resolution forced upon them by others“ (Warren 1999: 221). Figure 2 helps to make clear the interrelation between power and conflict regarding the conceptualization of the political and interpret it specifically in terms of the process aspect of political participation. It shows the absence of power relations in

¹² These aspects are thus treated in the following chapter 3.2 about the *variable elements* in political participation.

¹³ If politics is furthermore considered just as a conflict about powerful positions, a solution to this conflict can only be imagined as either a stalemate resulting in some strategic compromise or the prevailing of one party against another based on suppression and restraint (Mouffe 2008). The possibility of convergence and cooperation between political actors has no room within this way of thinking.

both non-conflictual processes where collective action occurs voluntarily and consensus exists about the desired goals (2) and conflictual processes which, lacking consensus, grant the opportunity to either enter (*voice*) or avoid (*exit*) these processes without the expectation of a forced decision (1).¹⁴ The non-power relationships Warren refers to are voluntary relations (as between friends or lovers) that might depend on the “force” of talk, intimacy, affect, and solidarity but are basically “defined by situations in which there is no threat that power might be organized to bind individuals to collective decision, organization, or action *against their will*” (Warren 1999: 220; emphasis added). Besides, the figure clarifies the non-political character of non-conflictual power relations (domination and hegemony) that stand out just due to the suppression of political conflicts like it is the case in totalitarian regimes and partly in gender relations (4). Consequently, only activities that are characterized by disagreement about means or outcomes and in which one of the involved parties has the power to “force the issue” (Warren 2002: 687) are part of the political domain and can thereby be labeled political participation (3).

Figure 2: The domain of politics

		Power	
		No	Yes
Conflict	Yes	1 Not political (no force on exit / disagreement)	3 Domain of Politics (contest in the fields of power)
	No	2 Not political (non-coercive consensus)	4 Suppressed Politics (uncontested power relations)

Source: adapted from Warren 1999: 219

We now know about the significance of power and conflict in defining political participation with respect to the context of influencing or making political decisions. But, as we mentioned before, to get a conclusive picture of the political dimension of participation we cannot only regard its context but also have to consider its *outcomes*. What makes the outcomes of a participatory act political? Iseult Honohan (2005: 3) suggests that

¹⁴ For more information about the terms *voice* and *exit* cf. Hirschman 1970.

a relevant feature of political participation¹⁵ is the existence of a broader social concern. This notion refers to the interdependence of people living together in a political entity and recognizes the direct or indirect consequences that one person's activities have on the lives and activities of others (Hay 2007: 70). "Broader social concern", however, must not be confused with what in some strands of political theory is called the "common good". It does not refer to what might be best for citizens or stand for a compromise summing up particular wills of individuals into one decision. While political participation in these terms solely includes forms of activity that not only concern single persons but develop *collective* outcomes (beyond the individual level), the use of the term does not imply that these activities have to be directed towards an a priori idea of what is good for the development of the individual as part of a wider *community* with shared preferences, goals and values. Again, it is not motivation but possible effect that makes an activity political. Lastly, participatory acts do not have to be collective in the sense that people act together in groups to make or influence decisions, also individual persons can act politically in terms of collective outcomes.

So are discussions with friends or relatives political acts? Central preconditions of an activity to be labeled political are that (a) its processes are conflictual, (b) these conflicts are influenced by power relations, and (c) it produces collective outcomes. Therefore we do not include discussions with friends or relatives in the definition because, although these discussions are an inclusive and conflictual form of social action, they do not imply any collective outcome and are not characterized by the existence of power relations.

3.2 WHAT IS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION? VARIABLE ELEMENTS

So far the discussions of this chapter have centered on the constant, invariable elements of political participation. Activities that do not comply with the requirements specified in these elements cannot be classified as forms of political participation – the preliminary definition is thus selective and facilitates a static inclusion (or non-inclusion respectively)

¹⁵ In fact, Honohan writes about active citizenship and not political participation per se. Nevertheless her definition is very close if not coextensive with the concept of political participation as it is defined in this study, therefore we consider this conceptual loan adequate in this case.

of activities into the concept. In this second section of this chapter the problem of how to accommodate the recent changes in political action on a conceptual level arises. How can we warrant that developments like the decline in forms of action like voting, party work and the like as well as the increase in activities like signing petitions, attending demonstrations and buying or boycotting products for political, ethical or environmental reasons are covered by a definition of political participation? By introducing what I call the variable elements of participation this dynamic component receives the necessary attention.

In this section I therefore first outline the changes in political action repertoires in more detail by drawing on the respective literature and give some insights in empirical data as well as theoretical explanations. As this section primarily covers conceptual concerns these insights remain cursory but illuminating. In a second step, I classify these forms along different theoretical dimensions. These elaborations will allow me not only to label the variable elements of participation through the dimensions but also to conceptually account for the nature of changes in political action repertoires by differentiating between different types of political activity.

3.2.1 CHANGING POLITICAL ACTION REPERTOIRES IN EUROPE

3.2.1.1 What kind of change?

In order to address the question how political action repertoires in Europe have changed recently, we have to discuss the nature of these changes in the first place. Two general options are possible: On the one hand, there could be *no change at all* in the development of political participation, which is neither likely from a theoretical point of view nor the case if we even just take a cursory look on the data on e.g. declining electoral turnout (Gray/Caul 2000, Franklin 2004, Rose 2004, Bernhagen/Marsh 2007, Blais 2007, Steinbrecher/Rattinger 2012). We therefore want to get rid of this option without any further consideration.

A second view suggests that *there have been changes* in political action repertoires and raise the additional question about form and direction. One of the most prominent and most widely discussed assumptions with regard to this topic is, that participation levels are

generally receding throughout developed democracies. This so called *decline thesis* is represented by researchers like Robert Putnam who describes a cutback in political activity as one aspect of the general erosion of societal relations and community life (Putnam 1995, 2000). As reasons for this erosion he mentions the impact of women entering the labor force as well as the increase of geographical mobility and – most prominent – the massive dispersion of television which all undermine the emergence of social capital by weakening the social bonds of small-scale communities and reducing the available free-time for voluntary engagement. All in all, it is the thesis of a general decline in political participation that ranks most prominently among political scientists who focus on developments concerning turnout and party activity as well as related phenomena like decreasing levels of party identification, trust in political institutions, political interest and efficacy (Norris 1999, 2002, Dalton 2005, Macedo et al. 2005, Karp/Banducci 2007). However, Putnam's theses have also been criticized. While some authors say that the asserted erosion simply has not happened or can just be observed for the United States, others accept the decline thesis but contradict the idea that this was problematic for democracy (Klingemann/Fuchs 1995, Schudson 1996, Gabriel et al. 2002; summing up Stolle/Hooghe 2004).

Despite all the criticism of Putnam's decline thesis, the contrary assumption that the expansion of government activities and the associated politicization of public life had led to a rise of overall political activity (*increase thesis*, cf. van Deth 2006) is not very widespread among scholars dealing with political action repertoires. Instead, recent research results suggest that we should rather speak of a *diversification* of political action repertoires than of a simple, one-directional decline or increase (Inglehart/Catterberg 2003, Zukin et al. 2006, Norris 2007, Dalton 2008). To address the question about the nature of changes in political action repertoires during the past decades more thoroughly, I want to throw a glance at empirical data that help to illustrate the actual developments for different forms of participation separately. I focus on Europe and examine those forms of participation for which figures and findings are available from different databases.

3.2.1.2 Forms of activity with declining participation rates

In political participation research it has become standard of knowledge that *electoral turnout* has declined in Europe during the past 35 years. As table 2 below shows, turnout in parliamentary elections has undergone a decrease all over Europe with an average drawback of 12.3 percentage points. There is, however, significant variation in turnout decrease between the observed countries.¹⁶

Table 2: Electoral turnout in European countries, 1980-2009

	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE
1980-84	92.6	94.6	-	88.1	79.8	75.7	70.9	88.9	81.5	-	74.6
1985-89	90.5	93.5	-	86.2	70.2	72.1	72.4	84.3	84.2	-	70.9
1990-94	84.3	92.7	90.5	83.6	77.0	68.4	68.9	78.4	83.0	67.0	68.5
1995-99	83.2	90.9	75.1	85.9	78.1	67.0	68.0	82.2	76.3	56.7	66.1
2000-04	84.3	94.0	58.0	87.1	72.2	66.7	60.3	79.1	75.8	73.5	62.6
2005-09	74.2	91.1	64.5	85.6	75.3	65.0	60.5	74.2	74.1	64.4	67.0
Net Change	-18.4	-3.5	-26.0	-2.5	-4.5	-10.7	-10.4	-14.7	-7.4	-2.6	-7.6

	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1980-84	89.0	88.8	84.0	82.0	-	82.0	-	-	91.4	72.8	83.3
1985-89	88.9	87.4	83.1	83.6	62.1	74.0	-	-	88.0	75.4	80.4
1990-94	86.8	88.3	78.7	75.8	47.7	68.2	85.5	85.9	87.4	77.8	78.3
1995-99	82.9	86.5	73.2	78.0	47.9	63.7	84.3	73.7	81.4	71.5	74.9
2000-04	81.4	91.7	79.6	75.0	46.2	62.8	70.1	65.5	80.1	59.4	72.6
2005-09	82.1	85.2	80.4	76.9	47.3	62.0	54.7	63.1	82.0	61.4	71.0
Net Change	-6.9	-3.6	-3.6	-5.1	-14.8	-20.0	-30.8	-22.8	-9.4	-11.4	-12.3

Source: International IDEA (<http://www.idea.int>)

Within the observed period since 1980, turnout decline was strongest in Slovakia (-30.8 percentage points) and the Czech Republic (-26.0) followed by Slovenia (-22.8), Portugal (-20.0), Austria (-18.4), Poland (-14.8), and Germany (-14.7) with a decline still above average. In the UK (-11.4), Finland (-10.7), France (-10.4), Sweden (-9.4), Ireland (-7.6), Greece (-7.4), Italy (-6.9) and Norway (-5.1) turnout dropped more than 5 percentage points between the periods 1980-84 and 2005-09, while the this change was moderate or almost

¹⁶ I use data on turnout decline for those countries for which also data on the other forms of participation are available. These are not the same countries, for which the empirical analyses of participatory in/equality in chapter 6 are conducted.

negligible in Spain (-4.5), the Netherlands (-3.6), Luxembourg (-3.6), Belgium (-3.5), Hungary (-2.6) and Denmark (-2.5). Additionally we can also observe that the slopes of the curves illustrating turnout decline are (despite some minor variations between countries) moderate and comparatively steady which indicates that there is no specific period when decline was extraordinarily sharp. There are, however, signs that point to an apparent weakening of the downward trend in turnout in many countries since the early 2000s. Whether the period of decline in voter participation since the 1980s has come to a preliminary end or the recent rebounds are just a short intermezzo within a general electoral recession, can only be evaluated with a view to the outcomes of future elections.

In this dissertation I cannot extensively deal with the reasons leading to turnout decline in terms of testing different hypotheses with the goal of explaining recent trends. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, I want to at least outline the best-researched explanations to be found in the literature. One interpretation introduced by Miller and Shanks (1996) focuses on the role of generational replacement for the decline of voter turnout, claiming that younger generations have weaker attachments to political parties, are less integrated in political communities and are not interested in politics as much as former generations were. Similarly, Blais et al. (2004) observe a lesser degree of attention paid to politics and a weaker sense of civic duty among younger generations. Yet, all the authors were not able to sort out the causal mechanisms behind this generational effect. Another explanation shifts consideration away from individual changes among the electorate to institutional changes of electoral rules. Following Franklin (2004) the lowering of the voting age and the fractionalization of party systems could also have contributed to the decline in turnout. Finally, changes in electoral participation cannot only be attributed to individual or institutional changes, but also be explained by differences in activation patterns among mobilizing agencies. In their analysis of turnout decline between the 1960s and the late 1990s, Gray and Caul (2000) show that “turnout has declined more substantially in countries where union density and labor party vote share have been going down” (Blais 2007: 630). As we see, there is still much confusion about the single effects contributing to declining turnout rates, nevertheless we note that factors at the micro-, meso- and macro-level seem to have some influence on electoral participation.

Table 3: Party membership rates (M/E ratio ^a) in Europe, 1980-2000

	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE
1977-1980	28.5	9.0	-	7.3	1.2	15.7	5.1	4.5	3.2	-	5.0
1988-1991	23.7	9.2	7.0	5.9	2.1	13.5	3.0	3.9	6.3	2.1	4.9
1997-2002	17.7	6.6	3.9	5.1	3.4	9.7	1.6	2.9	6.8	2.2	3.1
2006-2008	17.3	5.5	2.0	4.1	4.4	8.1	1.9	2.3	6.6	1.5	2.0
Net Change	-11.2	-3.5	-5.1	-3.2	+3.2	-7.7	-3.2	-2.2	+3.4	-0.6	-3.0

	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1977-1980	9.7	-	4.3	15.4	-	4.3	-	-	8.4	4.1	8.4
1988-1991	9.1	-	3.2	13.1	-	5.1	3.3	-	8.0	2.6	7.0
1997-2002	4.1	-	2.5	7.3	1.2	4.0	4.1	9.9	5.5	1.9	5.2
2006-2008	5.6	-	2.5	5.0	1.0	3.8	2.0	6.3	3.9	1.2	4.4
Net Change	-4.1	-	-1.8	-10.3	-0.2	-0.5	-1.3	-3.6	-4.5	-2.9	-4.0

^a M/E ratio: Number of party members relative to size of electorate

Source: Mair and van Biezen 2001, van Biezen et al. 2011

In the same trend as for voting, but also to a smaller amount, *party membership* rates¹⁷ sunk during the past decades. As table 3 shows, the number of party members relative to the size of the electorate (M/E ratio) has declined in all of the countries for which the respective data is available except Spain and Greece, with an average drop of 4.0 percentage points. Again we observe strong cross-country variation in both initial levels of party membership rates and decline, with Austria (-11.2 percentage points) showing the sharpest fall of relative figures followed by Norway (-10.3) and Finland (-7.7). These are also the three countries that showed the highest ratios of party members at the initial point of examination. As Katz et al. (1992) show in their analysis of party membership rates, a decline in M/E ratio can also be caused by a stagnation or even minor increase in absolute numbers of party members if the electorate grows to an even larger amount. Therefore Mair and van Biezen (2001) also analyze these absolute figures and find that absolute levels have stagnated during the 1960s to 1980s but have declined sharply between 1980 and 2000, a trend that continued until the end of the 2000s (van Biezen et al. 2011). The absolute membership figures dropped in every country except the younger Western democracies Portugal, Spain, and Greece. In relative figures (percentage change in number of members)

¹⁷ Although only scarce data are available for party activism in Europe, both activism and membership rates seem to follow similar trends as can be seen for countries where longitudinal data is available (cf. Scarrow 2007: 638). For this reason I decided to use membership data as a proxy for measuring party activism.

the strongest decline occurred in the Czech Republic, the UK and Norway while it was comparatively moderate in Germany and Hungary (figures not reported in table; see van Biezen et al. 2011: 34). In addition to these official figures based on the membership records kept by the parties themselves, also self-reported party membership decreased for both its active (work for political party) and passive (be a member of political party) forms (Scarow 2007, Scarow/Gezgor 2010).

In trying to figure out explanations for decreasing party membership rates, scholars have focused on so called supply-side and demand-side factors. In this terminology the latter describe the established parties' loss of interest in recruiting new members because the tasks usually ascribed to party members (making donations, supporting election campaigns, raising funds) can be performed cheaper without them (Crouch 2004: 70-78, Norris 2007: 635). While members cause costs to parties due to the benefits parties have to offer their members in terms of information, intra-party participation and patronage, individual donations have widely been supplemented by state subsidies and donations through firms and lobbying groups (see also Whiteley 2010: 31f.). Concomitantly, small-scale electoral mobilization efforts have been replaced by huge media campaigns. Parties do not need their members anymore and knock off at least their broad active recruitment (Scarow 2007).

At the same time that parties draw back their mobilization efforts, people's interest in becoming members of political parties decreases. This phenomenon describes the supply-side of factors explaining declining party activism. One aspect has already been mentioned is that parties usually have to offer new members incentives like opportunities for participation, intra-party career perspectives or other social benefits (e.g. renting flats, finding jobs, getting consumer discounts, etc.) if they want them to enroll. Some scholars think that parties are less and less able to provide such incentives to potential members, which is why potential members refrain from joining these organizations. Another interpretation highlights the erosion of traditional milieus and the declining power of traditional cleavages in shaping social structure and the behavior of individuals ("subjective dealignment") that has not adequately been absorbed by the political parties as well as the increasing rejection of hierarchical forms of organization by a growing majority of citizens (a process sometimes associated with individualization). Finally, also a decline of trust in the ability of political parties to solve the contemporarily pressing social problems (e.g.

those caused by economic globalization and transnational migration) may be a reason for people choosing not to become engaged in party organizations anymore (Wiesendahl 2006).

As political parties and trade unions are both organized strictly hierarchically and – at least in countries with a corporatist tradition – are both relevant actors within democratic decision-making processes, active engagement in trade unions and party work can both be considered similar types of activism. Due to this similarity it is therefore hardly surprising, that the figures for union and party membership show analogous patterns of development over time: throughout Europe union membership rates have declined sharply during the past 30 years (Ebbinghaus/Visser 1999, Checchi/Visser 2005, Visser 2006).

Table 4 illustrates the decrease in *union membership* in almost all European countries considered in this study. As was the case for parties, also for unions Spain (+7.5) with its rising level of participation is an exception to this pattern – albeit emanating from a surpassingly low initial value. An average cutback of 19.3 percentage points led to a reduction of union density in Europe from more than half of the wage earners being members of a trade union in 1980 to less than a third being organized in 2008. The extent of this reduction was above average in Austria (-28.6), Ireland (-26.9), and the UK (-22.6) as well as especially in the younger democracies Portugal (-35.5), Czech Republic (-47.0), Hungary (-32.3) and Poland (-50.3). A more moderate decline can be observed in Denmark (-9.8), France (-10.7), Germany (-16.3), Greece (-10.1), Italy (-14.5), Luxembourg (-13.5), the Netherlands (-15.8) and Sweden (-9.1), while it can be considered negligible in Belgium (-2.1) and Norway (-3.9). In Finland (+0.6) union density was more or less stable during the past 30 years. Just like in the case of the M/E-ratio, a drop in union density could also be observed despite an increase in the absolute numbers of union members, if the number of employees increases even to a larger extent. Examining the absolute figures of union membership in Europe therefore reveals a slightly different picture: While between 1980 and the end of the 2000s the number of members declined in Austria, France, Germany, Italy, UK, Sweden and the Eastern European countries Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, absolute numbers remained stable in Denmark, Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands, while even increasing in Norway and Spain. However, if we consider the

figures for the whole European Union (-7.5 million members between 1980 and 2003), the general trend seems to point towards a decline of union membership in Europe (figures from Visser 2006: 43f.).

Table 4: Union density^a in Europe, 1980-2010

	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE
1980	56.7	54.1	-	78.6	8.3	69.4	18.3	34.9	-	-	63.5
1990	46.9	53.9	64.4	75.3	12.5	72.6	9.9	31.2	34.1	49.1	56.8
2000	36.6	49.5	27.2	74.3	16.7	75.0	8.0	24.6	26.5	21.7	40.4
2010	28.1	52.0	17.3	68.8	15.9	70.0	7.6	18.6	24.0	16.8	36.6
Net Change	-28.6	-2.1	-47.0	-9.8	+7.5	+0.6	-10.7	-16.3	-10.1	-32.3	-26.9

	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1980	49.6	50.8	34.8	58.3	65.3	54.8	-	-	78.0	49.7	51.6
1990	38.8	46.4	24.3	58.5	30.4	28.0	67.3	61.1	81.5	38.2	46.7
2000	34.8	42.5	22.9	54.4	24.2	21.7	32.3	43.1	80.1	30.2	37.5
2010	35.1	37.3	19.0	54.4	15.0	19.3	17.2	29.7	68.9	27.1	32.3
Net Change	-14.5	-13.5	-15.8	-3.9	-50.3	-35.5	-50.1	-31.4	-9.1	-22.6	-19.3

^a Union density: percentage of employees who are members of a trade union
Source: ICTWSS database (<http://www.uva-aias.net/207>)

What can explain the downward trends in trade union membership? Checchi and Visser (2005) mention three types of explanatory factors that account for the decline in union membership in Europe: structural, cyclical, and institutional. Structural changes that help explain the trends refer to the decline in traditionally unionized (manufacturing) work and the similar rise of the service and retail sector, which is traditionally non-unionized, as well as the rise of female employment which is often unstable, part-time or conceived as a secondary wage. These changes in the labor market lead to lower recruitment efforts on the part of the unions because expanding unionism to the “new” unorganized workers is costly and brings only small benefits; they similarly lead to a lower motivation on part of the workers to join unions due to a lack of fear of social pressure which was connected to non-membership in former times when membership was kind of a social norm or custom. Besides these changes in the labor market, another structural factor explaining developments in union membership is the greater trade and financial openness of European economies. Although the feelings of insecurity generated by this greater openness could

theoretically lead to more successful mobilization of potential members, it is more likely that it contributes to the decline in membership due to a perceived inability of unions to exert bargaining power within the globalized economy.

Under cyclical changes Checchi and Visser summarize developments in economic factors that are related to the demand of labor. Changing unemployment rates might have positive or negative effects on union density depending on the unemployment insurance regimes within the respective countries, but most generally a rise in unemployment will be expected to lead to a decline in union density because industrial workers, who are more likely to be union members, are also more jeopardized by unemployment and mostly end their membership in case of becoming jobless (Elias 1996). Another cyclical factor affecting union density is inflation, which is said to have a positive effect in a static perspective but a negative effect if inflation remains high despite strong unions. Besides unemployment rates and inflation, the dynamics in the political sphere are also treated as a measure of cyclical changes. A swing in voting towards left-wing parties as well as an increasing strike activity are considered to promote union growth.

Finally, institutional changes are said to affect the fall of union density. Factors related to institutional changes mainly refer to laws that guarantee unions and their members representation of their interests at the workplace as well as participation in centralized wage negotiations. While legal anchorage of these rights is considered to favor membership in trade unions, a cutback in these areas will contribute to the decline of union density.

3.2.1.3 Forms of activity with increasing participation rates

Similarly to the steady decrease of voter turnout as well as party membership and union density, the amount of people being involved in other modes of activity increased during the past decades: a growing part of the population attends public demonstrations, signs petitions and boycotts certain products for ethical, social, or environmental reasons to name just a few examples to be treated here (e.g. Norris 2002, 2007, Inglehart/Catterberg 2003, Dalton 2008). There are several ways to grasp the developments in these forms of activity over a period of time methodologically. The most widespread and adequate way to guarantee the coverage of both longitudinal and cross-national trends is using respective survey data, which will also be the main source of information used here.

Table 5 shows that – contrary to turnout in elections, party membership and union density – participation in signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining in boycotts has risen throughout Europe during the past three decades. At the beginning of the 1980s, the first decade after the “participatory revolution” proclaimed by Barnes and Kaase (Barnes et al. 1979, Kaase 1982), 40.4 percent of the respondents to the European Values Study assert that they have already signed a petition, 17.4 percent say that they have attended a demonstration and 7.1 percent claim to have joined a boycott. By the end of the 1990s all three forms of participation had entered the standard repertoire of political action and reached their highest level of participation to date: more than half of the respondents had already signed a petition, 25.3 percent had demonstrated and more than one out of ten had boycotted certain products. Despite a minor decline in these forms of activism during the past ten years, we can observe a general increase in political action outside the realm of traditional political actors and institutions. This increase has been marginal when it comes to petitions (+18 percent), moderate for demonstrations (+27 percent) and considerable for boycotts (+50 percent).

Table 5: Signing petitions, attending demonstrations, and joining in boycotts in Europe, 1981-2010

PETITIONS	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1981-1984	-	24.5	-	43.5	23.7	-	44.6	45.7	-	-	28.9	40.9	-	34.8	54.6	-	-	-	-	54.2	63.2	40.4
1990-1993	46.8	50.1	48.1	51.2	22.0	40.7	53.7	58.8	-	18.0	42.0	46.4	-	50.0	61.1	21.4	29.2	41.0	27.6	71.7	75.4	45.0
1999-2001	56.7	68.5	58.7	56.8	28.6	49.6	68.3	50.6	49.6	14.7	58.6	54.6	53.2	59.1	-	22.5	22.6	59.3	32.4	87.4	79.3	53.3
2008-2010	49.1	58.6	34.1	66.6	41.1	54.5	67.8	57.0	19.2	15.0	54.0	50.7	59.6	53.0	72.7	21.1	27.0	38.8	34.3	81.6	66.0	47.5
Net Change	+2.3	+34.1	-14.0	+23.1	+17.4	+13.8	+23.2	+11.3	-30.4	-3.0	+25.1	+9.8	+6.4	+18.2	+18.1	-0.3	-2.2	-2.2	+6.7	+33.2	+2.8	+7.1

DEMOS	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1981-1984	-	14.0	-	16.5	23.9	-	25.2	12.7	-	-	13.5	23.8	-	12.5	18.7	-	-	-	-	15.4	8.9	17.4
1990-1993	10.4	25.3	35.5	27.4	21.7	14.2	32.7	26.7	-	4.4	16.5	33.9	-	24.8	19.5	19.3	24.8	22.9	10.1	22.6	13.6	22.4
1999-2001	16.7	35.8	27.8	29.3	26.9	14.6	39.7	27.1	47.5	4.5	20.7	34.8	28.3	31.2	-	10.0	14.8	14.3	9.8	35.3	13.4	25.3
2008-2010	16.2	28.8	11.9	34.4	38.6	15.9	45.6	27.2	24.0	4.0	16.0	37.8	33.3	21.7	29.1	8.3	14.7	5.5	13.1	22.6	14.6	22.1
Net Change	+5.8	+14.8	-23.6	+17.9	+14.7	+1.7	+20.4	+14.5	-23.5	-0.4	+2.5	+14.0	+5.0	+9.2	+10.4	-11.0	-10.1	-17.4	+3.0	+7.2	+5.7	+4.7

BOYCOTTS	AUT	BEL	CZE	DEN	ESP	FIN	FRA	GER	GRE	HUN	IRE	ITA	LUX	NED	NOR	POL	POR	SLK	SLV	SWE	UK	Avg
1981-1984	-	3.0	-	8.0	8.9	-	10.4	6.4	-	-	6.8	5.7	-	6.1	6.8	-	-	-	-	8.5	6.7	7.1
1990-1993	5.2	10.3	9.6	10.6	4.8	13.5	12.5	8.7	-	2.2	7.4	9.4	-	8.3	12.0	6.4	4.6	4.4	8.0	16.5	14.7	8.9
1999-2001	9.8	10.4	9.2	24.9	5.6	14.5	13.2	10.2	4.7	2.8	8.3	10.3	9.0	21.4	-	4.2	4.6	4.3	8.2	33.0	16.7	11.1
2008-2010	9.4	10.1	5.2	17.9	7.6	23.7	15.9	11.2	6.8	2.0	10.6	12.2	13.3	12.0	17.4	3.5	6.4	2.5	7.3	23.7	14.0	10.7
Net Change	+4.2	+7.1	-4.4	+9.9	-1.3	+10.2	+5.5	+4.8	+2.1	-0.2	+3.8	+6.5	+4.3	+5.9	+10.6	-2.9	+1.8	-1.9	-0.7	+15.2	+7.3	+3.6

Source: European Values Study 1981-2010 (4 waves)

Besides surveys also other data sources confirm the general rise of participation in the above-mentioned forms of activity. For example, several studies of political protest relying on so called protest event analyses¹⁸ – a strategy to examine the “properties of protest, such as frequency, timing and duration, location, claims, size, forms, carriers, and targets, as well as immediate consequences and reactions” (Koopmans/Rucht 2002: 231) on the basis of newspaper articles or police records – register a significant increase of demonstrations since the 1960s in several European countries like Austria (Dolezal/Hutter 2007), Germany (Rucht 2003), France (Tartakowsky 2004) and the Netherlands (Koopmans 1996). Overall, the protest event data tend to validate the results from the population surveys presented above.

Besides an increase of participation in the mentioned activities between the early 1980s and the late 1990s, the EVS data reveal a certain amount of stagnancy or even a decline of activism during the past decade that seems to put the apparent upward tendency of petitions, demonstrations, and boycotts until the year 2000 into perspective. Especially the younger democracies in Southern and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Greece, Portugal and Spain) not only show the lowest participation rates for these forms of activism at the end of the first decade of the 21st century. Together with Austria, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden they also face the strongest decline in participation during the past years. If we exclude the mentioned countries from the analysis of the development of declining forms of activism in Europe, the trends of the past decade seem to be at least modified if not stopped. With a focus on Europe’s established democracies (a) the increase over the longer time period becomes more obvious and (b) the decline of the last ten years turns more into a consolidation of participation rates on a very high level.

¹⁸ Although protest event analyses usually provide reliable results, one has to keep in mind that due to the inherent logic of print and visual media different protest events possess a completely unequal news value. If therefore the media are used as the main data source of a study, a researcher must assume that there is way more media coverage of demonstrations and violent activities like street battles and squatting than of clearly less spectacular protest forms like petitions and boycotts. This can lead to an overestimation of developments in the area of violent conflicts while the prevalence of non-violent activities might be crucially underestimated (Koopmans/Rucht 2002, Fillieule/Jiménez 2003).

Table 6: Signing petitions, attending demonstrations, and joining in boycotts, 1981-2010 ^a

	PETITIONS	DEMOS	BOYCOTTS
1981-1984	43,4	16,2	6,8
1990-1993	53,9	22,7	10,7
1999-2001	62,7	28,5	14,6
2008-2010	60,9	27,1	14,6
Net Change	+17,5	+10,9	+7,8

^a European countries excl. Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Greece, Portugal and Spain
Source: European Values Study 1981-2010 (4 waves)

If we now seek to find explanations for the emergence of petitions, demonstrations and boycotts as nowadays widely accepted forms of voicing political concerns, we repeatedly come across two major interpretations of these developments. The first set of explanations directly connects the rise of these forms with the fall of traditional political actors, mainly political parties and trade unions. These theories state a severe crisis of the representative political institutions that is expressed by the growing alienation of huge numbers of citizens. The crisis is based on a loss of regulatory capacity by the nation state that is again partly the result of the uncontrolled globalization and “post-nationalization” (Habermas 2001) of problems like economic, migration and environmental issues (see also Castells 2010). Because citizens lose their trust in traditional political actors they seek new ways to express their preferences and needs, which they find in the above-mentioned activities. As *sub-politicians* (Beck 1992, 1997) or *everyday makers* (Bang/Sørensen 2001, Bang 2004) they do not longer rely on elected representatives to meet the political challenges of our time, but take responsibility themselves and become engaged in a new type of democratic self-governance.

Another explanation for the emergence of new forms of participation connects the developments in the area of political action repertoires with the broader concept of social change, mainly with the rise of welfare and education levels in industrialized societies and the associated changes of citizens’ values. Following the main proponent of the value change thesis, Ronald Inglehart (1997, 2007), the rising average levels of formal education as well as the shared experience of formative security, especially of the younger generations, are responsible for a shift of value orientations away from the maintenance of economic stability, physical security, and law and order (materialist values) towards the promotion of self-actualization and participation (postmaterialist values). These

postmaterialist value orientations lead to a different self-assurance of social groups. New identities arise and their claims – namely the recognition and participation of socially disadvantaged groups – are reflected in the new forms of action. Value change therefore explains a major amount of the increase of participation in the emerging forms of activism (Fuchs/Klingemann 1995, Trinkle 1997).

3.2.2 THE VARIABLE ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: A CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

To transcend the empirical shortcomings of the outlined data and to offer a more complex conceptual taxonomy of the differentiation between the various forms of activism, I introduce a theoretically informed classification scheme covering seven dimensions of political participation and argue that the major changes of political action repertoires during the past decades happened along these dimensions. The variable elements of political participation are summarized by the dimensions target, frequency, regularity, source, style, structure and content. In order to avoid confusion, I need to note that all these features are also necessary elements (or preconditions) of political participation. We cannot speak of a form of action as political participation, if it is not aimed at a specific target, does not occur with a certain frequency or regularity, and so on. However, in contrast to the constant elements discussed above which have fixed meanings over time and space, these features can be subject to medium or long-term alteration – especially along the lines of social change. In this section I will therefore illustrate these dimensions comprising the variable aspects of political participation in more detail. The aim of this section is to establish a conceptual framework for classification that builds on a general account of the described changes in political action repertoires (previous sections 3.2.1.1 and 3.2.1.2) and can also be applied to the more detailed empirical analyses of participatory in/equality below (chapter 6).

In a traditional view on political participation the *targets* of activity used to be mainly national governments (Verba et al. 1978). Recent political and societal trends, however, force us to broaden our view of potential targets of political action both horizontally and vertically. Pippa Norris (2002: 193) differentiates between state-oriented und non-state oriented activities, which indicates that non-state actors have gained relevance as explicitly

political actors during the past decades compared to governmental institutions. Political participation is nowadays not only aimed at governments but also at markets, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the media or the general public¹⁹ (horizontal dimension). On the other hand, both state and non-state oriented activities can be directed towards national, but also towards subnational (local, regional) or supranational (European, global) actors. Contrary to the conservative notion of political participation on which the classic definitions outlined at the beginning of this chapter are based, this taxonomy offers a broader and more appropriate idea of the possible targets of political activities.

Although we defined activity (in opposition to attitudes or thoughtless behavior) as a prerequisite of political participation, we can further differentiate activities along the lines of frequency, regularity and source of activity. *Frequency* refers to the fact that some forms of participation are designed to allow activity only within a constrained legal frame (like elections) while others can be attained without legal boundaries (like demonstrations or petitions).

Besides, but related to, frequency the *regularity* of activity plays a decisive role. While some forms of engagement demand permanent commitment based on strong ideological identification of activists to fulfill their tasks (like party work), other forms of participation provide easy opportunities for “voice” and “exit” (Hirschman 1970) because they rely on spontaneous but only short term engagement.

Another distinction can be drawn on the basis of the *source* of activity. While in some cases the incentive for participation originates from an top-down mobilization process induced by political elites, other activities have their source in individually organized bottom-up initiatives (also: elite-directed vs. elite-challenging activities, see Inglehart 1977: 3). The difference is that in the first case the political participant becomes activated, while in the second case she becomes active by herself.

Mancur Olson introduces a further differentiation between individualistic and collective action, which refers to the *style* dimension of political participation (Olson 1973). Participatory acts can be individualistic or collective in terms of the activity itself, depending on how many people are involved in an act simultaneously and together.

¹⁹ Often protest activities do not want to reach a political decision in shape of the implementation of a law in the first instance, but rather try to alter individual behavior by communicating a topic to the public via the media.

Furthermore, activities can also be more or less “individualized”: this means that some forms of action offer more opportunities for participants to choose the way in which they want to become active while other forms dictate a rather clear-cut pattern of how involvement should look like (Stolle/Hooghe 2009).

Individual and collective activities occur within different sets of institutions and actors that can be more or less formal, hierarchical or even oligarchic in *structure* (according to Michels’ “iron law of oligarchy”, cf. Lucardie 2007: 72). Especially a differentiation between open or network-based structures on the one hand and institutionalized or hierarchical structures on the other hand will be analytically useful. For the sake of completeness it has to be noted, that structure and regularity of participation are sometimes closely linked.

Forms of participation can vary not only with regard to strictly formal criteria but also according to *content*. Especially if seen from a perspective sensitive to changes the apparently trivial dimension of content gains relevance for the analysis of political action repertoires, because new issues often enter the political agenda through new rather than through traditional participatory avenues. Forms of participation differ in terms of which and how many and broad issues they intend to cover.

Forms of political participation can be theoretically classified along these seven dimensions of activity. As can be seen in table 7 the declining forms as described above are characterized by their state-orientation within a national context. They refer to a nationalized idea of the political rooted in the last 20th century, when the nation state used to be the major (and sometimes only) arena where power relations were both negotiated and contested in Europe. Furthermore, these forms of political action demand long-term, ideology-based activity and are organized in a top-down manner by or within hierarchical institutions. These characteristics are ideal-typically represented by parties and trade unions. Activities of the declining forms of participation are collective and involve “taking part in structured behavior already in existence and oriented towards the political system per se” (Micheletti 2003: 25), thus they are also labeled “collectivist collective action” (ibid.). Concerning content traditional political activities, which are usually connected to respective organizations (parties, trade unions), relate to topics that have also been

considered crucial when these organizations were founded. These topics comprise mainly distributive concerns along the conflict between work and capital (left-right cleavage).

Table 7: Dimensions of change in declining and emerging forms of participation

	Declining forms of participation	Emerging forms of participation
Target	state-oriented; national	state & non-state oriented; post-national
Frequency	bounded by legal rules	legally unbounded
Regularity	permanent, long-term	spontaneous, short-term
Source	„top-down“	„bottom-up“
Style	collectivist collective action	individualized collective action
Structure	hierarchical organizations	loose networks or unorganized
Content	mainly distributive concerns	also lifestyle and identity issues

Source: own illustration

By contrast, participation in emerging forms of political action is characterized by a target orientation that is much less centered on the dominant role of the nation state in exerting power typical for 20th century politics. Only in recent years scholars have increasingly contested the idea that political power is limited to either the public, as opposed to the private, sphere or national, as opposed to sub- or supra-national, entities (Held et al. 1999). The dynamic behind emerging forms of political action reflects two major recent political and societal trends that challenge the nation state's outstanding significance of the past: the advancing societal and economic globalization and the enduring process of European integration. In the course of European integration new levels of government at which decision-making processes occur open up for traditional political actors; similarly non-traditional political actors (civil society organizations, e.g. NGOs, SMOs) formerly excluded from institutional decision-making processes discover opportunities of representative participation through modified forms of governance (Armstrong 2002, Magnette 2003, Ruzza 2004) and thereby become targets of citizen's participatory efforts (Bang/Sørensen 2001); finally, globalization reveals new options to political activists as communication channels and production circles are detached from national boundaries and international publics as well as transnational corporations become targets of political participation (Micheletti 2003, Stolle/Hooghe 2009).

Emerging forms of political participation are not only directed at different targets than the more traditional, declining forms, they are also more spontaneous, often require only short-term engagement, and activists are mostly not or only loosely organized. The single participants can decide to be active today and lay down their engagement again tomorrow. Although the activities can be either individualistic or collective – people get involved alone (as in petition signing or political consumerism) or within loosely knit networks (as in demonstrating) (cf. Diani/McAdam 2003, Geißel/Thillmann 2006) – participants usually are flexible in how to specifically organize their activities; they are writing their own script for their actions. In this case we call an activity to be individualized in character, Micheletti (2003: 25) speaks of “individualized collective action”. On the issue dimension modern political action reflects a politicization of everyday life. Life-style elements and identity issues enter the political realm, the private becomes political and the political becomes private (Bennett 1998).

These remarks clarify that emerging and declining forms of participation are not only subject to heavily divergent dynamics of development, but that these forms can also be distinguished substantially. In the empirical literature labels like “conventional” vs. “unconventional” (Barnes et al. 1979), “elite-directed” vs. “elite-challenging” (Inglehart/Catterberg 2003) or “old” vs. “new” (Forno/Ceccarini 2006) are commonly used to describe different types of activism. However, all these labels often only account for certain aspects or dimensions of the types of participation: un/conventionality refers entirely to the degree of recognition of an activity as part of the “established” repertoire of action; Inglehart’s denotation emphasizes the role of the source of activism over the other six dimensions elaborated above; and Forno and Ceccarini’s focus on new (as opposed to supposedly old) forms of participation neglects the fact that e.g. different forms of consumerism like boycotts can also look back at a very long tradition starting already in the 18th century (Friedman 1999). Also Norris’ (2007) distinction between cause-oriented and citizen-oriented action cannot cover the differences between the two types of participation adequately, especially because the orientation towards causes and citizens represents no logical, mutually exclusive dichotomy. The best-suited effort for labeling different types of activism is, in my opinion, provided by Marien et al. (2010) who distinguish between non-

institutionalized and institutionalized forms of action. Although the differentiation along the factor of institutionalization does not capture the inherent dynamic of change in political action repertoires, it is able to cover the main aspects of the different forms of participation and therefore provides a useful heuristic to denominate the two major types of political activism.

3.3 SUMMARY

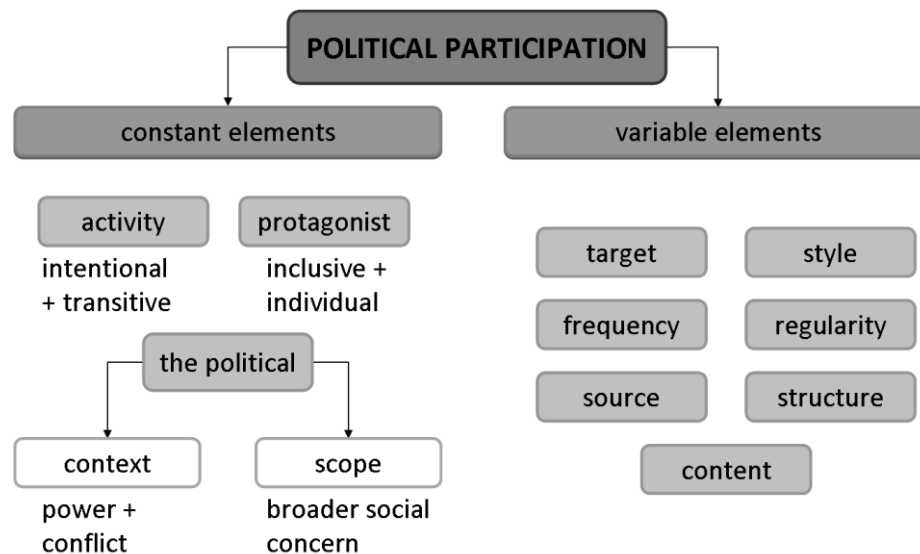
A dynamic analysis of participatory in/equality, preliminarily defined as the indistinguishability of individuals in terms of their political activity, initially requires thorough investigation of the assumed changes in political action repertoires. This investigation itself must again be based on a definition of the underlying concept of political participation that allows for the identification of changes in the first place. Such a definition has to fulfill two basic requirements. It has to be selective enough to allow the unambiguous assignment (or non-assignment respectively) of a phenomenon to this concept; and it has to be open enough to be able to capture possible changes that occur close to the core of the concept. Within this study I try to meet these requirements by, on the one hand, defining indispensable constant elements of political participation that every form of action has to comprise in order to be treated as political participation. On the other hand I define variable elements of political participation which enables me to account for possible changes (see figure 2).

Defining *constant elements* I followed established definitions of empirical research, adapted their accuracy where necessary and ended up defining an act as political participation if the following three criteria are matched:

- 1) The *protagonist* of political participation is the individual, only activities carried out by individuals can be labeled political participation. Additionally political participation is inclusive, i.e. the number of participants must not be formally restricted from the outset. Practices of collective actors and organizations (not individual) as well as restricted and highly specialized forms of engagement (not inclusive) are excluded from the concept of participation.

- 2) Political participation implies some form of *activity*. Attitudes and mere intentions to become politically active are left out of the definition, as is passive behavior. As a form of social action political participation has to be intentional and transitive, i.e. it arises from a conscious will to act and relates to other persons or collective actors. Motivations are considered irrelevant for a classification of an activity as political participation because they are widely blurred in real life practices and they are usually not examined in the respective studies. Rather than building on motivations, I treat any activity as participation that relates to the decision-making process (by claiming, making or evaluating decisions) by *design*.

Figure 3: What is political participation? Constant and variable elements



Source: own illustration

- 3) Political participation must relate to *the political* in a broader sense. As political I refer to activities that relate to decision-making processes in the context of power and conflict and express a broader social concern. As non-political, on the other hand, I refer to participatory processes that are either not characterized by disagreement in both non-power (consensual matters) and power (suppressed politics) relations or whose conflictual intensity is focused on a power-free field (voluntary social

relations). Also activities that solely aim at producing effects for single individuals are not deemed to be political in the way the term has been defined here.

Additional to the constant elements, political participation also encompasses *variable elements* that can be arranged along seven dimensions (target, frequency, regularity, source, style, structure and content). Any activity requires all of these dimensions in order to be called political participation – the specific way in which these dimensions are shaped, however, varies over time and space. Today, at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, we see participation in more traditional forms of action that are oriented towards the nation-state, bounded by institutional rules, geared to permanent and long-time engagement, enacted top-down, organized collectively and hierarchically, and focused on issues of distribution decline, while other forms of action that are oriented towards both state and non-state actors at various levels of governance, institutionally unrestricted, allow for spontaneous, short term, and proactive engagement, are either unorganized or occur within loose networks, and also consider lifestyle and identity issues enjoy growing attendance. These developments offer opportunities for individuals to influence political opinion formation and decision-making processes additional to the established pathways that have not been available in this form three or four decades ago and can therefore be interpreted as a diversification of political action repertoires. In order to account for these changes in political action repertoires, I will differentiate between institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation throughout the rest of this dissertation.

4 PARTICIPATION, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE: NORMATIVE AND ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES ON PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY

The study of democracy is both one of the oldest and most traditional as well as contemporarily most pressing concerns in political science. Thus, a lot has been written about the institutional and substantial foundations of what Winston Churchill has once labeled “the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time”. The existence of a plethora of contributions to the study of democratic rule lead Robert Dahl (1956) to state that there is not a single theory but rather various theories of democracy. Among these countless books and articles, many are concerned with the normative problem of the proper *form* of political activity, i.e. the question *how* democracy should be shaped through the participation of individuals. Much less attention within the debate, however, has been directed to the preceding problem of the adequate *scope* of political activity, i.e. the question *who* should participate in democratic decision making in the first place (Bauböck 2010). During the past three decades this latter issue has mainly been discussed with reference to the disposition of political rights, usually the franchise. Although the so called “boundary problem” (Whelan 1983) or “problem of inclusion” (Dahl 1989) already alludes to the topic of this study and predetermines some

major points of discussion, the issue of participatory in/equality still has to be considered independent of this legal approach to the *who*-question in democratic theory here. As I have outlined above, the dissertation at hand does not intend to discuss the problem of participatory in/equality from a legal perspective as it is the case in the numerous contributions to the boundary debate (e.g. Arrhenius 2005, Goodin 2007, Beckman 2009, Näsström 2011, Song 2012). Instead, in the theoretical section of this thesis I seek to link the “equality of what?” to the “equality of whom?” debate and apply it to the issue of political participation: why should political actions (*what*) actually be equal and *who* should, as a consequence, participate equally?

The purpose of this chapter is to tackle this question. To this end I want to illustrate why and under which circumstances equality in political participation is a desirable goal from a normative point of view. Emanating from the role different theoretical approaches ascribe to political participation in order to guarantee democratic rule (do we need participation at all, where and why?), I try to deduce from these approaches a rationale for participatory in/equality (why or why not equal participation?). In order to provide useful insights within the limits of this dissertation, a normative justification of participatory in/equality must fulfill three important preconditions: Firstly, it must be *compatible with the definition of political participation* elaborated in section two. Secondly, it must *account for the freedom not to be interested and actively involved in politics*. Thirdly, it must be *suited for an empirical implementation* of its constitutive conceptual principles.

To reach this end, this chapter proceeds as follows. In section 4.1 I provide a discussion of the normative justifications of participatory in/equality. Reflecting on how different strands in democratic theory interpret the role of political participation, I present three theoretical approaches which address this task: competitive elitism, participationism and proceduralist pluralism. I argue that these theories stress different functional aspects of political participation and therefore consider the active involvement in opinion formation and decision-making processes partly more (participationism, pluralism), partly less (elitism) essential for democracy in general. As a consequence, coming from either of the three perspectives leads to different conclusions about both *why* participatory equality might be necessary in order to be consonant with basic democratic principles and *how* equality of participation must look like in order to comply with the functional preconditions

of the respective theoretical approach. Section 4.2 takes up the findings of this normative discussion and draws on the pluralist approach, which highlights the democratic role of participation for the protection of interests, for a further elaboration of the question *how interests come into existence* in the first place and, consecutively, *who the major bearers of interests* in a polity are. I use Bourdieu's concept of the habitus as the, in my opinion, best elaborated approach to tackle the problem at hand to argue that interests develop as the result of individual experiences which are again determined by a person's social background, i.e. her position within the structure of society. Based on this argument, I conclude that if we want to adequately capture participatory in/equality in an empirical study we have to link democratic theories of political participation to sociological theories of stratification and social inequality. In section 4.3 I therefore discuss different approaches to the study of social structure and try to systematize them in order to develop a framework for the empirical study of participatory in/equality based on this approaches at the end of the section.

4.1 *EQUALITY AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY: THE FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION*

Recent history of democratic thought contains different approaches that discuss the role of political participation within democratic polities. Compared to early modern approaches contemporary democratic theory is unified by its secular reference point, i.e. the equal worth of all individuals grounded in their humanity. However, controversies exist about both the rationale and the shape of in/equality of political activity. In this section I present three different theoretical approaches and discuss what their positions on participatory in/equality with reference to the *function they ascribe to political participation* (4.1.1 – 4.1.3). I am well aware that the used trichotomy can only give a simplified impression of the broad landscape of contemporary democratic theory. Several approaches are ignored or merely briefly touched (e.g. radical and critical theories, deliberative democracy). However, reducing the existing plethora of theoretical approaches to some of the most relevant works of our times provides heuristic merits that compensate for the minimal amount of conceptual imprecision that comes with it. The used classification refers to the

most prevalent approaches that are considered in most textbooks on democratic theories (Held 2006, Cunningham 2007, Schmidt 2010) which is why I consider the tripartition an adequate basis for all further considerations. After having introduced the three prototypical approaches more generally, I describe their particular perspectives on the in/equality issue in more detail in a fourth subsection (4.1.4) and explain, which perspective offers the most convincing arguments for why equal political participation is necessary for democracy.

4.1.1 CHOOSING RULERS: COMPETITIVE ELITISM

The theory of *competitive elitism*²⁰ regards democracy as a political system, in which rulers emanate from the people in a competition for political leadership positions. Democracy is therefore perceived exclusively as a method of choosing these rulers, so called functional elites, whose task is to keep the political system stable by virtue of their leadership qualities. Following Duverger democracy in these terms does not mean “government of the people, by the people”, as in Lincoln’s famous *Gettysburg Address*, but instead describes a form of “government of the people *by an elite sprung from the people*” (Duverger 1954: 425). From the elitists’ perspective, the selection of rulers results from a market-like competition for the votes of the eligible population. Hereby the roots of competitive elitism are identified in the liberal political theories of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke as well as Adam Smith and (to a lesser extent) John Stuart Mill. These approaches were updated at the beginning of the 20th century, which lead to the emergence of a theoretical tradition that started with Max Weber’s modern idea of a “plebiscitary leader(ship) democracy” (*plebisitäre Führerdemokratie*; Weber 1978: 266f., see also Pakulski/Higley 2008) and was developed further by scholars like Joseph Schumpeter, Giovanni Sartori, Danilo Zolo or Adam Przeworski.

In this dissertation I want to illustrate the competitive-elitist view using the example of Joseph A. Schumpeter’s magnum opus in democratic theory titled *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (first published in 1942). As Schumpeter’s approach simultaneously comprises all constitutive elements of competitive elitism and gives a picture of its implications for everyday politics, I will refer to other authors only if necessary. Very much

²⁰ For the term *competitive elitism* see Held 2006.

like in other elitist approaches, the point of origin in Schumpeter's democratic theory – which he was inclined to label “realistic” (Scheuerman 2009) – was the notion of democracy as a method for the selection of rulers or, to be more precise, for being selected as a ruler: his perspective clearly focuses on those selected rather than on the selectors.²¹ To those chosen, Schumpeter (following the early elite theorists Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto) refers to as “the human material ... of sufficiently high quality“ (1976: 290), which competes for the votes of the population and later constitutes the ruling elite in the form of a distinct political class. Consistent with this definition of democracy, Schumpeter attaches only minor significance to participation in political processes. The basis for this perspective is to be seen in Schumpeter's notion of a “division of labor” between the voters and the parliament²² in functionalist terms. Although Schumpeter accepts the people as the democratic sovereign and the only legitimate source of power, he claims that it fulfills this role only on Election Day by expressing its (dis-)approval of the governing elite and their political agenda. In elitist conceptions of democracy, the only desirable form of political participation is therefore the election of political leaders (see also Sartori 1997: 122). Schumpeter (1976: 295) claims that besides institutional opportunities to influence politicians between elections “also less formal attempts at restricting the freedom of action of members of parliament – the practice of bombarding them with letters and telegrams for instance – ought to come under the same ban“. Political activism beyond electoral turnout, as demanded by the so called “classical” theorists (especially Rousseau), is not part of Schumpeter's ideal any more. Quite the contrary, he even considers political involvement of the population that transcends the act of voting highly questionable.

The idea to reduce public participation to a possible minimum is well-founded in Schumpeter's concept of both the political and human nature. The Schumpeterian model of democracy is based on a narrow and restrictive notion of politics, which merely comprises political institutions like parliaments and governments as well as political elites. To Schumpeter the most important feature of a political system is to keep its government

²¹ Schumpeter's exact definition characterizes „the democratic method ... [as] that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.“ (Schumpeter 1976: 269)

²² “The voters ... must respect the division of labor between themselves and the politicians they elect. They ... must understand that, once they have elected an individual, political action is his business and not theirs.” (Schumpeter 1976: 295)

capable of acting. To this end he claims that “the effective range of political decision should not be extended too far” (Schumpeter 1976: 291). Additionally, he questions the classic liberal idea of the “average” citizen’s ability to make reasonable decisions and doubts that people are able “to observe and interpret correctly the facts that are directly accessible to everyone and to sift critically the information about the facts that are not” (Schumpeter 1976: 253). While Schumpeter considers it possible for individuals to make rational decisions as far as their immediate life-world, e.g. the family or the workplace, is concerned, he refuses to believe that the same is true for a more abstract field of action like the political sphere:

“[T]he typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the sphere of his real interests. He becomes a primitive again. His thinking becomes associative and affective.” (Schumpeter 1976: 262)

This quote illustrates why Schumpeter, together with other proponents of *competitive elitism*, considers democratic rule only to be exercisable by elites. To him, ordinary people constitute nothing but a mass – he disrespectfully speaks of a “rabble” (1976: 242) – of stupid criminals. A similar picture is drawn by Giovanni Sartori who bemoans disinformation, lack of interest and political apathy on part of the masses and in most cases concedes to them no opinion at all (Sartori 1997). Consequently, both Schumpeter and Sartori reject any kind of participation in politics beyond voting as “foolish and dangerous” (Medearis 1997: 829). Inequality in political participation is, thus, not considered to be a problem by theorists of competitive elitism.

4.1.2 DEVELOPING THE SELF AND THE COMMUNITY: PARTICIPATIONISM

Beginning with the 1960s, different critical reactions to the elitist approaches emerged within the theoretical literature. A bulk of literature criticizes Schumpeter’s approach to democratic governance for its thin concept of democracy, its negligence of intermediary organizations (e.g. parties and unions), and the lack of normative claims beyond system stability. One of the most severe criticisms with regard to the topic of participatory in/equality concerns Schumpeter’s concept of human nature. What Emilio Santoro (1993: 130) labels the “Schumpeterian dilemma” refers to the following question: Why should

irrational voters who cannot even identify their individual, let alone more general interests, be able to elect the most capable rulers from a pool of candidates? And why, so the complementary question, should they be capable to deselect them in case of non-performance?

One important strand of democratic theory that tackles these questions is labeled *participationism*²³. Contrary to competitive elitism, participatory approaches put great emphasis on political activism, which is justified with reference to the functions attached to the participatory process itself. Participationists consider democracy not just as a method for the selection of rulers but conceptualize it as a “way of living” (Barber 1984), in which active involvement in decision-making and opinion formation plays a decisive role. Therefore we also speak of an intrinsic approach to political participation. The concept of politics and activism underlying this approach is broad and often referred to as “expansive” (Warren 1992), which clearly distinguishes it from competitive elitism’s restrictive idea of the political. Carol Pateman (1970: 106), one of the major protagonists of the participatory approach, claims that in participationist theory “the scope of the term ‘political’ is extended to cover spheres outside national government” and also demands to regard “industry as a political system”. She clearly identifies a „connection between the public and private spheres“, which can also be found in her later feminist works (e.g. Pateman 1988). Also Bachrach argues for a broader view on “the political”. With regard to David Easton (1965: 57), Bachrach treats private corporations as political leaders because from his perspective they also allocate values authoritatively. Given this position of power of the industry he is convinced that “[l]arge areas within existing so-called private centers of power are political” (Bachrach 1967: 102).

The central functions ascribed to political participation by the participatory approach are self-determination and self-development of the individual. Iris Marion Young refers to self-development and self-determination as the central and uncontroversial characteristics of contemporary conceptions of justice (Young 2000: 31f). Similarly Jürgen Habermas puts the intrinsic value of participation in a nutshell when he states, admittedly quite radically

²³ I borrow the term from Cunningham (2002) and thereby choose not to use the more common term *participatory democracy*. I go for the *-ism* because I consider this kind of term more adequate in order to grasp the nature of a theoretical paradigm instead of some political program for the promotion of political activism or the like.

democratic: “Democracy works for the self-determination of people, and only when the latter is real, the former will be true. Political participation will then be identical to self-determination.” (Habermas et al. 1969: 15; author’s translation) These functional aims can be reached by expanding opportunities to participation to all areas of living. As Carole Pateman (1970: 43) notes in *Participation and Democratic Theory*:

“Finally, the justification for a democratic system [and with it for equality in political participation, FW] in the participatory theory of democracy rests primarily on the human results that accrue from the participatory process. One might characterize the participatory model as one where ... output includes not just policies (decisions) but also the development of the social and political capacities of each individual...”

The educative function of participation, already highlighted by early thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, was picked up by approaches to democratic theory originating from the second half of the 20th century like those of Peter Bachrach, Carole Pateman, Benjamin Barber or Mark Warren. Bachrach (1967: 118f.), aiming to develop a theory of democracy that can meet contemporary challenges in politics, society and economy, considers himself to be situated between the poles of a normatively valid but overly idealistic (Rousseau) and a realistic but elitist position (Schumpeter). To him it is crucial for democracy (and with it democratic theory) to determine self-fulfillment, which includes both self-determination and self-development, as its central goal. As people are only able to gain self-confidence and develop competences through political activity, they have a basic interest not only in the results of decisions but also in the processes of participation. Accounting for this interest in the participatory process equally and thereby reaching an equal outcome, namely the egalitarian self-determination and development of people, requires equality of power, that is, equal participation of all members of a community in decision-making (Bachrach 1967: 108 and 120, footnote 8).²⁴ Carole Pateman (1970) and Benjamin Barber (1984) generally share Bachrach’s appraisal of the necessity of equal political participation for the achievement of self-fulfillment. Especially Barber (1984: 215), who puts the mutual transformation of the human being and the social

²⁴ Revising Bachrach’s critique of democratic elitism Gerraint Parry states in *Political Elite* from 1976: „Indeed, equality appears to be less important than liberty, understood as self-development, to Bachrach [...]“ (Parry 1976: 155) Anyway, given Bachrach’s unambiguous plea for equality of participation and power over decisions and the underlying Rousseauan definition of liberty as obedience to self-determined laws, this statement seems quite incomprehensible.

reality surrounding her to the core of his concept of *Strong Democracy*, considers equal participation the decisive criterion for the quality of democracy in general and the realization of the strong-democratic idea in particular (see also Bevc 2007: 274). Pateman, on the other hand, develops a negative rationale for participation by accusing the predominant “contemporary theory of democracy” to feature deficits in the area of self-determination and self-development as to be empirically observed by self-reported political efficacy. In Pateman’s participationism inequalities in political participation of any kind whatsoever must inevitably lead to an inadequate self-development of the non-involved individual. This argumentation not only comprises a critique of predominant democratic theory, but also changes the whole perspective on the topic of political competences and political interest: While one of the most influential arguments against mass political participation on part of elitist theory used to be grounded on the lack of interest and capabilities of people, Pateman reverses the argument by stating that the observed disinterest and apparent incompetence are *vice versa* caused by just this non-participation. Participatory equality, on the other hand, in these terms creates both interested and capable political individuals.

The same considerations – that political apathy and ignorance are products of a lack of political participation, and that this deficit can be overcome through self-transformation of the citizen – also form the basis of Mark Warren’s theoretical approach. Nevertheless Warrens four-dimensional model of a *Democratic Theory of Self-Transformation* (1992) adds the notion that more democracy also improves governability by causing the citizen to submit to the functional imperatives of community, learn consensual modes of conflict management and facilitate community-oriented decisions through a process of self-transformation (Warren 1992: 11-13). Political participation thus does not only affect self-fulfillment but also has an impact on communities and forms of political organization. Therefore an effect of participation can also be observed beyond the individual. Also Pateman (1970: 43) acknowledges the integrative effect of political participation in terms of community-building even though she, like Bachrach, seems to be more imprecise with regard to this question. Barber (1984: 213-260) on the other hand attaches great importance to the aim of transforming the social condition of the citizens from the separation inherent in liberal societies to the political community of strong democracy, and even though he

denies the existence of an a priori common good, he highlights the possibility to create community as “one of the chief tasks of political activity in the participatory mode”. (Barber 1984: 133) Although participatory equality seems to play only an implicit role in Barber’s theoretical concept, he emphasizes its importance indirectly by criticizing its marginal role in conceptions of “thin” democracy: „Representation is incompatible with equality.... In the absence of community, equality is a fiction“ (Barber 1984: 146).²⁵ Equality of participants is therefore an indispensable precondition in participatory approaches to democratic theory.

4.1.3 PROTECTING INTERESTS: PROCEDURALIST PLURALISM

Parallel to participationism, a strand labeled *pluralism* emerged in democratic theory during the 1960s. This approach took a prominent role during the following 20 years and still resonates clearly in contemporary political science (Cunningham 2002, Schmidt 2010). Pluralism took up general ideas from competitive elitism and developed them further in some crucial points by taking on the criticism originally formulated by the participationists. Similar to elitists, also pluralist scholars hold the view that it is the procedures through which rulers are selected that distinguish democratic from non-democratic systems. In opposition to the elitist model proponents of the pluralist approach, however, unanimously and vehemently criticize the “irresponsibility of political power based on the principle of leadership” (Neumann 1986: 259, author’s translation). Instead of analyzing political elites and their competition for positions of political power, pluralists put social conflicts about antagonistic interests to the center of their analyses (Cunningham 2002: 73). The focus on interests is probably the major characteristic of pluralist democratic theory that has its roots in liberal approaches (Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill) but also gives room to classical theorists like Jean-Jacques Rousseau in order to account for the criticism on the part of the participationists. In the following I will therefore elaborate a little further on the interest-based approach to participation rooted in pluralist democracy.

²⁵ In a short textbook Jack H. Nagel accuses Barber of even condemning equality in their early works and subordinating it to the quality of community and participation (Nagel 1987: 65). I consider this to be a selective reading of the authors that simply ignores central aspects of their argumentation. On the contrary participatory democracy does not contrast participation and equality as exclusionary alternatives but explicate the latter as a precondition for the former to fulfill its societal function.

I illustrate the theory of pluralism as exemplified by the works of Robert A. Dahl, not least because his approach can be considered prototypical for current pluralist approaches per se. I especially consider his more recent books *Democracy and Its Critics* (1989) and *On Democracy* (1998), in which he basically integrates the arguments developed in his older books *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (1957) and *Polyarchy* (1971). Although Dahl is certainly not the only scholar who contributed to the emergence and advancement of pluralism²⁶, his opus can be considered as the most sophisticated and most frequently cited elaboration of the pluralist approach. Following Gary Schaal (2007) I decided to label Dahl's version of pluralism (*liberal*) *proceduralism*²⁷, in order to emphasize its focus on political processes and similarly distinguish it from Ernst Fraenkel's more state-centered form of neo-pluralism (Schmidt 2010). In his theory of the democratic process Dahl tries to find a rationale for why the democratic state represents the best mode of government.²⁸ He builds his theory around a concept of the political that differs from both the election-centered concept we find in elitist theories and the holistic concept promoted by participationists. However, it is interesting to observe how Dahl's idea of the political varies from being quite narrow and restricted to the actors and institutions of representative democracy in his empirical analyses, to comparatively open in his more conceptual and introductory works. While, for example, in *Who governs?* (1961) he emanates from a narrow conception of politics when analyzing the local decision-making power of individuals, interest groups and government in New Haven, CT, in his 1963 book *Modern Political Analysis* Dahl defines a political system as "any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, control, influence, power, or authority" (Dahl 1963: 4). Obviously the latter definition is quite closer (though still not identical) to the one the participationists use, while the former is more or less compatible with an elitist concept.

Dahl treats democracy as a connection between citizens and the political system; to him participation in decision-making is therefore a crucial feature of democratic systems. In

²⁶ Alongside Dahl the most renowned proponents of pluralism are Harold Laski (*A Grammar of Politics*, 1925) and Ernst Fraenkel (*Deutschland und die westlichen Demokratien*, 1964).

²⁷ This term is also used by Gutmann and Thompson (1996).

²⁸ Although Dahl's approach is most commonly referred to as an empirical theory of democracy, he also explicitly accentuates normative aspects. Especially the limitation of political power through the maximization of civic autonomy ranks high among his theoretical elaborations. The remarks of this section mainly deal with the normative, less with the empirical aspects of Dahl's work.

proceduralist terms, the functional role of political participation is neither to simply select rulers nor to permit self-development within a community. Rather, participation serves to enable individuals to express and realize their interests – we also speak of an instrumental approach to political participation (Verba 2003).²⁹ In his works Dahl therefore tries to justify why it is crucial for the protection of the citizens' interests to participate in the making of collectively binding decisions. This justification is found in Dahl's concept of human nature, which seems far more positive than Schumpeter's and resembles the optimistic account typical for participatory approaches. It is based on a fictitious concept that appears trivial at first glance: the *idea of intrinsic equality* indicates that no human being is superior to another in terms of his or her life, liberty or luck. Thus every person does not only have the right to express his or her interests within the political process, but is also entitled to claim that all interests are considered equally (Dahl 1998: 65). Despite the general validity of this argument, it does not explain why equal participation should be an essential democratic criterion. After all, intrinsic equality and protection of interests could also be guaranteed by so called *guardians* (Dahl 1998: 69ff.). These guardians, contrary to the individuals, claim to be able to identify the common good and guarantee with their knowledge to produce this common good in terms of the equal protection of interests. Because it is insignificant or maybe even impedimentary for the identification and protection of interests if a person translates her own interest into a wrong preference³⁰, participation is not a desirable goal in this view. Nevertheless, Dahl mentions several reasons why final decisions should not be made by the guardians:

1. The crucial argument in favour of transferring decision-making power to the guardians is their expertise (knowledge of the common good). Dahl argues that while it is reasonable to delegate certain minor decisions to experts (e.g. to physicians about the best therapy for a disease), basic decisions (e.g. whether to treat or not to treat the disease at all) always have to be made by the person concerned.

²⁹ The liberal-proceduralist approach is often associated with a model of democracy that treats political participation as a means of influencing decisions made by political elites (*responsive model*, Teorell 2006). In my opinion this perception is too narrow and also those forms of participation that allow for direct decision-making on part of those involved can be analyzed with regard to instrumental aspects.

³⁰ Schaal and Heidenreich (2006: 25) provide an example for illustration: if a person A expresses a preference x, but person B knows that preference y would actually lead to better results for A, interests were only considered adequately if B decided on preference y instead of x against the will of A. Based on the idea of intrinsic equality and the equal consideration of interests there is no conclusive argument for A insisting on her original preference x.

2. While in politics many decisions are to be made on factual issues, the most resolutions rather concern ethical than scientific judgments. Thus scientific knowledge alone can never be the single basis of a decision or resolution.
3. Taking necessary political measures requires more than knowledge, precisely also resistibility against corruption and the seductions of power. It takes more than professionally skilled experts to make qualified political leaders.
4. Lastly the question who actually appoints the guardians comes up. Who elects the first guardians? Who the next ones? All these problems persist.

On the basis of these objections, Dahl (1998: 75) concludes: “Among adults no persons are so definitely better qualified than others to govern that they should be entrusted with complete and final authority over the government of state“. Turned to a positive meaning this statement leads to the two premises that “a substantial proportion of adults are adequately qualified to govern themselves“ (*strong principal of equality*) and that “everyone should be assumed to be the best judge of his or her own good or interests“ (*presumption of personal autonomy*) (Dahl 1989: 97ff.). Dahl supports his reservations about the deficits of a paternalistic, expertocratic concept of democracy with his normative perception that the idea of intrinsic equality can only be realized if people have the permission to protect their interests themselves. This perception he maintains with the empirical observation – or, in Dahl’s sophisticated wording, with the “preponderant weight of human experience“ (Dahl 1998: 78) –, that people lacking the opportunity to formulate and protect their interests themselves have always been ignored throughout history (slaves, poor people, workers, women). Given these arguments – especially by virtue of the *presumption of personal autonomy* – participatory equality plays a crucial role in pluralist approaches to democracy.

4.1.4 PARTICIPATORY EQUALITY AS REPRESENTATIVE INTERESTS

Throughout the previous pages I have introduced three theoretical approaches that provide different perspectives on a rationale for participatory equality based on the functional role that is ascribed to political participation in the democratic process. These approaches are labeled competitive elitism, participationism, and proceduralist pluralism. However, this

section aims to go more into detail by raising questions about *how these functional arguments relate to the specific arrangement of participatory in/equality*. How shall equal participation in politics look like according to the theoretical approaches that ascribe participation at least a minimum relevance for democracy? Referring to the general definition of in/equality outlined in the introduction I ask more precisely: which “entity” shall be indistinguishable, that is, *what* exactly shall be equal in participation? And what does the answer to this question imply for how participatory in/equality is conceptualized?

As a result of its narrow concept of the political as well as its negative concept of human nature, the theory of *competitive elitism* as elaborated most prominently by Joseph Schumpeter does not credit political participation any relevance beyond voting. Given that for Schumpeter only the rule of functional elites can guarantee system stability, he puts the competition for votes that brings about these elites to the center of his theoretical approach. Thereby, however, he loses sight of the fact that this consideration conflicts with his anthropological basics. If people were generally unable to make reasonable decisions, it would seem irrational to grant them even the most basal participation rights. In terms of a functional perspective on democratic theories, this means that individual participation in political processes plays no essential role in competitive elitism. It is therefore impossible to derive either a rationale for participatory equality or analytical categories for any further empirical analysis based on a Schumpeterian model of democracy. As John Medearis (1997: 831) put it:

“Both the force of arguments for democratic participation and the actual historical significance of struggles over the scope of inclusion and participation are lost when democracy is viewed merely as an institutional arrangement fostering elite competition.”

Due to its narrow conception of as well as its general disdain of popular involvement in politics, the elitist approach is not suited for further analyses in this dissertation as it does not satisfy two of three of the initially verbalized preconditions for the utilization of normative theories: it is neither compatible with the definition of political participation outlined in chapter two nor are the resulting evaluations of participatory in/equality applicable to empirical research. For these reasons, I will not consider this approach in the analytical considerations to follow.

For *participationism*, on the other hand, democracy is not just a form of government but rather a “mode of being” (Benhabib 1996) or “way of living” (Barber 1984). While elitist approaches justify non-participation by a lack of competence and amount of interest on part of the average citizen, the participatory approach offers an intrinsic argument for participatory equality – it considers participation indispensable for enabling people to live a life characterized by self-determination and overcome political apathy. Additionally, equal participation not only influences individuals themselves, but also produces legitimacy of decisions and integration of the community. But how do participatory democrats define equality? As mentioned, all participatory theorists consider the development of the individual towards a self-determined human being the central function of political participation. Participationism therefore aims at the creation of an emancipated citizen within an entirely democratic community. Given this fact, it seems obvious that from the participationists’ point of view every single person who is rightfully entitled to participate in decision-making shall make use of his or her right. Similarly, the building of a community oriented towards the common good demands participation of every citizen in politics. Participatory equality in these terms must therefore be interpreted as *all-inclusiveness*. From an analytical point of view this means that the normative claim for equal participation is violated as soon as one person drops out, regardless of who she is or why she remains inactive. The participationists’ view on equality is therefore an individualistic one which ignores (a) the right to non-participation and (b) the society in which the individual (non-)participant is embedded. It is thus not a coincidence that empirical examinations dealing with the study of in/equality in participation have rarely built on a participatory notion of the functions ascribed to political action (see also Mansbridge 1999). Notwithstanding the normative insights participationism provides in the study of activism, its analytical value is therefore limited, which is why I will not consider the approach during the empirical analyses of this dissertation.

Finally, *proceduralist pluralism* refers to democracy’s function of aggregating and processing the manifold interests present within society. In this view, political participation is a way of conveying these interests into the political sphere. As every person is best suited to realize his or her own interests, it seems necessary for people to participate in the process of decision-making personally and equally. In this sense, the proceduralist approach

emphasizes the importance of equal participation in politics just as the participatory approach does. Contrary to the participatory argument, however, the pluralist approach tackles the equality question in a much more multifaceted way. It builds on the idea that all interests entering the political process through participation must have the same impact on political outcomes. The instrumental approach thus does not treat equality as all-inclusiveness, but as *representativeness*. In order to be considered equal, it is not necessary that all individuals participate in political opinion formation and decision-making processes, but that all interests are represented equally and relative to their manifestation within the population in these processes (Schlozman et al. 2012). Viewing participatory in/equality as (lack of) representativeness based on the flexible notion of the political provided by pluralists enables us to conceptualize participation as an opportunity instead of an obligation thereby accounting for the right to non-participation.

To sum up the arguments of section 3.1, we can state that, for different reasons, both competitive elitism and participationism do not offer adequate foundations for an empirical analysis of participatory in/equality. While the former draws on a narrow conception of the political and considers participation as unimportant for the functioning of democracy, the latter does not tolerate non-participation because for participationists equality must be treated as synonymous with all-inclusion in order to reach individual self-development. Only procedural pluralism with its flexible notion of the political and its emphasis on participatory equality as representativeness of interests is able to accept if people make use of their right to not participate in politics. Whether this perspective can also provide the analytical tools for an empirical examination of un/equal participation shall be investigated in the following sections.

4.2 *HOW INTERESTS RELATE TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: SOCIALLY MEDIATED GUIDES OF ACTION*

How can the procedural-pluralist conception of equality as representativeness of interests, which describes a theoretical standard in democratic theory, be applied to empirical analysis? To answer this question – a question that is crucial for the intention of this dissertation, namely to *derive an analytical strategy to scrutinizing in/equality in political*

participation from this normative position – I first have to tackle a seemingly simple problem: I have to understand the meaning of the term interest. The pathway to elaborate on this rather conceptual problem is provided in the following subsection 4.2.1 by distinguishing the concept of interest from similar terms like the “general will” or the “common good” as well as – and this differentiation is crucial – the term “needs”. In a second step, in subsection 4.2.2, I describe in detail the social roots of interests and explain how interests translate into social (and therefore also political) action, that is: how interests mediate between the structure of a society and the behavior of individuals. I will argue that the concept of the *habitus* as developed by Pierre Bourdieu provides a helpful tool to understand interests as “socially mediated guides of action” and can therefore advance the intention of connecting normative to analytical theories of participatory in/equality.

4.2.1 THE SOCIALITY AND DETERMINISM OF INTERESTS

Let us start with a closer look at interests. Given the prominent position of the term interest in both social sciences and everyday language, the scholarly literature we find on this topic is surprisingly sparse. Only few authors address the problem of the meaning and location of interests in society comprehensively. Therefore the few books and articles on the topic of interests, which mostly seem to have a more lexical than truly theoretical character, describe the term in very different and inconclusive ways. These somehow exceptional works were to a large part published in the 1970s and early 1980s in both German (e.g. Neuendorff 1973, Weber 1977, Massing 1979, von Alemann/Forndran 1983, Massing/Reichel 1985) and English language (Balbus 1970, Connolly 1974, Hirschman 1978, Schmitter 1981). Richard Swedberg’s book *Interest: A Reader* published in 2005 is to my knowledge the only contemporary contribution to the debate.

Very basically, interests can be defined as stable long-term orientations and dispositions guiding the actions of individuals and groups within a social environment with the aim of making direct or indirect benefit³¹ (Weber 1977, Heinze 1981). In this spirit I regard

³¹ The term “interests” is not restricted with regards to contents in any way whatsoever. It covers not only material, but also immaterial aspects. Also the term “benefit” is not strictly defined economically, as was the case when the term first appeared in the Middle Ages. As Hirschman (1978: 32) put it: “When the term ‘interest’ ... gained currency in Western Europe during the late sixteenth century, its meaning was by no

interests as (a) dispositions of social action that (b) interact with the structural characteristics of a social field and from which (c) an actor aspires to derive (effective or putative) advantage for either herself or some other individual or group (Patzelt 2003). This first definition lays the foundations for all further considerations about the interest term towards a normatively sound analysis of participatory in/equality. It is, however, crucial to dwell on some constitutive aspects and describe them in more detail in order to elaborate the concept of interest in an analytically stable form. To this end I want to draw classificatory boundaries between interest and two related yet distinct terms.

On the one hand interest must be distinguished from the concept of the *general will*. As opposed to the sum of particular interests, the general will represents what everybody wants or, put differently: what is in everybody's interest, and with it the common good (Schaal/Heidenreich 2006: 139-152). In these terms, the general will as a higher ranking virtue serving the common good resembles what is sometimes labeled in the literature as public interest. A bulk of the scientific literature, especially the writings of the early pluralists in the US, perceive the common good (or the public interest) as resulting from the conflict of opposing interests (Truman 1951, Bentley 1967). However, this interpretation of the common good/public interest is subject to severe criticism. While some approaches act on the assumption that it is possible to determine a common good/public interest *a priori* or at least to reach this state by a balance of differing interests, others note that diverse actors will always interpret the common good in distinct ways according to their ideological orientation. In this sense, another problem arises: the one who disposes of the proper instruments of power has better chances to define the common good/public interest than the one who does not (von Beyme 1980). Even the result of a procedural balance of interests is therefore merely a compromise favoring some claims over others while some remain unheard. The term interest thus always stands for some kind of *self*-interest, albeit in terms of an interest of the self (as in individualism), not as being exclusively interested in the self (as in egoism). As already noted by Georg W.F. Hegel (1861: 78), a certain to-be-specified type of conflict is an integral aspect of interest: "[I]nterest is present only when there is opposition." At the same time, there is no such thing as a superior idea in terms of a general

means limited to the material aspects of a person's welfare; rather, it comprised the totality of human aspirations"

will or public interest. A compromise approximating these concepts cannot be captured with the term interest, it rather contradicts its basic conceptual intentions (Weber 1977).

Another differentiation that is of major importance for the study at hand is that of interest(s) from need(s). The crucial point in this differentiation – a differentiation which can already be found in Immanuel Kant’s *The Metaphysics of Morals* (first published in 1786) – is that interests as dispositions for action are deemed to develop in the relationship between the individual and her social environment. Following Rolf G. Heinze (1981: 37) personal interests interrelate with the social structure and the political power constellations within a society while needs, in contrast, are linked exclusively to the individual.³² In these terms we must understand interests, contrary to needs, as reactions to structural conditions. A similar argument can be found in the work of Philippe C. Schmitter (1981, 2006), who analyzes the interdependence of needs and interests in more detail. Schmitter illustrates the social process of the transformation of unfiltered human needs into institutionalized political interest groups and organizations and calls this process the “funnel of interest politics”. In the first step of this process individual needs are translated into collective interests. Schmitter considers interests to necessarily be a collective phenomenon, because they “are rooted in unavoidable relations of dependence upon others” (Schmitter 2006: 12).³³ From this rootedness in social relationships results also the deliberate nature of interests. To Schmitter, unlike the unfiltered variety and volume of needs among the population, interests are consciously defined. However, as opposed to concerns or – to make use of a stronger term – preferences (Connolly 1974), interests can be silent and unexpressed. In a similar way, Isaac Balbus (1970) outlines two possible meanings of the term interest: on the one hand it used as an expression of “being interested in something” which hints at Schmitter’s concept of concern; on the other hand the term might also stand for “having an interest” which refers to the more passive yet conscious aspect of what Schmitter labeled interests. These definitions also resemble what has even earlier been labeled “latent” interests in the work of Ralf Dahrendorf. Dahrendorf (1959) defines latent interests as relatively vague wishes, aims, and ideas and distinguishes these from so called

³² According to this definition, also animals have needs while interests are only developed by humans.

³³ A very similar (and much-cited) definition can be found in Jürgen Weber’s *Die Interessengruppen im politischen System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* from 1977. He specifies interests as “aims or needs guiding the behavior of individuals or groups within a social environment” (Weber 1977: 33; own translation).

“manifest” interests, which approximately correspond to Schmitter’s concept of concerns or Connolly’s concept of preferences.³⁴ Despite differences in terminology Dahrendorf, like Schmitter and Balbus, illustrates how (latent) interests are at the same time more specific than vague needs and more open than explicit concerns or preferences. What Dahrendorf and Balbus statically put on the same level is, for the first time ever, arranged (chronologically) by Schmitter. By doing so he emphasizes the procedural structure of interest expression through which it is enabled to acquire its social character in the first place.

Summing up, interests can be classified as socially mediated but individually expressed dispositions of human action. Consequently interest is at the same time always *self-interest*, i.e. interest of the self, and *social* interest, i.e. interest shaped by and related to society. It must therefore be distinguished from related concepts like the general will or public interest on the one hand and the personal needs on the other. In this dissertation, I therefore emanate from the idea that interests can neither be aggregated to a general will or public interest nor that “an individual’s interest is simply what he says it is” (Bachrach 1975: 39f.). But what do these conceptual remarks entail for the analytical relation between interests and political participation? Which conclusions can be drawn about the roots of interests within the structure of society and thereby the main bearers of interests from the general insight that interests are socially conditioned? And what do these conclusions imply for the empirical study of participatory in/equality? These questions shall be tackled in the following subsection.

4.2.2 THE ROOTS OF INTERESTS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF INTERESTS INTO ACTION

Above I have defined interests loosely as “socially mediated guides of action”. Throughout the following section I now long to substantiate this definition by asking for the origin and development of interests as well as the specific relationship between interests and action. A first glance at the respective literature reveals that the adequate perspective on interests as dispositions for human action is contested and that there is no single unambiguous position

³⁴ Actually Dahrendorf (1959: 237) describes latent interests as not “necessarily being conscious to their incumbents “, which means that they are unconscious until they become manifest. Nevertheless Dahrendorf’s differentiation of latent and manifest interests seems to correspond well to Schmitter’s differentiation of interests and concerns/preferences which is why I tend to accept this minor conceptual fuzziness at this point. However, as others might think differently, I am willing to accept criticism in this case.

concerning this problem (Swedberg 2005). While some theorists deny any association between interest, human action and social structure with reference to other concepts and forms of cognition³⁵, the major part of sociological approaches decidedly acknowledges a more or less strong relation between these three phenomena. These works indicate that interests do not only feature a certain amount of normative relevance by providing a rationale for the democratic necessity of equal participation. By linking social structure to human action interests are additionally regarded to fulfill an analytical function.

Already early thinkers like Gustav Ratzenhofer, Albion Small, Arthur Bentley and Max Weber considered interests to play a central role in the explanation of human action. While, however, Ratzenhofer considered interests to be inborn rather than acquired, Small criticized Ratzenhofer for his biologicistic way of reasoning and introduced the notion of society into the strand of literature that intended to explain the genesis of interests. Small's general idea that interests are determined by social structure was further elaborated by Bentley, who came up with the idea that social groups and not individuals or any other entity shall be considered the bearers of interests and therefore the basic unit of society. Additional to his notion of groups as the bearers of interests, Bentley also thinks about how these groups come into being. In his view, interests/groups are to be defined in relation to other interests/groups and society emerges from the dynamics resulting from this relationship. For Bentley, society could therefore not be imagined without reference to groups and their interests. According to these findings, contemporary social sciences do not consider interests to be determined biologically/genetically, but study them against the background of experiential and historical effects. Groups, not individuals, are regarded as

³⁵ Not all approaches in sociological theory consider interests relevant for the analytical connection of social action and the constitution of society. Quite the contrary, social systems thinkers like Talcott Parsons (as well as his student Niklas Luhmann) criticize the methodological individualism of certain approaches within the social sciences and accuse them of hampering rather than facilitating relevant findings. As functionalists claim, not the actor and her actions and interests should be at the center of social science analyses, but the systems as well as the norms inscribed to them. To Parsons (1964: 404) these norms are the "ultimate source of power", while he treats interests as "a brittle thing" (Swedberg 2005). Also contemporary authors like John Meyer (1977, 2000), who is considered one of the founders of new institutionalism, adopt the system thinkers' skepticism as regards the concept of interest being the (rational) basis of individual and collective action. Criticism is therefore focused on the idea that interests, conceived as a rational calculus, can control human action independent of other factors. I will consider these objections throughout the rest of the analytical considerations within this section. Specifically I will neither (a) treat interests as the result of a purely rational calculus (see above) nor will I (b) act on the assumption that interests are independent of the actors biographical experiences or social surroundings (see below). However, I will not go into detail of either functionalist or new institutionalist theory in these analytical sections.

the sole bearer of interests. But is there also a concrete conceptual approach that captures these arguments in a more comprehensive way? In the following paragraphs I want to outline my approach of linking society to action through interests on the basis of Swedberg's idea of *signpost* and, above all, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, that enables us to take an analytical path towards the investigation of participatory in/equality as in/equality of social interests.

As already indicated, one of the most recent discussions of the relationship between interests, human action and society was initiated by US sociologist Richard Swedberg (2005). Deducing his concept of interest, Swedberg makes use of an analogy first introduced by Ludwig Wittgenstein in order to illustrate the importance of socially mediated interests as the mainspring for social and thus political action. Following Swedberg, interests act as "signposts" that partly navigate individual action. The metaphor points up two things: on the one hand it makes clear that the signpost determines the direction but not the details of the path towards interest satisfaction. While a person might be given a certain idea of orientation by her interests in order to obtain what she aspires, she will not be told by her interests how to exactly get there.³⁶ On the other hand, the analogy of the signpost clarifies that interests are located beyond the individual. This means that not the individual controls her interests but that interests determine the direction of the individual – in these terms interests are all but purely subjective. Swedberg assumes that the determinations are caused by the individual's belonging to a certain social unit. For Swedberg, the term interest therefore covers both a subjective and an objective aspect of human action. It acts as a broker between individualistic and structuralist modes of perception and explanation, thus also between the individual and society.

Swedberg's approach to making the concept of interest applicable for action theory is by all means inspiring, yet poorly elaborated on a theoretical level. In sociological literature, especially in the mentioned classics, we can find scattered manifestations of similar considerations. A full theoretical account of the role interests play for human action as well

³⁶ To highlight this idea, Swedberg quotes Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*: "Does the sign-post [sic!] leave no doubt open about the way I have to go? Does it shew which direction I have to take when I have passed it; whether along the road or the footpath or cross-country? ... So I can say, the sign-post does after all leave no room for doubt. Or rather: it sometimes leaves room for doubt and sometimes not. And now this is no longer a philosophical proposition, but an empirical one." (Wittgenstein 1986: 39f.)

as the societal roots of interests still seems to be a desideratum in sociological research. What seems to come closest to this desideratum at least on a conceptual level – and what also strongly resembles Swedberg’s signpost – is Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of habitus³⁷ as an intermediate principle between individual and society, between agency and structure. As habitus is probably the most substantial concept aimed at explaining the relation between interests and action but also the genesis of interests, I want to give Bourdieu’s ideas some room at this point.

In his works, Bourdieu developed what he called “partial theories of the social” (Bourdieu et al. 1991), which should provide scholars with an ensemble of theoretical and methodical tools that allow them to examine a plethora of different social phenomena. In his well-arranged introduction to Bourdieu’s work, Schwingel (2011) refers to these conceptual instruments as a “perspective” because, depending on the specific research question, they can be flexibly applied to the respective subject matter. For the study at hand I am especially interested in the concept of habitus, because it allows us to make statements about (a) the connection between interests and actions as well as (b) the origin of these interests within the structure of society. We can therefore also characterize Bourdieu’s theory of habitus as a “theory of the mode of generation of practices” (Bourdieu 1977: 72) through which one of the major problems in sociology, namely that of the relationship between agency and structure, maybe cannot be entirely solved but can at least be put one step closer to a final solution.

Bourdieu developed his theory of habitus across the entirety of his scientific works and in this course applies it to a number of different subject areas (including himself as a sociologist and political activist, cf. Bourdieu 2007). Thereby the concept of habitus turns out to be an acutely robust, theoretically founded and empirically sound component of both Bourdieu’s macro-sociological theory of society as well as his micro-sociological theory of action (Hillebrandt 1999). Throughout his writings, Bourdieu defines habitus as a “system of dispositions” which acts as a “durably installed generative principle of regulated

³⁷ I am well aware that the term interest can also be found at some point of Bourdieu’s work (especially Bourdieu 1998: ch. 4). However he seems to use it in a broader sense of “being interested” in a social field instead of “having an interest” in terms of a disposition to act in a certain way. Swedberg’s idea of a signpost is much closer to Bourdieu’s concept of habitus than to his concept of interest which is why I chose to refer to the former here.

improvisations” (Bourdieu 1977: 78). With this definition he is able to capture the habitus’ attribute as a “*structuring structure*” that to a certain amount “generate[s] and organize[s] practices and representations” (Bourdieu 1990: 53) which characteristically take the same form independent of time and space. The first thing to be discussed here is therefore the impact of habitus on human action. As structuring structure, habitus comprises three aspects, we can also speak of regulatory schemes, in Bourdieu’s work: 1. schemes of perception that cover the sensual aspect of everyday cognition; 2. schemes of thought that comprise cognitive, ethical and aesthetic standards of evaluation; and 3. schemes of action that are equivalent with the individual and collective practices of actors (Schwingel 2011: 62). The question arising against this background is: how do interests fit into this set of schemes? If we adopt a broad understanding of interests as dispositions, mindset or moral judgments, we can certainly subsume them under the schemes of thought. They can be considered as the assessment of facts based on a cognitive-evaluative process going on within the human mind. As such interests form the conscious³⁸ and intellectual aspect of habitus, or what Bourdieu calls *ethos*, which can be separated from the somatic aspect of habitus, referring to Aristotle Bourdieu speaks of *hexis* in this case (Bourdieu 1977). Together with other factors, interests hence form the habitus as a principle that guides human cognition, thought and action within the different fields that make up the social space. Through its effect as “structuring structure”, however, the habitus affects not only individual actions, it also exerts a – by trend conservative – influence on the constitution of society “by providing itself with a milieu to which it is as pre-adapted as possible, that is, a relatively constant universe of situations tending to reinforce its dispositions by offering the market most favorable to its products.” (Bourdieu 1990: 61) Habitus seeks to reinforce itself, it looks for affirmation rather than challenge. Therefore, using the theory of habitus it is much easier to explain social stability than to explain social change. Nonetheless, the

³⁸ Bourdieu characterizes the habitus as “quasi-conscious” or “only very partially ... conscious” (Bourdieu 1984: 174) at various points of his work. However, this should not suggest that Bourdieu considers the habitus as unconscious in a psychological sense; what the author means by using the term is just that people forget about the circumstances of the emergence of the habitus. In these terms the habitus is being activated within consciousness, yet it cannot be consciously controlled or changed (Rehbein/Saalmann 2009: 112). That actions are conscious in terms that they are activations of the habitus does not contradict the fact that Bourdieu, following Leibniz, thinks that people “are automatons in three quarters of what ... [they] do” (Bourdieu 1984: 474). An automatic action might not be chosen freely, but it can still be conscious in the sense referred to above.

concept of habitus enables us to view social reproduction from a perspective that combines macro and micro elements.

The habitus (as practical sense) is thus mainly responsible for the regulation of human action. Anyway the habitus does not completely determine these activities, it rather guides action by providing a framework that acts as an aid to orientation for the individual. Based on this framework, the individual can now make her “regulated improvisations”. For that reason the human being is neither independent creator of her practices nor mere imitator of memorized behavioral patterns in Bourdieu’s theory. The habitus and its effect on action must then be evaluated similarly to Swedberg’s signpost: the direction and goal are predetermined, but the individual can choose how to get there with comparatively broad room for maneuver. Or, put differently: actions are individual only within the confines of habitually determined opportunities. To illustrate the effect of the habitus Bourdieu refers to the idea of generative grammar introduced by Noam Chomsky in his 1965 book *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Similar to grammar, that permits building an infinite number of sentences according to certain rules and within fixed boundaries, the habitus permits the individual countless variations of action – again within specific patterns and boundaries. The emerging freedom of action can thus be described as “conditioned and conditional freedom” (Bourdieu 1990: 55).

However, Bourdieu also criticizes Chomsky fundamentally in his work. Unlike Chomsky, who considers the universal grammar of the individual as being genetically inherited (such as Ratzenhofer considers interests to be biologically determined), Bourdieu treats the habitus as being formed by society. Habitus is therefore described as “*structured structure*” in the sense that it is not inborn but acquired through the interaction with others. Bourdieu calls this mode of acquisition socialization, which mainly comprises individual experiences in the course of upbringing and training (Bourdieu/Wacquant 1992). By referring to experiences Bourdieu clarifies that the habitus is not something that is learned in intellectual terms but, as mentioned, acquired through experience.³⁹ So called “early experiences” are considered to be of major importance with regard to the genesis of

³⁹ The idea that habitus originates from experiences also invigorates Robert Dahl’s argument (as cited in section 3.1.3) that every person is deemed to be “the best judge of his or her own interests”. Anne Phillips points out the link between the ability of a person to realize her own interests and the fact that these interests are based on experience (as opposed to other modes of learning): “[N]o amount of thought or sympathy, no matter how careful or honest, can jump the barriers of experience” (Phillips 1994: 89).

habitus. But the habitus is not only shaped in the formative years of childhood and adolescence, it keeps being formed during adulthood, albeit with declining impact as existing dispositions tend to stabilize over time (König 2003: 54). Thus the habitus is not generally fixed but can be changed in the course of lived experiences – for example by a change of engagement in different social fields – which bestows the concept of habitus with a certain dynamic element that had been neglected in the abovementioned definition of habitus as structuring structure (Bourdieu 1990: 60). At the same time the habitus is nevertheless inertial and reveals a constant tendency to self-reproduction. Bourdieu labels this phenomenon *hysteresis* (Sunderland 2009).

The habitus is formed through experiences that are made at different social locations. To Bourdieu, the most important of these locations are the family and the school as “agents of socialization” (Grusec/Hastings 2007). Depending on everyday practices within the family, for example, children tend to adopt and imitate basic dispositions, e.g. relating to the definition of gender roles and gender-specific division of labor within the household, already very early in their lives. In succession, schools and other organizations a person passes through over the years (especially during adolescence and early adulthood) generate a secondary or specific habitus through which the primary or general habitus acquired in the family can be either consolidated, loosened or modified (Bourdieu 2000). All these experiences should not be interpreted as random or without pattern, but must be understood as a function of social structures. Habitus formation is significantly predetermined by social structure, i.e. the specific position an individual holds within the composition of society.⁴⁰ Similarly it is also shaped by history, that is: it adapts to changing conditions and situations and therefore also considers the social mobility of actors. The social and historical determination of habitus, however, refers to the same underlying idea:

“Since the history of the individual is never anything other than a certain specification of the collective history of his group or class, *each individual system of dispositions* may be seen as a *structural variant* of all the other group or class habitus, expressing the difference between trajectories and positions inside or outside the class.” (Bourdieu 1977: 86, emphasis in original)

⁴⁰ In his works Bourdieu avoids the term „society“ and instead speaks of the „social space“. I will further elaborate on Bourdieuan analysis of social structure and his specific terminology in section 3.3.

The habitus as conceived by Bourdieu is therefore nothing more than “incorporated class” (Bourdieu 1984: 437) and as such it is not subject to individual decision. Instead the different forms of habitus – attitudes, taste, interests – can be considered as an *amor fati*, a “choice of destiny” (ibid. 178), which allows the individual not a free decision but only a decision for the necessary.

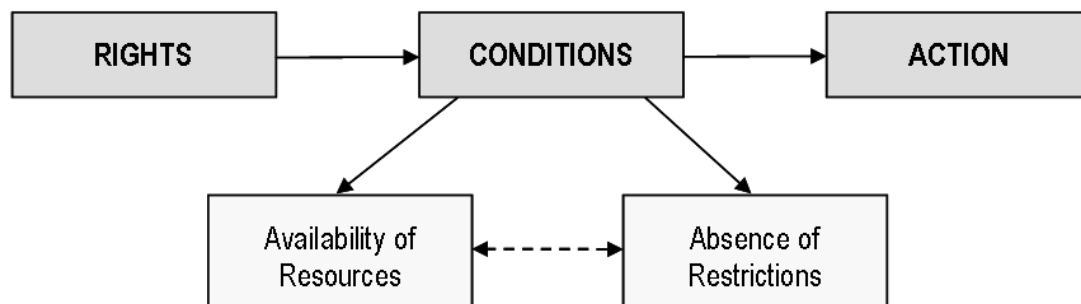
Based on Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, I therefore expect social structure to influence the development of interests (as one major aspect of habitus) and thereby social and political action which again contributes to reinforce social structures. It is what an individual shares with other members of a collective entity in terms of their socialization experiences that determines individual participation in particular and the constitution of society as a whole. Therefore participatory in/equality must be measured with reference to one’s place within the social space. The question that remains open is, how we can comprehend the current state of the social space: which people can, due to their position in society, be expected to make similar experiences in their lives that consequently lead to the development of common interests? In order to answer this question, I will discuss contemporary approaches to social stratification and in/equality based on the most popular literature within this field of research in the following section.

4.3 *MEASURING IN/EQUALITY: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO SOCIAL STRATIFICATION*

In this section I want to introduce different approaches that attempt to detect the social structures within society and describe their specific characteristics as well as the delimitations and (virtual or real) collectives produced by these structures. This section’s analyses are based on the insights of sociological stratification research. In particular, I am concerned with a variety of “models for the analysis of different living conditions” (Weischer 2011: 323; own translation) through which individual interests are shaped. The task is to analyze, which factors contribute to the fact that some people have the ability to actualize their life chances and achieve their goals of action better than others. Social stratification therefore always implies different opportunities for different groups of people, that is: social inequality (Burzan 2011). In trying to provide a definition of social

inequality, however, a purely positional characterization of the term is insufficient. In this sense, Harold Kerbo (2003: 11) defines social inequality as the “condition where people have unequal access to valued resources, services, and positions in the society.” But if society is regarded as both the basis and result of social relations, i.e. human action, definitions like the one provided by Stefan Hradil seems to be better suited. To him social inequality comprises “socially created and comparatively durable conditions of action ... that enable certain members of society to reach the widely accepted life objectives better than others.” (Hradil 1987: 144; own translation)⁴¹ This definition comprises the fact that (a) inequalities are produced through human interaction (*social*) and that (b) the resultant conditions of action, Rössel (2009) calls them resources and restrictions, are distributed among different social groups quite permanently (*structure*). Interests thus develop with regard to the distribution of the conditions of action as well as the social advantages and disadvantages of a person connected to these conditions. In other words and to resume the idea of right, action and voice presented in the introduction of this thesis: for the political *actions* of individuals to be equal, the *conditions for action* of the different social groups these individuals belong to must also be equal (see figure 4 below).

Figure 4: The interrelation between rights, conditions and action



Source: own illustration

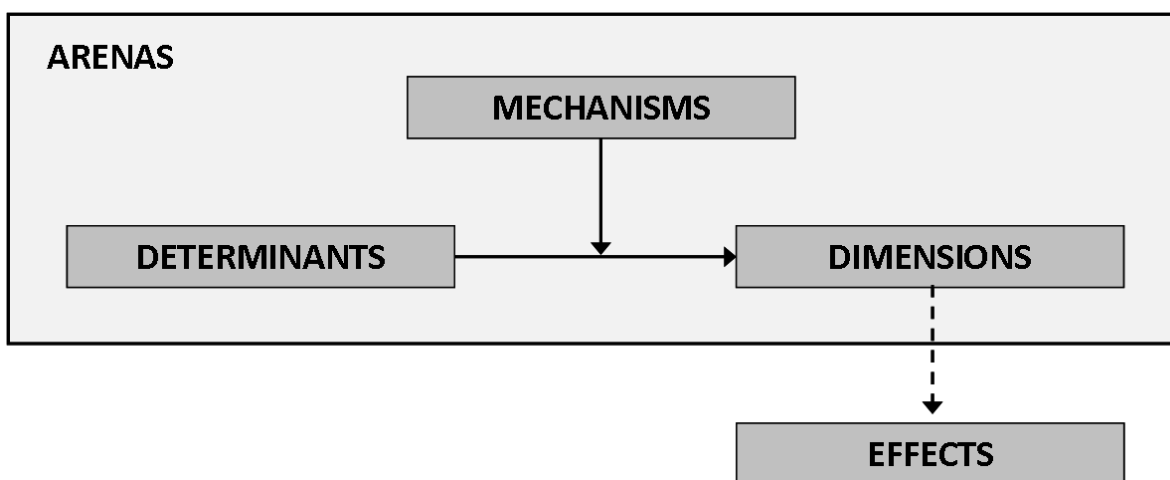
In the following I want to introduce the most important contemporary approaches in social stratification research and ask what insights they can offer when it comes to the genesis of interests within the structure of society. These approaches either claim (a) the persistent relevance of vertical stratification (mainly inspired by the classical class and status models

⁴¹ A similar characterization can be found in Solga et al. 2009: 15.

introduced by Karl Marx and Max Weber) or (b) the necessity to extend vertical approaches to stratification by non-vertical parameters. All presented approaches are examined especially regarding the question, whether they comprise the elements that are necessary for an approach to the study of social stratification. Extending the model of Hradil (2010) these approaches must include statements concerning

- 1) The *arenas* of stratification⁴²: Where does social in/equality occur?
- 2) The *mechanisms* of stratification: How does social in/equality occur?
- 3) The *dimensions* of stratification: Which (dis-)advantages are defined?
- 4) The *determinants* of stratification⁴³: What leads to (dis-)advantages?

Figure 5: Arenas, mechanisms, dimensions, determinants and effects of stratification



Source: Hradil (2010), Solga et al. (2009), own modifications

To understand what contemporary approaches to social inequality can offer in terms of these indispensable elements of a stratification theory is one of the important tasks of this section, because this allows me to develop a framework for the empirical analysis of political participation as an *effect* of stratification from the in/equality perspective.

⁴² Rössel (2009: 50) also speaks of the “fields of resource allocation”, consequently he also labels the dimensions of stratification “resources” for social action.

⁴³ In an article by Blackburn (2008: 253) these determinants of stratification are referred to as the “bases of inequality”.

Before we turn to contemporary models of social stratification, let us throw a short glance at the classic approaches to analyzing the structure of society in order to better understand what the foundations of today's scholar's considerations are. According to Harold Kerbo (2003: 82ff.) we can identify three "competing paradigms in the study of social stratification":

- *Ruling class theory* following Karl Marx considers society to be held together by conflict and unequal power between social groups (with different or even oppositional interests). It is based on the assumption that social inequalities within a society exist but that they can and should be overcome. For ruling class theory (and other approaches based on critical value assumptions) it is the duty of the social sciences to strive for a better society.
- *Power conflict theory* following Max Weber is also based on the idea that conflict is a constitutive element of any society. However, Weber's approach (as well as all other uncritical value models) considers some degree of social inequality as inevitable within a society. Furthermore, Weber and his followers are convinced that the social sciences must be value-free instead of reformist or even revolutionary.
- Last but not least, *functional theory* following Émile Durkheim shares the uncritical value assumptions of the Weberian approach and considers social inequality not only as inevitable but even as constitutive of modern societies. Yet, in contrast to Weber and Marx, functional theory is based on the idea that societies are held together by common norms and values instead of conflict.

Although these three classic "paradigms in the study of social stratification" obviously exhibit some fundamental differences in their interpretations of the social order as well as their evaluation of social inequalities, all of them have in common basic assumptions about the arenas, dimensions and determinants of stratification: Marx as well as Weber and Durkheim consider the area of production – the (labor) market – as the place where social differentiation primarily occurs. Therefore they all treat occupation as the main determinant of stratification. While Marx sees property as the only form of (dis-)advantage constituted by the unequal access to the means of production of the working class and the bourgeoisie, Weber and Durkheim add prestige as an interpersonal form of recognition as another

dimension of inequality. Notwithstanding the multiple perspectives which tell them apart, we can therefore summarize that the three classic approaches to social stratification – Marx’ ruling class theory, Weber’s power conflict theory and Durkheim’s functional theory – share the notion that society is *stratified on a vertical axis* resulting in a social structure in which life chances are distributed unequally between the different social groups, or classes, that constitute the so called “class society”.

Despite the seemingly enduring consensus among the three paradigmatic models, the classic approaches to the analysis of social stratification were criticized already at an early stage and scholars diagnosed a dissolution of major social groups and a decrease in the determining effect of traditional class positions. One typical proponent of such a perspective was German sociologist Helmut Schelsky, who developed his thesis of a “leveled middle-class society” (*nivellierte Mittelstandsgesellschaft*) in an article published in 1953 (here 1965). According to his hypothesis, widespread social processes of upward and downward mobility during the previous two generations are deemed of having induced a “relative reduction of class conflicts” and thereby lead to a phenomenon called “de-differentiation”, “homogenization” or “social leveling”. If at all uniform interests as well as consistent patterns of social and cultural behavior have ever existed, Schelsky considers these as outdated not later than in the early 1950s in West Germany. Additionally, in Schelsky’s view, social upward mobility cannot be regarded as a societal goal anymore, because the differences between social positions have become negligible and the “social ladder” has therefore shortened.

Also a plethora of contemporary literature on social stratification analysis is ridden by the question to what extent one can still affirm that interests, attitudes and behavioral patterns are determined by a person’s affiliation to a major social group today. This debate was re-fueled in the 1980s by the publications of Ulrich Beck, who aimed to develop a sociological theory of society beyond the lines of argumentation introduced by Marx and Weber. Especially his book *Risk Society* (1992; first published in German in 1986), in which he predicted the social structure to be developing towards a society “beyond status and class” (also: Beck 1987), gained some popularity.⁴⁴ In a nutshell, Beck’s theses can be

⁴⁴ The idea of a declining relevance of social group membership for a contemporary analysis of social structure also came up in international debates in stratification research. Besides Beck, the problem was therefore also discussed in the works of Stephen Crook, Jan Pakulski and Malcolm Waters (Crook et al. 1992,

summarized as follows (cf. Weischer 2011: 429f.): The relations of social inequality between major social groups have remained comparatively stable in all countries of the world and have not been changing significantly despite factual economic growth and the socio-political reforms of the past decades. Nonetheless, the major conflicts about social inequality have ceased to exist within the same period of time. This is caused by the fact that the whole society is much better off today than it was about 50 years ago. People nowadays come across improved working conditions, have higher incomes, are better educated and live longer than their parents and grandparents. These improvements, summarized by Beck (2007: 687) under the label “elevator effect”, lead to the successive dissolution of subcultural class identities. Beck calls the process behind these developments “individualization”, which he describes as “the variation and differentiation of lifestyles and forms of life, opposing the thinking behind the traditional categories of large-group societies – which is to say, classes, estates, and social stratification.” (Beck 1992: 88) Individualization thus abrogates the former certainties and fixations that had originated from an individual’s belonging to a major social group. This leads to the development of a “culture of the self”, which Beck – in comparatively radical tone – equates with the achievement of an “inconclusive society without social structure” (Beck 1997: 195, own translation).

The assumption claiming a declining relevance of social inequality and the affiliation to social groups for the achievement of life objectives or, at its extremes, an overall dissolution of social structures, has aroused social stratification research, because it shakes the whole research tradition to the core. The following two sections sum up the different reactions to the theses of the “leveled middle-class society” (Schelsky) and of “de-structuring” and “individualization” (Beck). I will, however, not describe the approaches by all the different authors that form the current state of the art in the field in detail. Rather, I will summarize similar writings and present two broad branches that describe how social stratification is conceptualized and empirically scrutinized at present. These branches either claim (a) the persistent relevance of vertical stratification or (b) the necessity to extend vertical approaches to stratification by non-vertical parameters. One major contribution of

Pakulski/Waters 1996, Pakulski 2005) as well as the approaches of Peter A. Berger (1996, 2010). As the individualization thesis, however, summarizes the partly different positions quite well, I decided to exemplify the theories of „de-structuring“ with Beck’s approach for the purpose of lucidity.

this dissertation is realized within this section: to give more substance to the current state of research about participatory in/equality by connecting the normative considerations of democratic theory with the analytical approaches from social stratification research.

4.3.1 PERSISTENT RELEVANCE OF VERTICAL STRATIFICATION: NEW CLASS MODELS

In this subsection I want to outline some of the main contemporary approaches that consider modern societies as still being stratified along the lines of class.⁴⁵ These approaches are unified by the assumption that (a) contemporary societies are continuously structured predominantly by vertical axes of stratification, (b) dispositions of interest are typically shaped by class positions, and (c) life chances and risks can be derived from social positions and the resultant determinations (Geißler 2011: 93f.). Notwithstanding these similarities, there also exist some differences between the approaches to be presented. Some of the so called *new class models* are oriented towards a Marxian notion of class, which puts the exploitation of labor as a result of the proletariat's relation to the means of production to the center of its considerations. On the other hand we find class models inspired more significantly by Max Weber. They adopt a broader perspective on economic conditions and also include qualification requirements and employment relationships as dimensions of social inequality into their examinations. Both variants, however, share a focus on distributional issues in the analysis of social structures. Thirdly and finally, however, there are also class models that are based on a subjective definition of prestige and exhibit some proximity to both Weber's idea of *Stand* as well as Durkheim's notion of a value consensus. Rather than focusing on distributional issues, in these models a reputational perspective stands out. In the following, both approaches shall be considered.

4.3.1.1 Distributional class models

As has already been indicated, new class models put economic factors – especially a person's relation to the means of production, her income and property conditions, as well as her qualifications – to the center of their analyses. Among these models we can

⁴⁵ The terms class and status (group) are used interchangeably in this thesis. In my understanding both terms characterize a form of inequality along vertical lines of stratification. In both cases the arena of stratification is the (labor) market as the area of production and consumption.

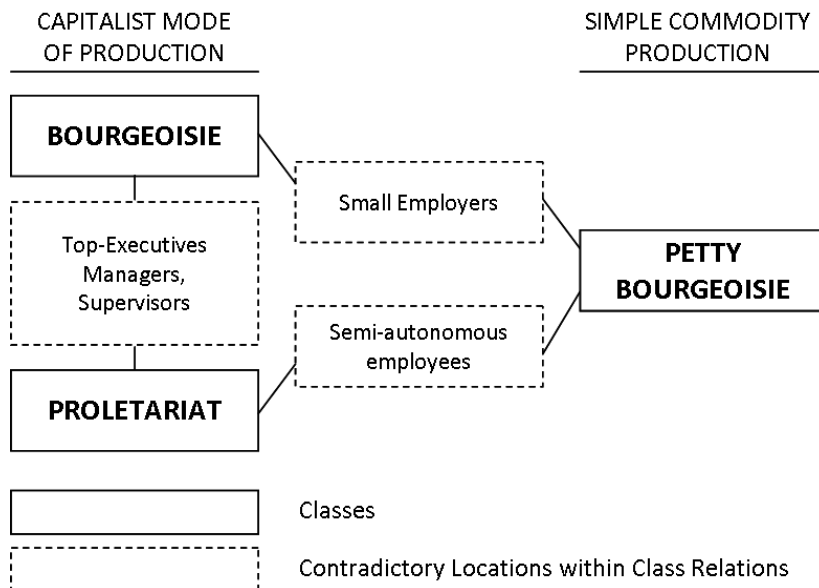
differentiate between such approaches that are more strongly inspired by Karl Marx and such that are more prone to the thinking of Max Weber. Although both approaches introduced in this chapter – the ones by Erik O. Wright and John H. Goldthorpe – must be regarded as much less dogmatic than, for example, some German efforts to resuscitate Marxian class analysis carried out in the 1970s (e.g. Leisewitz 1977, Bischoff et al. 1982), Wright's work is usually considered to be inspired more strongly by Marx while Goldthorpe's writings are deemed closer related to Weber.

Erik O. Wright has developed his approach to stratification analysis throughout a myriad of books and articles since the 1970s (Wright 1978, 1979, 1985, 1990, 2000). His work has inspired countless studies of social inequality and is regarded by some authors as the most fruitful attempt to synthesize previous class theories, because it is not only theoretically and analytically sophisticated but also empirically testable (Erbslöh et al. 1990). Given the obvious shortcomings of existing concepts of class, Wright makes it his business to come up with his own model. Therefore, he first of all seeks to make up a definition of the concept underlying his considerations. To Wright, a class “should be seen as rooted in the complex intersection of three forms of exploitation: exploitation based on the *ownership of capital assets*, the *control of organization assets* and the *possession of skill or credential assets*.” (1985: 283, emphasis added) With this definition he explicitly refers to John Roemer's *General Theory of Exploitation and Class* (1982), which itself clearly relates to a Marxian perspective on exploitation and oppression. Wright perceives his approach as both historical and materialistic, he defines class exclusively in relation to the system of production within a society. His approach can therefore, despite some Weberian influences, only be labeled Neo-Marxian. However, Wright does not simply resume the approach of Marx, but develops his own model emerging from a critique of the idea of a dual class system. His analyses have to be understood as a reaction to the analytical problem, that the middle classes – whose existence had already been acknowledged by Marx – have disappeared neither in times of industrialization and the rise of the revolutionary labor movements, nor thereafter. Rather, instead of successively dissolving into the working class, the middle classes have become an essential element of contemporary societies (Solga et al. 2009).

During the development and empirical implementation of an analytical framework that suits these observations, Wright comes up with different quantities of existing classes. In doing so, he presents a four-, a six-, but also a twelve-class model suited for the analysis of social inequality and stratification. The all in all rather simple four-class model (Wright/Perrone 1977) comprises the groups of capitalists (owners of the means of production), managers (control labor of others for capitalists), workers (sell labor to capitalists), and the petty bourgeoisie (own small means of production but have no or only few employees). Later Wright expands the model by differentiating between basic classes and contradictory class locations (Wright 1978, 1982). Basic classes are clearly defined by their control (or non-control) over the means of production; contradictory class locations on the other hand are similarly considered as exploiting and exploited.⁴⁶ In the resultant six-class model Wright identifies three basic classes, under which he subsumes the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie, as well as three contradictory class locations, to which he ascribes top-executives, managers and supervisors, small employers and semi-autonomous employees. Top-executives, managers and supervisors are wage earners without having a share in the means of production, yet they can decide over the way of production. They are therefore located between bourgeoisie und proletariat in the model. In contrast, small employers (between bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie) own some means of production, but have only little property and mostly depend on larger companies and businesses (e.g. as subcontractors). Semi-autonomous employees, eventually, are also wage earners and must therefore be attributed to the proletariat. However, their qualifications allow them to take an advantageous bargaining position vis-à-vis their employers when it comes to salary negotiations and grants them a certain amount of autonomy in the organization of their work plans. Taken together these specifics makes them similar to the petty bourgeoisie.

⁴⁶ By accounting for contradictory class locations (and the status inconsistencies accompanying these locations), Wright makes a clear reference to Weber. Thus, his approach can, as indicated at the outset of this subsection, not be regarded as purely Marxian, but as rooted in Marxism but enhanced by Weberian influences (see also Rössel 2009: 114).

Figure 6: Six-class-model following Wright (1985: 48)



The six-class model has been criticized for indiscriminately capturing a huge number of employees under the label “proletariat” when applied to empirical scrutiny (about 50% at the end of the 1980s, see Holtmann/Strasser 1990). Especially the lack of differentiation between blue- and white-collar labor and between high-skilled and low-skilled jobs has been chastised (Weischer 2011: 353). For this reason Wright decided to revise his approach and developed a more complex model of class analysis, which additional to a differentiation regarding the means of production also accounts for a person’s skill level and position within the business hierarchy, i.e. their involvement in intra-company decisions or “relation to authority”. Concerning the latter Wright distinguishes between managers, supervisors and „non-managers“. Due to their function in the “extraction of extra-work” (Rössel 2009: 111) managers and supervisors receive a higher salary than persons without oversight capacities. This explains the dissimilar interests and, as a consequence, different class position of these two groups. Also workers with higher qualifications earn higher wages than semi- or unskilled workers. This can be justified by the fact that the skills owned by this group are scarce and its work is more difficult to supervise. Just as for managers and supervisors, employers have to create incentives for skilled workers in order to develop ties between the employee and the company, that is: the bourgeoisie. Again, these relations help explain the specific interests and class position

related to the skill dimension. The social structure resulting from these observations comprises twelve classes and is summarized in figure six below.

Figure 7: Twelve-class model following Wright (2000: 22)

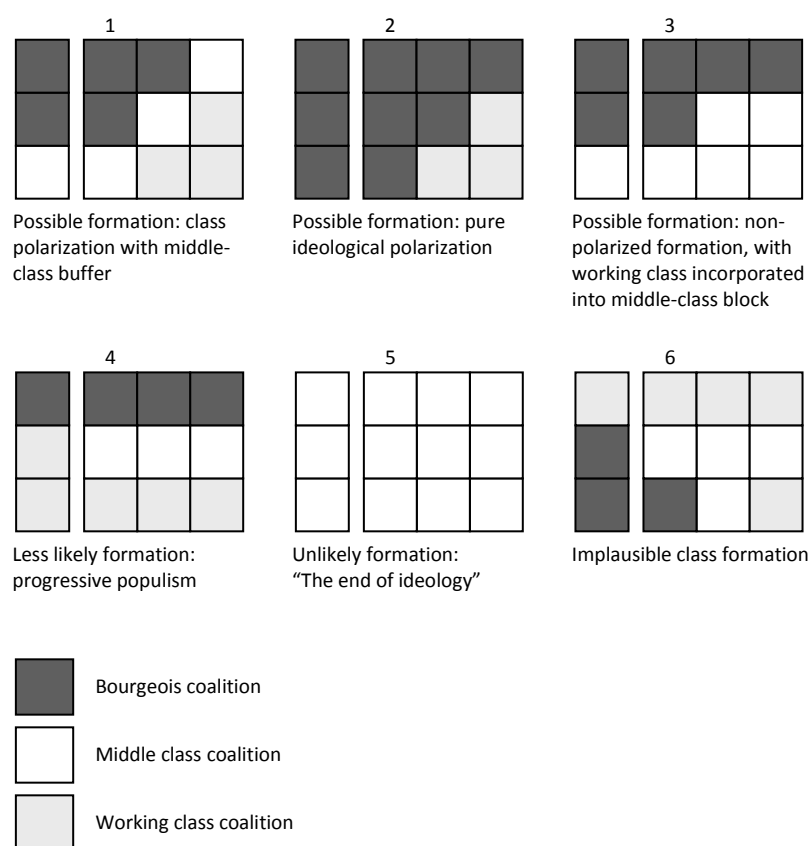
		Relation to means of production				
		Owner	Employees			
Number of employees	Many	Capitalists	Expert managers	Skilled managers	Non-skilled managers	Managers
	Few	Small employers	Expert supervisors	Skilled supervisors	Non-skilled supervisors	Supervisors
	None	Petty bourgeoisie	Experts	Skilled workers	Non-skilled workers	Non-management
		Relation to scarce skills				
			Experts	Skilled	Non-skilled	

Based on the different positions within the twelve-class structure, Wright (2000: 204ff.) detects different combinations of groups in various positions that lead to what he labels different class formations. These formations are the result of three class-based mechanisms (exploitation, experiences, alliances) which determine the probabilities that particular class formations will occur. Wright finds three possible formations that are depicted in figure 8. In version 1 the middle classes, comprised of the petty bourgeoisie, experts, skilled supervisors and non-skilled managers, build a buffer between the working class (skilled and non-skilled workers, non-skilled supervisors) and the bourgeoisie (capitalists, small employers, expert managers and supervisors, skilled managers). In version 2 the middle classes disappear and a pure ideological polarization between the working class and the bourgeoisie exists. In version 3 the working and middle classes have merged resulting in a non-polarized ideological class formation between the new middle classes and the bourgeoisie.

Additional to these possible formations Wright also describes less likely, unlikely and implausible formations. The first (version 4) contains a “populist coalition” of non-skilled and skilled workers, experts and the petty bourgeoisie confronting a class of capitalists and

managers with an insignificant middle class formation between them. Version 5 depicts the unlikely case that class polarization has dissolved and all groups end up in ideological consensus. Version 6 represents the implausible case that workers, managers and capitalists form a working class coalition while experts, expert supervisors and petty bourgeois group together as the bourgeoisie. Especially the “likely” formations will be considered in the empirical investigations of this study.

Figure 8: Formable and unformable class formations following Wright (2000: 208)

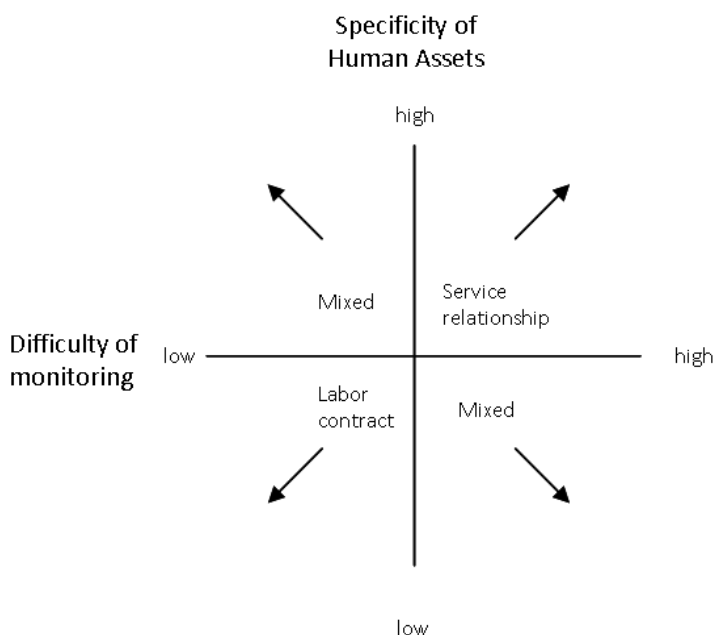


In both the six- and the twelve-class version, Wright’s class model offers the researcher a much more convincing approach to analytically get hold of the structure of contemporary society than Marx’ classic dual class model does. Additionally the models allow to empirically test for the impact of one’s class position on different social phenomena like attitudinal or behavioral patterns. Wright himself has scrutinized numerous of the “effects” of social stratification and has discovered a high explanatory value of his models – even in its very reduced fourfold version (Wright 2000).

Another distributional class model that is more strongly influenced by the works of Max Weber than by Karl Marx is provided by John Goldthorpe. The so called EGP-Scheme, which Goldthorpe first introduced together with Robert Erikson and Lucienne Portocarero and later refined in collaboration with other scholars (Erikson et al. 1979, Erikson/Goldthorpe 1992, Goldthorpe/Marshall 1992, Goldthorpe 1996), is at present considered one of the most commonly used class models in international stratification research. Since it builds on profession as the crucial manifestation of class membership, the EGP-scheme assigns individuals to occupational groups according to the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO) developed by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1957. Although the primary distinction between employers, self-employed persons and employees still plays a role in Goldthorpe's model, the most important criterion for assignment to occupational groups is not (as was the case in Marxian approaches) one's access to the means of production, but the labor market position and work situation of the wage-earners (Brauns et al. 2000). Not the exploitation of the proletariat determines Goldthorpe's perspective, but a focus on efficient work coordination at the company level. In his work Goldthorpe aims to solve the main problem resulting from the social link between employer and employee: how good must the employees' performance be given the working conditions imposed on them by the employer? (Weischer 2011: 365) To this end he distinguishes between two types of employment relationships: labor contracts and a service relationships. In a labor contract an employee is paid according to working hours or output, i.e. the number of goods produced. Supervision of this kind of work is usually easy to manage (*low difficulty of monitoring*) and qualification requirements placed on the employee are comparatively modest (*low specificity of human asset*), while there is a relatively high risk of job loss and only marginal chances for promotion. Any long-term provisions and side benefits do not exist in a labor contract. In a service relationship, on the other hand, the employee is not remunerated according to working hours or output but gets paid a monthly salary. In this case supervision of performance is more intricate (*high difficulty of monitoring*) and qualification requirements are generally higher (*high specificity of human asset*). However, job security and career options also increase in service relationships while pay raises and

profit sharing create commitment and loyalty to the company (Goldthorpe 2000). Besides these two basic formations there also exist mixtures of the two comprising high qualification requirements and simple monitoring or *vice versa* (see figure 9).

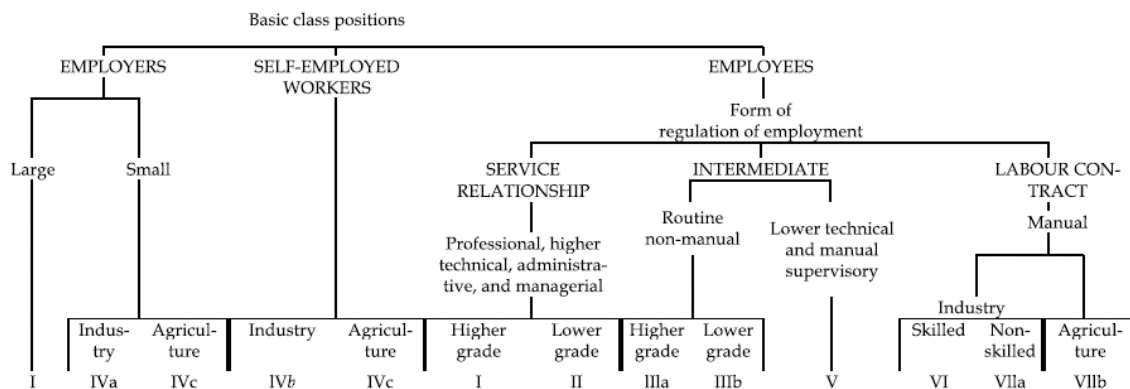
Figure 9: Employment contracts (following Goldthorpe 2000: 223)



Like Wright, also Goldthorpe develops his class model over the years and therefore offers several versions of it. The class scheme Goldthorpe elaborated together with Erikson and Portocarero comprises, in its most common form, seven classes which can be further split up into eleven sub-groups. In doing so, occupations are classified according to their degree of autonomy, employment relationship, qualification, position in the intra-company hierarchy, and employment sector. In these terms the higher-level service class (I) comprises higher-grade professionals, administrators, and officials, managers in large industrial establishments and large proprietors; the lower-level service class (II) encompasses lower grade professionals, administrators, and officials, higher-grade technicians, managers in small industrial establishments and supervisors of non-manual employees. Routine non-manual employees in administration and commerce (IIIa) as well as in sales and service (IIIb) make up the next group level; the petty bourgeoisie is composed of small proprietors and artisans with (IVa) and without employees (IVb) as well

as farmers and smallholders (IVc). Supervisors of manual workers and lower-grade technicians comprise group V. Skilled manual workers (VI) and semi- and unskilled manual workers in industry (VIIa) and agriculture (VIIb) complete the class schema (Erikson et al. 1979, Erikson/Goldthorpe 1992: 38f.). As Oesch (2003: 243) points out, among employees the major distinction between the construed classes lies between classes I and II (service relationship) on the one hand and VI and VII on the other, while classes III and V can be regarded as “vague” intermediate classes.

Figure 10: EGP class scheme (Erikson/Goldthorpe 1992: 38f.)



As outlined, the class models by Wright and Goldthorpe are characterized by several dissimilarities concerning their theoretical foundations as well as the classifications they introduce as class building categories. However, we can also find some similarities between these models. They share the assumption that actors with different resources in terms of means of production and qualifications socially interact within companies, i.e. they enter a contractual relationship in order to protect their respective interests. Within this relationship capital owners try to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the employees while the employees try to accomplish the best possible remuneration and working conditions (Rössel 2009: 120f.). In recent times, however, new class theories have lost their monopoly in stratification research and have been complemented by other, more status-oriented approaches.

4.3.1.2 Reputational class models

One of the first authors to make use of the prestige concept in an empirical study was William Lloyd Warner. In an extensive study called the *Yankee city series*, which was conducted between 1930 and 1934 in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and whose first volume was published in 1941 under the title *The social life of a modern community*, Warner aimed at an examination of social inequality and mobility as well as individual ideas of social stratification in small social units. In his methodologically sound study, Warner asked people to rank others according to their notion of prestige and built groups based on these rankings. The groups bound together by the same position within the prestige ranking, he – somehow surprisingly – labels classes.⁴⁷ He defines a prestige class as „two or more orders of people who are believed to be, and are accordingly ranked by the members of the community, in superior and inferior positions.“ (Warner/Lunt 1948: 82) Warner’s concept of prestige class is both subjective and vertical: on the one hand he uses a concept of prestige based on the conceptions of his objects of study, i.e. the citizens of Newburyport, MA; on the other hand, Warner’s concept of prestige assigns persons to higher- and lower-ranking positions within a social entity. Reputation is obviously the central category of differentiation in Warner’s study while inequalities of power and wealth do not seem to play any role in his considerations.

As a result of his empirical study, in which he uses different methodological instruments such as surveys, qualitative interviews, and participant observation, Warner comes up with his model of prestige classes which can clearly be demarcated from one another with reference to their degree of personal interaction and their legal status. He furthermore develops an „index of status characteristics“, in which he summarizes those characteristics that are typically considered as markers of prestige, and allocates persons to the social structure with the help of this index. The “index of status characteristics” is multidimensional and not merely determined by economic factors. Among the characteristics constituting the index are occupation and source of income, but also house type and dwelling. The six emerging prestige classes are:

⁴⁷ Warner completely mixes up the concepts of class and *Stand* by using the term class for his reputational model of stratification. Class position, in the original understanding of Max Weber, does not result from prestige but from one’s role in the process of economic production and consumption. I therefore decided to use the term “prestige class” to label Warner’s concept in the following paragraphs.

- 1) the *upper-upper class* (“old money”), i.e. people who were born rich,
- 2) the *lower-upper class* (“new money”), i.e. people who have become rich within their lifetimes,
- 3) the *upper-middle class*, i.e. high-salaried professionals (doctors, lawyers, CEOs),
- 4) the *lower-middle class*, i.e. lower-paid professionals (police officers, non-management office workers, small business owners),
- 5) the *upper-lower class* (“working class”), i.e. blue-collar workers and manual laborers, and
- 6) the *lower-lower class*, i.e. the homeless, permanently unemployed and “working poor”.

Warner’s prestige class model is difficult to replicate as information about the exact definition of his groups are missing. The same is true for most of the status models (*Schichtmodelle*) developed in post-war Germany, e.g. the ones by Geiger, Dahrendorf or Geißler. Empirically easier to apply prestige models like the *Standard International Occupational Prestige Scale (SIOPS)* invented by Donald Treiman (1977) have to cope with the severe disadvantage, that they are based on continuous instead of categorical variables which makes it difficult if not impossible to define separate social groups with different interests on the basis of these models. In the following I therefore focus on the distributional class models and leave the reputational models out of the further analyses.

4.3.1.3 Bourdieu’s “theoretical” class model: The social space and four forms of capital⁴⁸

A very special version of a vertical class model that combines the Marxian, Weberian and Durkheimian perspectives including some notion of prestige is offered by Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1985). He criticizes existing class models for being overly simplistic and develops a model of the social space – a term that is used by Bourdieu instead of the term “society” in order to account for the multidimensionality of the social structure – that is determined by the interdependence and interrelations of different resources which he labels “forms of capital” (Bourdieu 1986). In order to understand Bourdieu’s model, let us first clarify some

⁴⁸ Some authors might argue to rather treat Bourdieu’s approach among the socio-cultural models as described in section 4.3.2.2. In my opinion, however, the vertical aspect is clearly dominant in Bourdieu’s approach, as class inequality forms the background of all further implications in his analyses. Therefore I decided to discuss Bourdieu’s “theoretical” class model in this part of the thesis.

of the terminology he uses, as it is very unique and not so easy to relate to the approaches presented so far.

The most basal concept introduced by Bourdieu for the analysis of stratification is that of capital. In the author's own words, capital is a "set of actually usable resources and powers" (Bourdieu 1984: 114), it is a

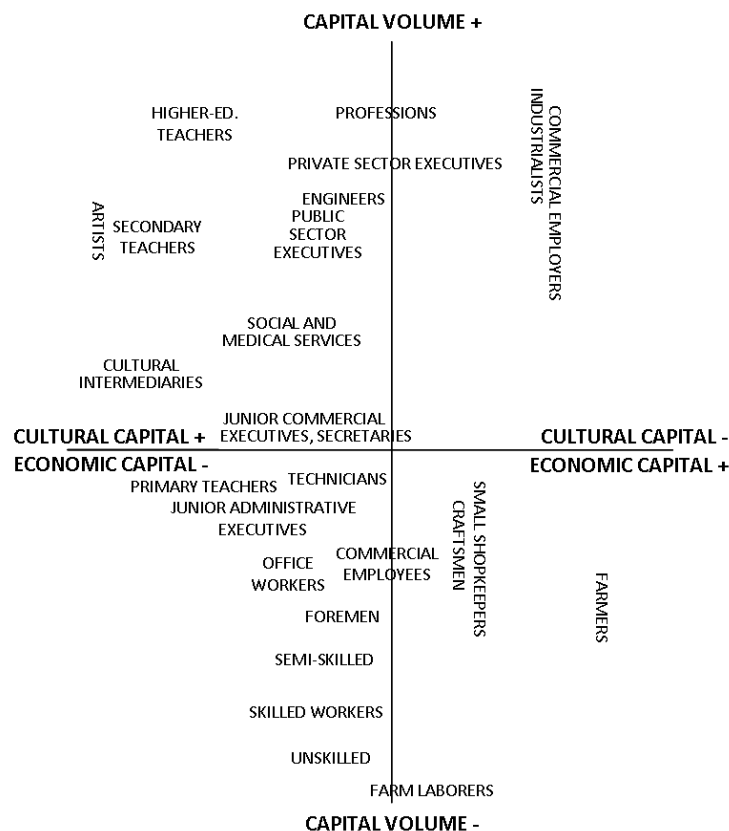
"force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible. And the structure of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices." (Bourdieu 1986: 46)

Following this definition Bourdieu defines four distinct forms of capital. *Economic capital* comprises any kind of commodity that is "immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights" (ibid.: 47). Concerning the second form, cultural capital, Bourdieu distinguishes three different states: *embodied cultural capital* is bound to the individual and presupposes a process of incorporation that requires investing a certain personal "cost" – especially of the time that it takes to acquire cultural capital in its embodied state, i.e. knowledge and education. Different to that, *objectified cultural capital* is not bound to the individual but can be transferred from one person to the other and also be converted into money. In its objectified state cultural capital comprises material objects and media like books, paintings, musical instruments and the like. The third state of cultural capital, *institutionalized cultural capital*, consists of academic titles and school leaving certificates. It is this state that distinguishes the degree holder from the autodidact. The third form of capital is labeled *social capital* which stands for those "resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (ibid.: 51). In these terms social capital comprises the belonging to renowned families as well as the membership in various kinds of clubs, alumni associations, parties, etc.. As a fourth form of capital Bourdieu introduces *symbolic capital* which refers to the trustworthiness, reputation and prestige of a person. Symbolic capital is especially relevant in fields where economic capital is not accepted as a "currency".

Bourdieu develops his model of the social space based on empirical analyses. In these analyses it turns out that the two first forms of capital (economic, cultural) are considerably

more important to define a person's position in relation to others than the latter two (social, symbolic). In Bourdieu's view the social space is therefore three-dimensional: the vertical axis illustrates the volume of the different sorts of capital. Class location is primarily determined by an individual's position on this axis. The horizontal axis depicts the composition of different sorts of capital – on the extreme right only economic and no cultural capital exists and on the extreme left only cultural and no economic capital exists. According to this dimension persons can be further differentiated into what Bourdieu (with reference to Marx) labels class fractions (Weininger 2005: 88). A third axis differentiates social positions according to the trajectories that individuals follow in terms of the change they experience concerning their volume and composition of capital over time – especially over generations. This third axis makes it possible for Bourdieu to also study social mobility using his notion of the social space.

Figure 11: The social space following Bourdieu (1984)



Based on the notion of the social space Bourdieu also develops his idea of classes which he defines as

“sets of agents who occupy similar positions and who, being placed in similar conditions and subjected to similar conditionings, have every likelihood of having similar dispositions and interests and therefore of producing similar practices and adopting similar stances.” (Bourdieu 1985: 725)

In Bourdieu’s model individuals are grouped together into classes according to their positions within the social space so that as a result persons within one class are as similar as possible (in as many as possible respects) and the different classes are as distinct from each other as possible. These classes are, as Bourdieu emphasizes, not “real” existing groups but analytical constructs, “but constructs well-founded in reality” (Bourdieu 1986: 5). Based on these considerations, Bourdieu defines three major classes that can be distinguished mainly due to their different volume of capital: the “dominant class” or “bourgeoisie” comprises occupational groups like industrialists, private sector executives and higher-education teachers; the “petty bourgeoisie” consist of small business owners, office workers, technicians, teachers and secretaries; the “popular classes” are composed of manual workers and farm laborers (Bourdieu 1984: 128f.). Although Bourdieu defines these three major classes which indicates a somehow categorical approach to stratification analysis, one has to be aware that these categories are considered to be of strictly heuristic value by the author. Rather than postulating strict lines of cleavage between classes, Bourdieu claims that the social space is a “universe of continuity” and that the three axes illustrating the volume, composition and trajectory of capital are continuous dimensions (ibid.: 259). In these terms, Bourdieu’s approach to the analysis of social stratification results in a “theoretical” class model that, due to its use of the concept of capital, does not allow to analyze different group interests. Therefore Bourdieu’s model, although theoretically convincing, will not be employed any further in this thesis.

Before we proceed to the next section, let me give a short summary of the previous paragraphs. As I have already outlined at the outset of this section, there are some crucial

commonalities between new class models. In particular the new class models share that (a) they emphasize the vertical compared to other dimensions of stratification, (b) they build all of their further considerations on the existence of class-specific interests and (c) they assume that the existence of “real” classes lead to common class-specific life chances and risks. Additional to the similarities we can furthermore derive some virtues shared by the different class models from the previous remarks: First, all new class models have already proven their high analytical value in various studies over and over again. Secondly, this analytical value could be achieved by using only few explanatory variables which makes the models not only powerful but also easily applicable. And thirdly, the new class models are well funded in classic concepts of inequality and stratification which adds some considerable theoretical merit to the mentioned analytical value.

Nevertheless the new class models have also been rightfully criticized in several books and articles during the past decades. These critiques made clear that the traditionally oriented models have to be revised in order to be able to capture the contemporary structure of society adequately. One of the major bones of contention in recent stratification research has been the *strict focus on occupation* on part of the class models, which has been marginally expanded by Warner who included factors like house type and dwelling in his analyses as well as Bourdieu who at least theoretically considered social and symbolic capital. However, the critique formulated by Kerbo (2003: 137) for Marxist class models seems to apply to all of the approaches presented in the previous section:

“Perhaps the most important weakness of Marxian theory [and class models in general] is the assumption that ... economic conflicts are the only conflicts of interest among people or groups, or at least the most important conflicts. ... History, at least so far, and except for small, exceptional human groups, suggests this assumption is incorrect.”

Kerbo’s critique illustrates that, from the perspective of conflict theory, class models must be reconsidered and other present-day divisions in society must be included in a contemporary analysis. Additionally, it also demonstrates that a strict economic focus of stratification research leads to neglecting all the people outside professional life. Taken together, however, these non-employed people (e.g. housewives, children, unemployed and elderly people) made up more than half of the population at the time many of these models were developed (in the 1960s or 1970s) and still make up more than one third of the

population of the EU-27 today.⁴⁹ Although some authors like Geißler (2011) at least seem to be aware of this problem, his way to deal with it seems half-hearted. They assign individuals to classes according to the status of their families which means that children and non-employed people were classified according to the status of the (usually male) head of the family, while those retired were classified according to their former occupational status. Obviously this approach, although recognizing the core of the problem, cannot solve the dilemma of neglecting many people within the social structure. Lifting the problem to the household level appears elegant and to some extent even accurate, but still does not get us to the heart of the matter as the individual per se is simply removed from analysis.

As a second point of criticism, some scholars object that new class models *fail to account adequately for the increasing socio-cultural diversity* in today's societies, especially in the Western countries. Although probably overrated by authors like Beck, the various processes of e.g. (post)modernization, sustained prosperity and transnational migration have led to a diversification of lifestyles, value systems and individual conceptions of a good life that cannot be captured by a purely economic perspective that treats the area of production (and consumption) as the only relevant arena(s) of social stratification. Both points of critique concerning the extension of vertical approaches to stratification (focus on occupational life, neglect of socio-cultural diversity) will be regarded in the considerations presented in the following subsection.

4.3.2 EXTENDING VERTICAL APPROACHES TO STRATIFICATION: HORIZONTAL MODELS

The points of criticism mentioned at the end of section 4.3.2.1 have recently been taken up by several strands of research. Some of these strands shall be discussed in the following paragraphs. To this end I present approaches extending class models by so called “new” (Hradil 1987) or “non-vertical” (Kreckel 2004) determinants and dimensions of stratification. One part of these approaches assumes that resources like a person's occupational status (as an attribute of vertical class differentiation) cannot develop their whole “exchange value” until they are related to other structural attributions like gender, “race”/ethnicity and generation. That means, for example, that unequal occupational status

⁴⁹ Data on EU employment rates can be retrieved from European Commission's Eurostat website under <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.

might lead to completely different life chances for women as opposed to men, immigrants as opposed to natives or the young as opposed to the elderly (Weiß et al. 2001). As these approaches put strong emphasis on the concurrence of different stratification effects, I want to speak of *intersectional models* in this case. Additionally, I want to introduce a strand of literature that, in addition to positional issues, gives more weight to collective systems of meaning (*kollektive Sinnsysteme*, Reckwitz 2006: 22), i.e. the values, norms, and attitudes shared by individuals, when it comes to the analysis of social stratification. These approaches have been mainly developed in Europe, especially in Germany and comprise the concepts of social milieus and lifestyles (Schulze 1992, Spellerberg 1996, Georg 1998, Vester et al. 2001, Otte 2004). Because these approaches focus on the meaning individuals attach to their actions, I speak of them as *socio-cultural models* of stratification. While some of these models highlight the mentioned meaningful practices as dimensions of social in/equality additional to vertical characteristics of class and status, others treat their concepts as fundamental alternatives to traditional approaches. Dirk Konietzka (1994) labels the former *structuring*, the latter *de-structuring* models. However, as the assumption of a complete de-structuring of milieus and lifestyles seems to be almost inexistent among these approaches, I prefer to abstain from such a differentiation and consider theoretical prevalence if necessary.

4.3.2.1 Intersectional models

The foundation for an analysis of social stratification which, additional to vertical dimensions of class also comprises non-vertical characteristics like gender, ethnicity or generation, was already laid early in the United States. Peter M. Blau, who can be considered as one of the first to systematically consider non-vertical characteristics in stratification theory, regards societies as structured by what he labels *parameters*, i.e. “axes in the multidimensional space of social positions among which the population is distributed” (Blau 1977: 30). However, not all attributes by which people can be classified develop into such parameters. Instead, Blau only treats those attributes as parameters that also have an impact on social relations. While people, who can be pooled in one social category or group on the basis of sharing the same aspect of a parameter, are characterized by a high degree of interaction and association, persons from different categories or groups

interact or associate much less prevalently. Out of all the conceptual innovations introduced by Blau, especially his differentiation between nominal and graduated parameters is of reverberant relevance for the newer intersectional models of social stratification. Blau (1977: 31) defines this differentiation as follows:

”A nominal parameter divides the population into subgroups with distinct boundaries and without an inherent rank order. Sex, religion, race, and place of residence are nominal parameters. A graduated parameter differentiates people in terms of a status rank order, which is in principle continuous, so that the parameter does not draw boundaries between strata.”

This quote illustrates an extension of the scope of stratification analysis by non-vertical attributes that had been suppressed in former new class approaches.

In a way similar to Blau also Stefan Hradil pictures his ideas of social stratification in early 1980s Germany in his book *Sozialstrukturanalyse in einer fortgeschrittenen Gesellschaft* first published in 1987. His concept of social situations (*soziale Lagen*) enhances the variety of “widely recognized life goals” towards which all human aspirations are directed. Additional to the classic economic goals like wealth and professional success, Hradil realizes that there are also welfare goals like health and existential security as well as social goals like inclusion, self-fulfillment and emancipation which are pursued by individuals within a society. By expanding his perspective, Hradil accomplishes to not only account for property and occupation as relevant parameters of stratification; moreover, he is also able to incorporate living and leisure conditions as well as social roles and relationships into his view on social inequality. Besides the areas of production and consumption, therefore now also the areas of reproduction and social relations seem to be important as arenas of stratification (see also Kreckel 2004). Not only resources but also risks and restrictions (Rössel 2009), not only mechanisms of exploitation but also of social closure (Parkin 1971) are analyzed.

Based on these considerations Hradil develops a conceptual typology of fourteen different social situations that are all defined by the disposal of a certain amount of resources expressing different dimensions of social inequality. An individual’s social situation in this typology is determined by the resources of the primary dimension which makes all other resources only secondary expressions of situation. In these terms the highest social situation, the power elite, is determined by a high amount of formal power as

a resource, while the second highest situation, the wealthy, is determined by money. The remaining situations are: the intelligentsia, managers, experts, students, low-risk “average wage earners”, medium-risk “average wage earners”, high-risk “average wage earners”, retired persons, long-term unemployed, poor people and marginalized groups. Despite Hradil’s informative and theoretically well-founded extension of the considered dimensions of stratification and inequality, his model of social situations leaves many questions unanswered – especially as far as the empirical application of his typology of situations is concerned. Through the introduction of a hierarchy between primary and secondary dimensions of unequal life conditions and the more or less exclusive focus on the former, Hradil’s model all in all remains one-dimensional. Besides, the labels of the different social situations are again mainly based on the occupational scheme, which leads to the inclusion of persons who have to this point been neglected in class and status models (the retired, the unemployed and the poor), yet still excludes non-employed people doing domestic and family work such as housewives, family business workers and the like.

Although the approaches of Blau and Hradil have to be given credit for the dimensional augmentation of the strictly vertical class models, their conceptual approach gets stuck halfway on yet another level. While both authors assume that social *differentiation* (in the sense of heterogeneity) finds expression along horizontal or nominal parameters, they think that these parameters do not lead to social *inequality* directly but only mediated by vertical or graduated parameters. An essentially different perspective on the interrelation of horizontal and vertical dimensions of stratification is presented by a strand of research that is known as intersectionality research. The roots of intersectional analyses lie in the field of women’s and gender studies, which emphasize the horizontal dimension of stratification in order to protest against the scientific and societal marginalization of gender-related inequalities. Male differentiations of the so called principal (between labor vs. capital) and secondary contradiction (between the genders) are the targets of criticism on the part of the intersectional approaches.⁵⁰ The term “intersectionality” itself traces back to an article

⁵⁰ A similar terminology is used by Reinhard Kreckel (2004), who speaks of a primary asymmetry of power between classes as opposed to a secondary asymmetry of power that results from the former and becomes relevant within classes (e.g. the working class). In a related fashion, Pierre Bourdieu (1984: 102) labels the

published by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, in which she analyzes the employment policies of various US companies with a special focus on the particular form of discrimination black women workers experience compared to black male workers or white women workers.⁵¹ Intersectionality is therein defined as “the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations” (McCall 2005: 1771). As mechanisms initiating and controlling these relations, intersectionality research names a combination of exploitation and social closure which is also labeled as discrimination (Klinger 2003, Hancock 2007, Winker/Degele 2010). On the one hand, horizontal or nominal dimensions of stratification therefore form new and independent hierarchies in a society that are complementary to class inequalities. Through their with other (vertical) parameters of stratification, on the other hand, these dimensions generate specific types of inequality that could not be captured if a merely horizontal or vertical perspective was taken.

Which dimensions of stratification are scrutinized in intersectional approaches? Generally spoken, nearly all publications include the categories class, gender and “race” in their analyses⁵² (Klinger 2003, Klinger/Knapp 2005, Berger/Guidroz 2009, Andersen/Collins 2010; see also Grusky/Szelényi 2011). Other approaches like the one of Helma Lutz and Norbert Wenning (2001) differentiate between body-oriented, socio-spatial and economic dimensions of stratification in terms of which they distinguish a total of thirteen categories of social inequality (gender, sexual orientation, “race”/skin color, ethnicity, nationality/state, class, culture, health, age, sedentism/place of origin, property, North-South/East-West, development status). In a very similar way Gabriele Winker and Nina Degele (2010) subsumed the fourteen categories work, income/property, education, social background/family, generativity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity,

categories sex, age or nationality, which he considers necessary for the definition of a person’s class position, “secondary properties”.

⁵¹ While the term “intersectionality” was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, the phenomenon described by the term has already been subject to scrutiny since the 1970s. As groundbreaking many scholars consider the scientific work of bell hooks (1981, 1984) as well as the political writings and action of the Combahee River Collective (1977), that have been articulated as a critique of the male dominance within the US civil rights movement.

⁵² In intersectional analyses the term “race” is at times, but not always, enclosed in double quotes. In any case the use of the term has to be understood as critical, the use of terminological alternatives is considered to be of merely “cosmetic value”. As Klinger (2003: 38; own translation) states: „Whoever decides to talk about social relations, simply has to make use of the names they bear. This does, however, not imply approval or consent to the relations at issue.“

region, religion/ideology, age, constitution/health and attractiveness under the four dimensions class, gender, “race” and body. The different numbers of differentiations among the presented approaches illustrate a problem that has most explicitly been addressed by Judith Butler: the fact that all lists of possible dimensions and categories of stratification inevitably have to be incomplete. Consequently, Butler (1990: 143) argues that all efforts of categorization should generally be dismissed:

“Theories of feminist identity that elaborate predicates of color, sexuality, ethnicity, class and able-bodiedness invariably close with an embarrassed ‘etc.’ at the end of the list. Through this horizontal trajectory of adjectives, these positions strive to encompass a situated subject, but invariably fail to be complete.”

Such as the emergence of class theories in the middle of the 19th century in Europe, the appearance of theoretical approaches to intersectionality since the late 1970s and early 1980s can only be comprehended if linked to the political changes of its day. What the labor movement was for the development of Marxian class theory, the identity-related claims made by the feminist, civil rights and LGBT movements are for the debate on intersectionality. The emergence and further differentiation of these movements, e.g. black feminists, lesbian women, etc., stimulated processes of identity formation and realization processes as well as public discourses about these processes, which significantly contributed to the establishment of the intersectionality approach within the social sciences. In this spirit, group-specific interests justify the intersectional perspective on those identities that form at the junctions of different structural characteristics.

A closer look at the state of research reveals some peculiarities and innovations of the still young intersectionality approach. On the one hand, especially the intersections of gender and class (in German speaking publications, e.g. Wetterer 1992, Becker-Schmidt 2007) as well as of gender and “race” (in US contributions, e.g. Crenshaw 1989, 1991, Collins 1990, Browne/Misra 2003) appear to be well studied, while the link between class and “race” as well as other intersections in the area of (dis-)ability and health⁵³ still seem to receive inadequate attention (Weischer 2011). With regard to the approach being rooted in women’s and gender studies, this finding is hardly surprising. Additionally, we find that the intersectional perspective does not only reveal new dimensions of inequality in the

⁵³ For an overview of exceptions cf. Warner/Brown 2009.

examination of familiar arenas of stratification (e.g. the workplace). Rather, also new arenas of stratification (e.g. the household) arise and become subject to analyses of social structure. Finally, a methodological innovation accompanying the emergence of an intersectional perspective on stratification should be mentioned: while classic approaches to social inequality (class and status models) primarily use statistical techniques in their analyses, intersectional models almost exclusively apply qualitative methods. This can partly be explained with the dominant theoretical approaches guiding intersectional analyses, namely deconstructivism, poststructuralism and ethnomethodology. All these approaches – McCall (2005) labels them anti- or intracategorical, because they reject or at least critically question the use of social categorizations (cf. Butler 1990) – make use of more interpretive, inductive methodological strategies (Knudsen 2006: 65f.). Nonetheless there exist also so called (inter)categorical approaches that are open to the use of quantitative methods:

“The categorical approach focuses on the complexity of relationships among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories and not on complexities within single social groups, single categories, or both. The subject is multigroup, and the method is systematically comparative.” (McCall 2005: 1786)

Altogether this cursory review shows how intersectional models can open up a new perspective on social inequality research by including new arenas and mechanisms of stratification, and thereby new categories of differentiation, into their analyses of social structure. How these models can be operationalized for empirical analyses and to what extent their theoretical advantages translate into analytical benefits, will be scrutinized in chapter four.

4.3.2.2 Socio-cultural models

A completely different strategy of expanding the bundle of criteria that is used for the analysis of social inequality in classic approaches to stratification (new class models) can be found in the concepts of social milieu and lifestyle. The so called socio-cultural models of stratification using these concepts, however, do not include additional “objective” (Hradil 1987) dimensions to the vertical categories of property, income and education. Rather, the repertoire of categories that are in charge of the constitution of major social

groups is extended by “subjective” elements like values, norms and attitudes. Rössel (2009) spots the main difference between class and intersectional models on the one hand and milieu and lifestyle models on the other in the fact that the former are concerned with the role resources and restrictions play for human action, while the latter instead focus on partners and objectives of (inter)action. The terms used to capture this new perspective conceptually are derived from classic sociological literature. Without going into further detail here, it should be remarked that, besides Weber and Durkheim, socio-cultural stratification researchers also make references to the works of Georg Simmel and Thorstein Veblen (Burzan 2011).

How can the concepts milieu and lifestyle be defined? And (how) do these concepts relate to each other? Following the mentioned differentiation introduced by Jörg Rössel (2009), lifestyle models could be regarded as focusing on the analysis of a person’s objectives of action which are expressed by their cultural preferences and taste (304f.). Milieu models, on the other hand, are concerned with interaction partners, more precisely: they analyze networks of social interaction (335ff.). With the current state of research in mind, however, this differentiation seems only partly comprehensible. Of course, personal interaction might be considerably relevant for the definition of milieus used in models like the one presented by Gerhard Schulze (1992: 174; own translation) who defines a milieu as a “group of persons who can be distinguished from all the others on the basis of group-specific forms of existence and a high degree of intra-group communication.” Nonetheless empirical applications of milieu models build much more on cultural preferences and value orientations, that is: on life objectives, than on aspects of personal interaction. Also the definition provided by Stefan Hradil clarifies that the existence of lifestyles – characterized as “constantly recurring combination of behavioral patterns, interactions, opinions, inventories of knowledge and evaluative attitudes of a person” (2001: 46; own translation) – has to be regarded as a crucial precondition for the constitution of milieus – defined as a “group of people ... exhibiting those external living conditions and/or inner mindsets from which common *lifestyles* emerge” (1987: 165; own translation, emphasis added). Both concepts thus cannot be examined separately but have to be regarded as two different conceptual levels of the same analytical perspective. With this in mind, I do not differentiate between milieu and lifestyle approaches in the further course of this section.

Instead I treat both milieus and lifestyle groups as similar societal units and consider them as expressions of the same socio-cultural form of social stratification.

One of the most popular contributions to socio-cultural stratification analysis was provided by Gerhard Schulze in his book *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft* from 1992. Therein the author argues that individual actions within the society of late-1980s Germany are no longer affected by external constraints like godliness (pre-enlightenment) or class position (industrialization). Instead, activities within the affluent societies of the late 20th century are “experience-oriented”, that is: they are driven by the pursuit of happiness and the quest for a good life. Schulze claims that, at the individual level, experience-oriented acts transform into a stable, wide-ranging pattern of action which could also be labeled a lifestyle. As not every person develops her own lifestyle, groups of people with at least similar lifestyles can be summarized as milieus.

In Schulze’s concept of the “experience society” milieus are unified by a shared taste concerning clothes, jewelry, furniture, art, entertainment, and so on. From his empirical analyses Schulze therefore derives three basic “everyday-aesthetic schemes” along which the members of a modern society like the German can be structurally classified (see also Burzan 2011: 111f.):

- The *high culture scheme* could also be labeled as “aesthetic” in a very traditional sense. Classical music, visits to theaters, museums or the opera as well as reading “sophisticated” books are essential behavioral components of this scheme. Pleasure is sought in silence and physical retirement, while loud and rude people as well as their ideas of entertainment (drinking beer, watching television) are detested for their simplicity. The philosophy of life shared by members of the high culture scheme is perfection without any limitation to a certain subject matter: whatever a high culture person does must meet her high requirements that are themselves measured on the basis of the expectations of others (especially parents, superiors, etc.).
- As opposed to the high culture scheme, the *trivial scheme* is often disdained because of its affinity to pop music, quiz shows and trashy novels. Pleasure is associated with coziness and the search for the familiar, otherness is hardly reconcilable with the anti-eccentric attitude of this scheme. Also the philosophy of life dominant in this scheme

must be interpreted in these terms: harmony is considered as the basis of a good and fulfilling life.

- For the *tension scheme*, eventually, nothing is worse than boredom and monotony – it is therefore completely different to the trivial scheme. Typical features of the tension scheme are rock music, thrillers (as books and movies) as well as going out to bars, clubs or discos. The tension scheme seeks pleasure in the form of physical action, therefore also sports plays a major role. The philosophy of life in the tension scheme is narcissism: you do things for yourself, not to be liked by others or to assimilate, but to self-actualize.

These schemes, however, do not yet constitute milieus. Not before the high culture, trivial and tension schemes are connected in different combinations, five typical groups emerge: the high-level milieu exhibits proximity to the high culture scheme and considerable distance to the trivial and tension schemes. In contrast, the integration milieu shows some affinity to both the high culture and the trivial scheme but remains distant to the tension scheme. The harmony milieu is close to the trivial scheme, the entertainment milieu is close to the tension scheme. Between these two, the self-realization milieu is characterized by its proximity to the high culture and the tension scheme as well as its distance to the trivial scheme (see figure 12 below).

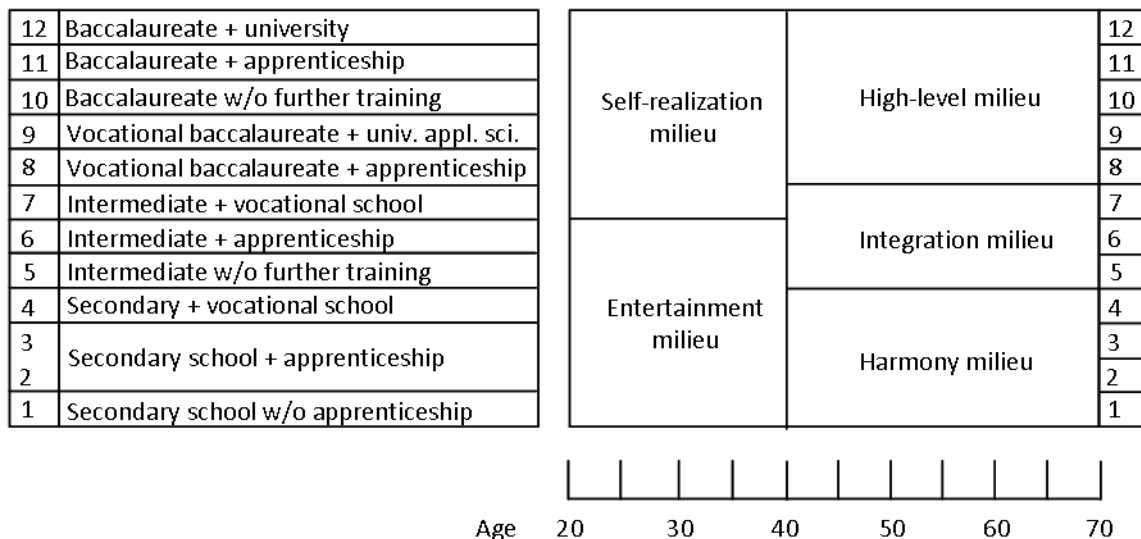
Figure 12: Milieu-specific types of experience orientation (following Schulze 1992: 165)

	Translation into the dimensional space of everyday-aesthetic schemes “+” indicates proximity, “-” indicates distance		
	High culture scheme	Trivial scheme	Tension scheme
High-level milieu	+	-	-
Integration milieu	+	+	-
Harmony milieu	-	+	-
Self-realization milieu	+	-	+
Entertainment milieu	-	-	+

Schulze also writes about the parameters determining a person’s membership in a certain milieu. In his empirical analyses, he finds out that a person does not belong to a milieu by chance but that this belonging is affected by various “traditional” factors of stratification.

The central factors determining one's belonging to a milieu according to Schulze are education and age, with age having the even stronger sorting influence: "The verticalization effect of education is thwarted by the horizontalization effect of age." (Schulze 1992: 401; own translation) The relationship between the milieus must not be interpreted like a hierarchy or a conflict (as was the case for the class and status models), but more like an indifferent coexistence. The figure below illustrates the relationship between milieus and the categories age and education.

Figure 13: Experience milieus by age and educational level (following Schulze 1992: 670)

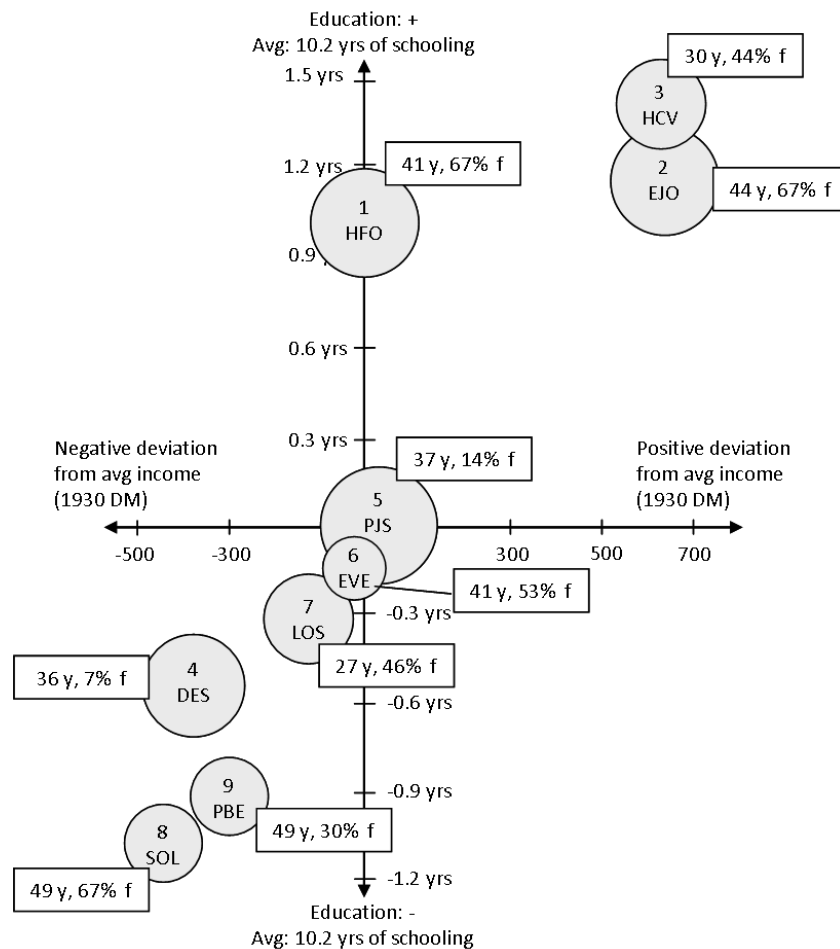


A study similar to Schulze's was conducted by Annette Spellerberg in the early 1990s. In her research that uses data from the Welfare Survey 1993 and was published in the book *Soziale Differenzierung durch Lebensstile* (1996), Spellerberg examines the interactive (leisure activities), expressive (taste in music, furniture, and literature) and evaluative dimension (life objectives) of lifestyles. Based on these three dimensions the author develops a classification of nine "lifestyle groups", which could also be labeled as milieus. The constitutive axes of these lifestyle groups are their scope of action (domestic vs. extramural) and their cultural preferences (established, modern or popular culture). Especially the latter illustrates the affinity of Spellerberg's approach and Schulze's everyday-aesthetic schemes. The nine resultant lifestyle groups are labeled as (Spellerberg 1996: 122):

- 1) Holistic family-oriented (HFO): creative, socially engaged, nature-loving, committed, well-informed, close to family
- 2) Established job-oriented (EJO): aspiring, high professional engagement, well-informed, quality conscious
- 3) Hedonistic culturally versatile (HCV): postmaterial values, high standard of living, experience-oriented and active, well-informed
- 4) Domestic entertainment seekers (DES): spends leisure time at home, strives for attractiveness, prefers pop music, shallow entertainment and juvenile outfits
- 5) Pragmatic job- and sports-oriented (PJS): pleasure-seeking, lifelong learning, well-informed, hardly interested in culture, casual outfits
- 6) Expressive versatile (EVE): plays to the gallery, prefers pop music
- 7) Leisure-oriented sociable (LOS): seeks variety and likes to choose, spends most of the time with friends, information unimportant, figure-hugging clothes
- 8) Solitary (SOL): avoids risks, safety-oriented, few friends and cultural interests, leads a modest life
- 9) Place-bound energetic (PBE): spends leisure time at home, hobby artisans and gardeners, pragmatic, popular taste

Like Schulze's milieus, also Spellerberg's lifestyle groups are not formed independent of the categories of social stratification. Especially age and education, but also income and gender influence the lifestyle significantly. The figure below illustrates the combination of effects graphically. What attracts attention is that women are overrepresented among both the highly educated and high-income earners (HFO, EJO) as well as the poorly educated low-income earners (SOL), while they are underrepresented among average citizens (PJS, DES). Young people, on the other hand, are to be found predominantly among the best-educated top earners (HCV) but also among the average LOS. The lifestyle groups with the highest average age are also those with the lowest degree of formal education and the lowest income level (SOL, PBE).

Figure 14: Lifestyle groups (following Spellerberg 1996)



Supplemented by data on average age (years) and proportion of women (percent) as found in Weischer (2011: 411)

Compared to the concepts of Schulze and Spellerberg, the milieu model developed at the University of Hannover by a research group led by Michael Vester is much more stratified, especially on a vertical dimension. The model, first published in the book *Soziale Milieus im gesellschaftlichen Strukturwandel* (1993, revised version published 2001), builds on the works of the British historian Edward P. Thompson (1968) who studied the roots of the working class in England at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. In doing so, Thompson develops a notion of class as a “social and cultural formation“ which already comes pretty close to the concept of milieus discussed in this section. Additionally, Vester’s model also builds on the theoretical approach of Pierre Bourdieu from whom Vester borrows the idea that the social space is structured by both the volume and

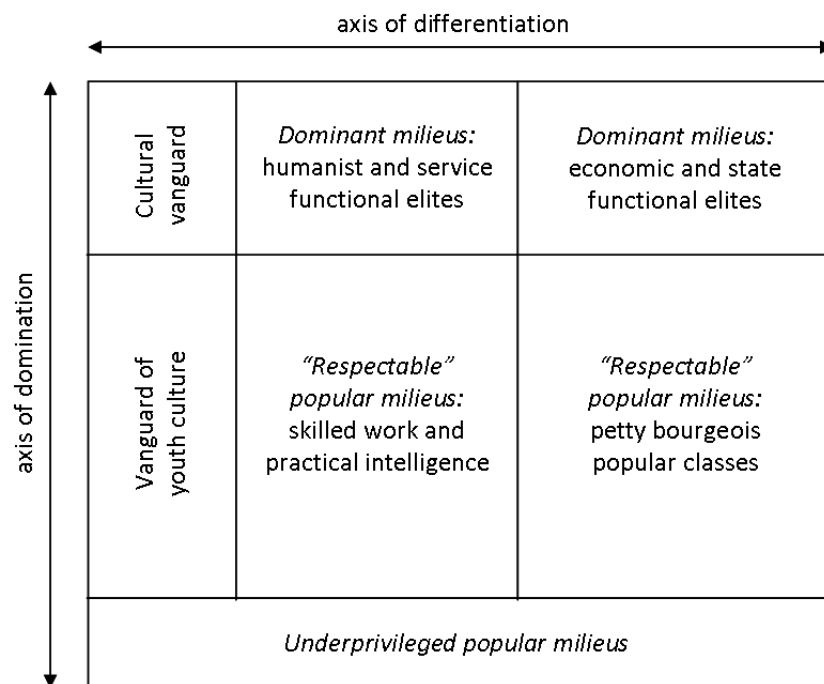
composition of capital – especially economic (money) and cultural (education and degrees), but also social capital (networks).

On this conceptual basis, Vester and his colleagues create a socio-spatial model spanned by two structuring axes. On the *axis of domination* society is divided into three hierarchical milieus with similar capital endowment: the dominant milieus disposing of a high volume of education, power and property; the „respectable“ popular milieus composed of skilled blue- and white-collar workers, service providers and small self-employed; and the underprivileged popular milieus comprising semi- and low-skilled workers. The boundary between the upper and medium milieus Vester labels as the line of distinction, while the boundary between medium and lower milieus is referred to as the line of respectability. The horizontal *axis of differentiation*, on the other hand, splits society into groups with vanguard, autonomy-oriented, status-oriented and authoritarian value orientations according to the degree of obedience to authorities and individual responsibility. The connection of these two axes reveals a social space that, in its raw version, comprises seven milieus, five of which Vester labels as tradition lines (Vester 2003):

- 1) The tradition line of *power and property* (formerly propertied classes) comprises the economic and state functional elites (e.g. large scale entrepreneurs, politicians). People belonging to this milieu are very proud and conscious of their elite status and powerful position in society. It is almost impossible to ascend into this milieu (no upward mobility, high degree of closure).
- 2) The tradition line of *higher education and services* (formerly educated classes) comprises the milieus of the humanist and service functional elites (e.g. professors, senior officials). Members of this milieu share a charitable ethos, are enlightened idealists and promote a strictly meritocratic ideology.
- 3) The tradition line of the *cultural vanguard* is located at the upper left corner of the model. Members of this group live their lives according to strict aesthetic and/or moral standards.
- 4) The tradition line of *skilled work and practical intelligence* is rooted in the pre-industrial milieus of free peasants, artisans and urban citizens. Members of this milieu disapprove of authorities and want to determine their fate themselves.

- 5) The tradition line of the *petty bourgeois popular classes* originates from the „subaltern“ milieus of bureaucratic, urban or rural hierarchies. It is bound to authorities – fathers, notabilities and politicians are still treated as role models.
- 6) The *vanguard of youth culture* is characterized by their desire to get rid of the limitations imposed on them by the adult world. It is not a tradition line per se but emanates from the rebellion against the achievement and duty ethic of the traditional popular milieus (4 and 5).
- 7) The *underprivileged popular milieus* can be described as powerless. Due to their deprived position, members of this traditionless milieu often take either a fatalist („Everything goes down the drain“) or hedonistic („Live every day as if it were your last“) perspective on life. In general, they align themselves with the strategies of the milieus above them in order to cope with their unfortunate situation.

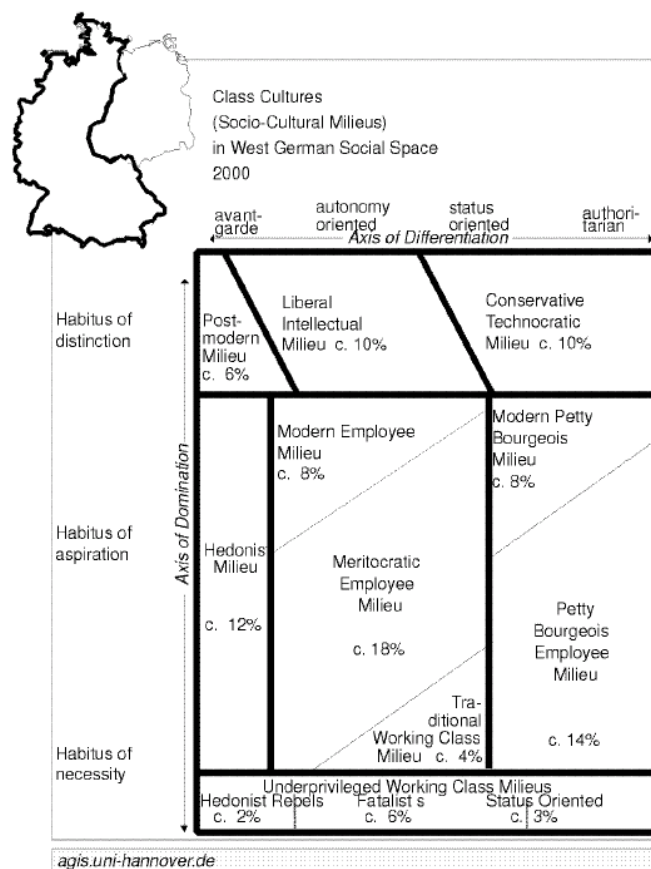
Figure 15: The structure of the social space (following Vester et al. 2001: 31)



Applied to the German population of the year 2000 the above-mentioned general structures form into specific milieus that, in terms of their size, can be put into numbers. Accordingly Vester (2003: 40) describes ten larger groups: the postmodern milieu (approx. 6% of the

population); the liberal-intellectual and conservative-technocratic milieu (both approx. 10% of the population); the hedonist milieu (approx. 12%); the modern (8%) und meritocratic (18%) employee milieu; the traditional working class milieu (approx. 4%); the modern petty bourgeois (8%) and the petty bourgeois employee milieu (14%); the underprivileged working class milieu (approx. 11%). A longitudinal perspective reveals that, while the size of the upper milieus remains relatively stable between the early 1980s and the mid-2000s, the medium milieus increase in size at the “expense” of the lower milieus during the same period (Weischer 2011: 406).

Figure 16: Map of West German class milieus



Source: Vester 2003: 40

The presentation of different milieu and lifestyle models within this subsection has revealed that these approaches introduce a new, socio-cultural dimension to the analysis of social stratification. In times when the determining effect of class positions is decreasing, this new

dimension possibly allows for a more accurate description and analysis of socio-structural groups with shared interests, as it is aspired in this thesis. What has to be added to this insight, is that none of the presented milieu and lifestyle models insinuates a complete detachment from vertical parameters in stratification research. In view of this, Rainer Geißler's concern that "with the uncritical focus on the dynamic plurality of situations, milieus and lifestyles the critical perception of pertaining structures of social inequality" might be blurred and this shift of perspective could lead to "a tendency to differentiate, pluralize, individualize or dynamize the vertical structures away" (Geißler 1996: 323; own translation) seems overstated. The relationship between social structure and the typical patterns of individual action has not at all disappeared in milieu and lifestyle models, it has merely become much more complex (Burzan 2011: 117). It is in this sense that these models should be considered in the empirical part of this study.

4.4 SUMMARY, OUTLOOK AND HYPOTHESES

This dissertation examines how participatory in/equality in Europe is shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires. To this end chapter three was guided by the following questions: Is participatory equality desirable (and inequality in participation a problem) from a normative point of view? Why is this the case? And what does this imply for empirical analyses? To answer these questions I have provided some insights into democratic theory (section 4.1). Comparing three theoretical approaches – democratic elitism, participationism and proceduralist pluralism – I have found that only the latter of these approaches could fulfill all three preconditions of a normative justification of participatory equality. Only proceduralist pluralism, which regards *participatory equality as representativeness of interests*, is (a) compatible with the definition of political participation of chapter two, can (b) guarantee to the individual the freedom to neither be interested nor active in politics and is (c) applicable to empirical implementation.

Based on this pluralist approach to participatory in/equality I, in a next step (section 4.2), tried to find out under which conditions interests are representatively transferred into the political sphere through participation. To this end I sought to comprehend two facts: First, I had to understand the role of interests in guiding social activities like political participation

(how do interests transform into actions?). Secondly, I needed to find out how interests come into existence and where the roots of interests are. The first step towards learning about these things was to define interests as individual (as opposed to a general will or public interest) and conscious (as opposed to needs), yet not articulate (as opposed to concerns or preferences) dispositions that guide our actions and are mediated by society. Using Bourdieu's concept of the habitus I then specified the role of interest as "structuring structure" that organizes human actions, and as "structured structure" that is formed by lived experiences which are again *determined by one's position within society*. In this sense, a person's affiliation to a major social group defines a person's interests to the greatest possible extent.

In a final step (section 4.3), I therefore presented contemporary approaches to the analysis of social stratification and inequality. In particular, I introduced approaches highlighting the persistent relevance of vertical stratification (new class models) as well as approaches emphasizing the extension of vertical approaches to stratification by other, non-vertical parameters (intersectional and socio-cultural models). All these models somehow refer to classic models of social inequality and highlight different arenas, dimensions, determinants and mechanisms of stratification. Combined in various ways, the arenas, dimensions, determinants and mechanisms lead to the classification of different types of groups with shared interests.

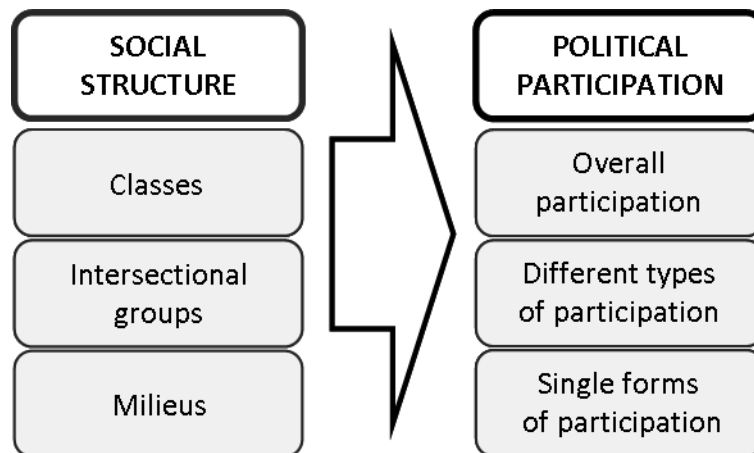
Figure 17: Elements of different stratification models by model-specific group type

	ARENAS	DIMENSIONS	DETERMINANTS	MECHANISMS
Class	production consumption	property/success	occupation	exploitation
Intersectional group	production consumption reproduction interaction	property/success inclusion	occupation gender ethnicity generation, etc.	discrimination
Milieu	orientation (production) (consumption) (reproduction) (interaction)	self-fulfillment	cultural preferences value orientations	misrecognition

Source: own illustration

Figure 17 reveals that for classes the main *arenas* of stratification are the areas of production and consumption, i.e. the (labor) market, while for intersectional groups also the areas of reproduction (family, household) as well as the area of interaction (all fields involving communication) are relevant. For milieus, on the other hand, the main arena of stratification is the area of orientation (culture) while all other mentioned areas remain important as secondary arenas of inequality. The main *dimensions* of stratification that describe the “widely accepted life objectives” (Hradil 1987: 144) within a society with regard to class models are property and success which expand by inclusion when it comes to intersectional approaches. As regards socio-cultural models, the main dimension of stratification is self-fulfillment as a rather individual life objective in relation to which all other material and/or collective goals become less important. As *determinants* of stratification – i.e. the characteristics affecting people’s opportunities to realize the widely accepted life objectives – I accordingly treat occupation for classes, occupation, gender, ethnicity, age and similar collectively negotiated parameters of inclusion for intersectional groups and cultural preferences and value orientations for milieus. Finally, the *mechanisms* that lead to the emergence or persistence of social inequality are exploitation for classes, discrimination (as a combination of exploitation and social closure) for intersectional groups and misrecognition for milieus.

Figure 18: Relationship between social structure and political participation



Source: own illustration

In this study I want to understand which approach, drawing on which notion of group, can help me understand political activism from an in/equality perspective. More precisely, I want to examine how these various types of groups relate to different forms and types of political participation in order to be able to analyze participatory in/equality as an *effect* of social stratification. In these terms, ***participatory inequality exists, if the members of different classes, intersectional groups or milieus participate in politics in a different way and/or to a different extent.*** Figure 18 above summarizes these objectives in a rudimentary framework.

Although comparing the participation levels of different social groups might provide some interesting insights, the observations based on this rudimentary framework might themselves remain exploratory and hardly challenging unless they refer to existing studies, i.e. the theoretical and empirical state of the art in this area of research. In these terms it seems conducive to develop some hypotheses that are intended to guide the following empirical investigations with the aim of generating not only exploratory but also analytical knowledge. The question to be asked in the first instance is: Are there any presuppositions about the relationship between social stratification and political participation that can be deduced from the existing state of research and/or the theoretical considerations described in the former sections of this dissertation? Even if hypothesis testing in a narrow statistical sense is not part of the design of this study, existing publications can give hints to some guiding assumptions about the effects of stratification on political activity. Caínzos and Voces (2010) are among the few scholars who relate their analyses to debates in stratification research. Their aim is to test the so called “death of class”-hypothesis, i.e. they want to know whether vertical stratification (still) matters in the sense that class affiliation affects a person’s propensity to participate in politics significantly. As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, their findings reveal a considerable effect of class on participation. Emerging from this point of departure and applying the considerations of Caínzos and Voces to the broader perspective on social inequality employed in my study, I consider three mutually exclusive *basic presuppositions* relevant for this dissertation:

BP1: If vertical forms of stratification in European societies prevail, new class models will, in a statistical sense, predict political participation to a considerable extent (“Hypothesis of robust association”⁵⁴).

BP2: If vertical forms of stratification are supplemented by non-vertical inequalities, intersectional or socio-cultural models will enable us to understand participation better than new class models (“Hypothesis of differentiation”).

BP3: If political activism in Europe is not stratified at all, none of the inequality models will illuminate our understanding of political participation (“Hypothesis of independence”).

While these basic presuppositions might provide a general impression of whether an association between social stratification and political participation exists, they surely do not give us detailed information about the appearances of participatory in/equality that concern particular types of participation more than others. If we therefore, in a consecutive step, consider the changes in political action repertoires described in section 3.2.1 and differentiate between institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of activism, several additional and more *specific presuppositions* about the relationship between stratification and participation can be made.

SP1: There is no difference between institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation in terms of all kinds of participatory in/equality.

This presupposition is based on the works of Samuel Barnes and his colleagues (1979) who found out already in their seminal Political Action study carried out in eight Western countries (Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United States and the United Kingdom) in the mid-1970s that, in terms of socio-economic status, exactly the same kind of people participate in, as they label it, both conventional and unconventional forms of action. When generalized to a broader understanding of stratification and participation, these findings indicate that the diversification of political action repertoires is not associated with matters of participatory in/equality in the sense that the former have any effect on the latter. Following the findings of Barnes et al. (1979) we can assume that, despite the emergence of new, non-institutionalized forms of activism,

⁵⁴ The terms “hypothesis of robust association” and “hypothesis of independence” can also be found in the article of Caínzos and Voces (2010: 392) whereas I developed the idea of a “hypothesis of differentiation” as a presupposition that is complementary to the two aforementioned hypotheses.

political participation is stratified in the same way that one would observe if only traditional, institutionalized forms of activism were considered in the empirical analysis.

SP2a: The emergence of non-institutionalized forms of participation leads to an increase in class-related participatory inequality due to the higher costs that come with them. These higher costs are caused by their lower degree of institutionalization compared to the traditional forms of participation.

SP2b: The emergence of non-institutionalized forms of participation results in a decrease in class-related participatory inequality due to the lower costs that come with them. These lower costs are caused by their more sporadic nature compared to institutionalized forms of participation.

Both of these two opposing presuppositions are based on the fact that a person's position within social structure in terms of class is empirically linked to this person's disposition of cognitive and material resources: upper-class people with better jobs have higher levels of formal education and higher incomes than members of the middle or working class. Their disposition of a greater amount of cognitive and material resources makes it easier for upper-class people to bear the costs of political participation, among them information costs (which incur as a result of the necessity to gather knowledge about the possible outcomes of a decision in order to be able to make the decision that maximizes one's benefits) and opportunity costs (which incur as a result of the participatory act itself, e.g. fuel costs for driving to a meeting or election by car or tram) (Downs 1957).

Starting from these foundations, the two presuppositions presented above move into different directions. The first acts on the assumption that a high degree of institutionalization, as is the case for party and union activism, reduces information costs and makes it easier for citizens with lower resource levels to participate in these political opinion formation and decision-making processes. The higher costs incurring in non-institutionalized forms therefore lead to lower participation levels of middle- and lower-class citizens and therefore a higher degree of class-related participatory inequality (Kaase 1981, Verba et al. 1995, Caínzos/Voces 2010). To the contrary, the second presupposition indicates that the need to engage in institutionalized forms of activism on a very regular nature constitutes an opportunity cost factor that requires high resource levels on behalf of the participants. Non-institutionalized activism, on the other hand, occurs only sporadic and can therefore also be carried out by citizens with lower resources (Li/Marsh 2008, Smith

2009). Following this line of argumentation there should be a lower degree of class-related participatory inequality in the sporadic, non-institutionalized than in the regular, institutionalized forms of political activism.

SP3: The emergence of non-institutionalized forms of participation leads to fundamental changes in participatory in/equality when analyzed in the context of changes in the social structure of contemporary Western societies. While institutionalized activism is more stratified along the lines of intersectional group affiliation, non-institutionalized forms of participation are more stratified along the boundaries of milieus.

As I have outlined in more detail in the introduction of this dissertation, studies considering other approaches to social stratification than some particular type of class model in their analyses are not only scarce but mainly inexistent. However, some recent publications at least consider categories like gender, age and ethnicity in their analyses of un/equal political activism. These categories, which are also part of (inter)categorical intersectional analyses, affect the results of participatory in/equality in a different manner:

- Studies show that there is generally a smaller gender-gap between the participation levels of men and women in non-institutionalized activism. Disadvantages can be observed mainly in traditional forms of participation (especially active party membership, Morales 2009) as a result of e.g. the masculine structure of state institutions (Geißel 2004, Holland-Cunz 2004). New forms of participation, on the other hand, “allow for the merging of public and private spheres and ... relate closely to every-day life activities” (Stolle/Hooghe 2009: 14), they are less time-consuming and can therefore be arranged more easily with the “double burden” many women have to manage today (Burns et al. 2001). Therefore these new forms are more frequently used by women.
- As regards age, recent studies observe differences in the participation levels of different generations. While the older generations seem to be more active in traditional forms of activism, the young – mostly people below 30 – are more involved in non-institutionalized forms of political action (Fahmy 2006, Marsh et al. 2007, Zukin et al. 2007, Harris et al. 2010). What attracts youngsters in new forms of activism like demonstrations, petitions or boycotts are the low entry costs as well as the sporadic

nature which makes durable commitment unnecessary (Norris 2002, Stolle/Hooghe 2009).

- As a result of steady transnational migration movements and the growing diversification of national populations, ethnicity has clearly (re)gained relevance as a category of social stratification during the past decades (Benhabib 1999, Triandafyllidou/Gropas 2007, Bonifazi et al. 2008). Recent studies point out clearly lower levels of participation on the part of immigrants compared to the native population in institutionalized activism (Martiniello 2006, Aleksynska 2011). These can be explained not only with a lack of political rights but are also caused by immigrants' lower average levels of cognitive and material resources as well as their partially strong orientation towards the country of origin (especially among short-term resident first generation immigrants) which can at least delay political engagement in the new home country (Cyrus/Vogel 2008). While low resource levels could also restrain the participation of immigrants in non-institutionalized activism, recent studies assume that some migration-specific processes of mobilization enhance immigrants' involvement in politics, especially as regards some forms of protest like demonstrations and petitions. This might also lead to higher levels of participation of immigrants in non-institutionalized forms of activism when compared to natives (Gallego 2007: 13).

Taken together, all these findings affect my presuppositions concerning the effect of intersectional models of stratification on political participation. As especially institutionalized forms of activism seem to be more affected by non-vertical categories like gender, age and ethnicity, I expect these forms to be more stratified along the lines of intersectional group affiliation than the non-institutionalized forms.

But not only categories like gender, age and ethnicity gain attention in recent analyses of participatory in/equality. Also other non-vertical categories, for the most part value orientations, are considered ever more often in studies of political participation. Especially Ronald Inglehart (1977, 1990, 1997, 2006) has suggested that, with rising levels of formal education and existential security, a fundamental cultural change from material to postmaterial value orientations has taken place in Western societies during the past 35 years. Through its socialization effect, this value change also affects the political orientations and behavior of individuals. In these terms, Inglehart's main contribution to the

study of participatory in/equality lies in the fact that he (a) considers socio-cultural orientations and not economic conditions to be the decisive determinants of major social group affiliation (and thereby of the interests shared by the members of groups) and (b) applies this finding to the study of political participation asserting that, in the course of value change, also public involvement in what he labels “elite-challenging” participation has increased significantly (Inglehart/Catterberg 2003). On a micro level, the findings of Ronald Inglehart concerning the relationship between socio-cultural orientations and political participation imply that people highlighting postmaterial over material values (self-determination and individual liberty more important than personal security and wealth) are more prone to engage in non-institutionalized activities and vice versa (Van Deth/Scarborough 1995, Walter/Rosenberger 2007, Dalton 2008). Again these findings affect the expectations I have regarding the effect of milieu models on political participation. I assume that, although both types of participation will relate to a person’s membership in a particular milieu (which is mainly defined by cultural preferences and value orientations), especially non-institutionalized activism is stratified along the lines of socio-cultural group affiliation.

Summing up, scrutinizing the relationship between social structure and political participation will help us better understand the nature of what is labeled participatory in/equality in this dissertation. It will enrich our knowledge about the subject matter by being theoretically informed and analytically sound. Together, the basal framework of analysis and the presuppositions presented above will guide the empirical analyses conducted in the third part of this dissertation.

PART III

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIONS AND ANALYSES

5 APPROACHING THE DATA: MAIN OPERATIONALIZATIONS

Additional to a puzzling and socially relevant research question and a conclusive theoretical framework, the most important components of every sound research design are adequate data – i.e. data that is suited for answering the research questions building on the theoretical considerations – as well as the use of these data (e.g. King et al. 1994). For this reason it seems indispensable at this point to make just a few explanatory notes on the use of data in the study at hand, especially as far as operationalizations of the main concepts are concerned. In the following, I therefore want to describe all the *variables* used in this study. First, I want to dedicate some space to the description of the measures of political participation. I consider it crucially important to describe the distribution of different forms of participation in different countries throughout Europe in order to get an empirical impression of the subject matter of this thesis. Additionally, I check whether the distinction between declining, institutionalized and emerging, non-institutionalized forms of participation holds when it comes to the ESS 2006 dataset. In a second step, the measures of social inequality shall be scrutinized in more detail. This serves the purpose of getting an impression of the size of and relationship between the social groups (classes, intersectional

groups, milieus) before entering the empirical analyses of the core concept of this study, namely participatory in/equality.

5.1 MEASURING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN EUROPE: FREQUENCIES AND FORMS

The items included in the ESS 2006 main questionnaire for the purpose of measuring and further analyzing political participation in Europe are summed up in table 8 below. The items B11 as well as the battery B13 to B19 cover such different topics as voting in the last national election, contacting a politician, government or local government official, working in a political party or action group, working in another organization or association, wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker, signing a petition, taking part in a lawful public demonstration and boycotting certain products. What is interesting about this catalogue is, that all forms of illegal protest like unapproved strikes, squatting, road blocks or violence against others are obviously left out and not considered relevant for further analyses. The item battery for the purpose of measuring political participation used in the ESS 2006 obviously builds on a legal notion of activism. But how are these different (legal) forms of participation distributed throughout Europe? And can we find the theoretical distinction between institutionalized activism with declining participation rates and non-institutionalized activism with increasing participation rates also in our empirical data?

If we look at the numbers in table 8, we can at first observe that most respondents are both able and willing to answer questions about their political engagement in an interview situation. The share of refusals (R) and memory gaps (don't know = DK) in no case makes up for more than one percent and can therefore be neglected in further analyses. The figures furthermore illustrate the very different levels of involvement in each of the different forms of participation. As the standard instrument of political voice, voting holds the highest participation rates of all forms also when a subjective instrument like a survey is used for data acquisition: almost 70 percent of all respondents claim to have cast a ballot in the last national election. To a much lesser extent have Europeans taken part in the second-most popular form of participation. Only a little more than one quarter of all respondents (26.1 percent) say that they have signed a petition within the twelve months before they were

interviewed. The third rank in this classification of forms of participation is taken by boycotts, which have been joined by about 18 percent of all respondents of the ESS 2006, while only about one out of seven respondents (14.6 percent) declares to have worked for an organization or association different to political parties or contacted a politician or government official within the previous year. Between seven and eight percent of the people interviewed for the ESS 2006 say that they had taken part in a demonstration or worn/displayed a campaign badge or sticker in the twelve months before the survey. The lowest popularity in this battery of legal forms of political action is enjoyed by parties: only 3.7 percent, that is less than one out of 25 persons, has worked for a political party or action group.

Table 8: Political participation in Europe, total

	Voting	Contacting	Political party	Another org
Yes	69.7	13.3	3.7	14.6
No	29.4	86.4	96.1	85.2
R/DK	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.2
	Campaign badge	Petition	Demonstration	Boycott
Yes	7.4	26.1	8.0	17.8
No	92.4	73.4	91.8	81.8
R/DK	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.4

Weighted data, n = 33,032

Source: ESS 2006

An exploratory factor analysis (e.g. Thompson 2004, Brown 2006, Stevens 2009) of the eight different forms of activism covered by the ESS 2006 helps us find a possible structure in our data and enables us to compare its results to the theoretical classification introduced in section 2.2.2. In a nutshell, a factor analysis is a statistical procedure that helps the researcher to systematically reduce the number of variables used for analysis in order to increase the manageability of the data at the expense of some loss of information. To this end, the variables at hand are considered as specifications of some other factor behind these initial variables. As Kim and Mueller (1978: 8) put it: “Factor analysis assumes that the observed variables are linear combinations of some underlying (hypothetical or unobservable) factors.”

For my dissertation I conducted a principal component analysis (PCA) using orthogonal varimax rotation which resulted in the extraction of two factors (or components) based on a scree test as suggested by Cattell (1966).⁵⁵ Both of these factors have eigenvalues greater than one, together the two account for 42.7 percent of the total variance of all initial variables. As regards content, the first factor comprises the non-institutionalized forms “taking part in a lawful demonstration”, “wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker”, “signing a petition” and “joining in boycotts”. All of these forms of participation are strongly correlated to factor one but only weakly correlated to factor two (factor loadings). The second factor of our PCA comprises the forms “voting”, “contacting politician or government official”, “working for political party or organization” and “working for another organization or association”. While the factor loadings for the first two forms are strong on factor two and weak on factor one which allows a clear classification of voting and contacting, both working for a political party and working for another organization show strong loadings on both factors. Unlike the theoretical distinction, that is quite clear in these cases, both forms of activism cannot be classified unambiguously on the basis of the ESS data. Since, however, the factor loading for both forms of organizational work are still stronger on factor two, I will summarize the non-institutionalized forms under factor one and the institutionalized forms under factor two.

Table 9: Forms of political participation in Europe, PCA with varimax rotation

	Factor 1	Factor 2
Lawful demonstration	.715	-.044
Campaign badge	.698	.059
Petition	.600	.232
Boycott	.433	.220
Voting	-.199	.756
Contacting	.269	.598
Another org or association	.411	.484
Political party or action group	.384	.410

Weighted data, n = 33,032

Source: ESS 2006

⁵⁵ Before the analysis was conducted, I ran a test for whether the variables are suited for dimension reduction. Both Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 25,489$) and the measure of sample adequacy (MSA) following Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (0.773) confirmed the applicability of PCA (for tests see Backhaus et al. 2006: 272-277).

In order to get an impression of how widespread participation in different types of political activism is in different parts of Europe, let us in a third step not just compare the participation rates in all European countries taken together but also examine the differences in participation levels between the 21 countries included in the empirical observations of this study. To this end we can distinguish between different groups of countries as far as their average participation levels are concerned. The highest overall participation levels can be found in the Scandinavian countries with Norway ($M_{\text{total}} = 2.29$) heading the list, followed by Sweden ($M_{\text{total}} = 2.25$), Denmark ($M_{\text{total}} = 2.18$) and Finland ($M_{\text{total}} = 2.11$). While Norway and Finland gain relatively high scores in the level scales of both types of participation, Sweden exhibits especially high levels of non-institutionalized activism ($M_{\text{non-inst}} = 0.96$, especially petitions and boycotts) whereas in Denmark more people participate in institutionalized forms ($M_{\text{inst}} = 1.42$), above all voting. A second group of countries with similar participation levels is composed of the Western European states France ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.89$), Belgium ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.88$), Austria ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.87$), Germany ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.72$), the Netherlands ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.67$), Switzerland ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.65$) and Spain ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.62$) as well as the United Kingdom ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.73$), Ireland ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.58$) and – somehow exotically – Cyprus ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.50$). Among these countries, Germany, Ireland and Spain show similar levels in both types of activism, while the United Kingdom, France and Switzerland score higher on non-institutionalized ($M_{\text{non-inst}}$ between 0.77 and 0.89), Austria, Belgium, Cyprus and the Netherlands score higher on institutionalized forms of participation (M_{inst} between 1.21 and 1.35). Finally, a third group of countries composed of the Eastern European societies of Slovakia ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.20$), Slovenia ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.19$), Hungary ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.08$), Poland ($M_{\text{total}} = 0.87$), Estonia ($M_{\text{total}} = 0.85$) and Bulgaria ($M_{\text{total}} = 0.84$) as well as the young democracy of Portugal ($M_{\text{total}} = 1.01$) exhibits rather low levels of participation. Within all of these countries there are low levels of participation in both forms of activism, but while Slovakia and Slovenia perform slightly better than the rest in terms of political activity levels, especially Poland, Estonia and Bulgaria are to be considered severe “underperformers”.

It becomes clear that, examining political participation in Europe, we are not only able to find differences along state borders. Rather, countries can be grouped according to their similar levels of activism. As the results of similar studies confirm (Neller/van Deth 2006,

Bernhagen/Marsh 2007), the consolidated democracies in Western and Northern Europe show much higher average levels of participation than the younger democracies of Southern and Eastern Europe. This observation generally applies except for some outliers such as the low level of turnout in Switzerland and the low level of lawful protest in Finland as well as the high levels of party activism and demonstration attendance in Spain. In the following I will account for these regional differences by conducting separate analyses for the Northern/Western and the Southern/Eastern countries.

5.2 *MEASURING SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN EUROPE: CLASSES, INTERSECTIONAL GROUPS, MILIEUS*

In section 4.3.2 several approaches to analyzing the social structure of contemporary societies have been presented. In general I have distinguished between new class models, which point out the enduring relevance of vertical inequalities for the realization of life goals, and intersectional as well as socio-cultural models that both highlight the existence (and increasing importance) of new, non-vertical axes of social stratification. The main difference between the latter two models is that intersectional models emphasize identity formations at the intersections of factors like class, race/ethnicity, gender and age (to name just a few possible categories) while socio-cultural models focus on groups that come into existence in relation to the cultural preferences and value orientations that – at least partially – take the place of the formerly dominant vertical structures. The aim of this section is to devote some thoughts to the question, how the three types of groups that emerge from these different models of stratification (classes, intersectional groups, milieus) can be scrutinized in empirical analyses. What are the elements an empirical concept of class, intersectional group or milieu must comprise? Do we find these elements in the ESS 2006? And what do we find out about the existence and size of these major social groups based on our data?

5.2.1 CLASSES

In the conceptual part of this thesis, I introduced several recent approaches to measuring class inequality in contemporary societies. These approaches have in common that they define occupation as the main determinant of social stratification. Consequently, the most popular and widely-used empirical concepts of class today are those that build their notion of class on the *International Standard Classification of Occupations* (ISCO). Just as many other surveys, also the ESS 2006 contains a bundle of questions that allows to classify respondents according to their position in the area of production. In particular, the items F22 to F25 of the ESS 2006 ask for a respondent's occupational title ("What is/was the name or title of your main job?"), job content ("In your main job, what kind of work do/did you do most of the time?"), qualifications necessary for the job ("What training or qualifications are/were needed for the job?") as well as the sector in which the firm or organization a person works for is active ("What does/did the firm/organization you work/worked for mainly make or do?"). Out of these four open questions it is possible to calculate the ISCO code which again is used as the basis for the Wright and EGP class schemes.

5.2.1.1 Wright class scheme

For the analyses of this thesis I first of all decided to make use of the 12-class scheme as described by Wright (2000). An SPSS syntax for calculation of class belonging is provided by Leiulfstrud et al. (2010) and was applied to the data of the ESS 2006. Additional to the variable covering the ISCO codes, calculation of class belonging according to Wright also requires the variables E29 (Employment status), F12 (Employment relation), F13 (Number of employees), F16 (Responsible for supervising other employees), F17 (Number of people responsible for in job), F18 (Allowed to decide how daily work is organized) and F19 (Allowed to influence policy decisions about activities in organization). Based on these items a new variable taking twelve possible values, i.e. the twelve classes, was constructed.

The results depicted in table 10 show that, out of the 33,032 respondents to the ESS 2006, 28,726 were able to answer the questions based on which the Wright class scheme is calculated. That means that 87 percent of the persons interviewed have spent at least some time of their life in a paid work relationship. Out of these a majority of more than two

thirds (67.9 percent) are in non-management positions (experts, skilled and non-skilled workers), 14.0 percent are supervisors and 6.5 percent are managers. Thus, wage earners make up for almost 90 percent of all people in a paid working relationship whereas only one out of ten persons is self-employed and more than sixty percent of the self-employed persons do not even have own employees.

Table 10: Social classes in Europe according to Wright's 12-class scheme

	Frequencies	Percent	Valid %
Capitalists (w/10+ employees)	189	0.6	0.7
Small employers (w/1-9 employees)	1,075	3.3	3.7
Petty bourgeoisie (w/o employees)	2,049	6.2	7.1
Expert managers	528	1.6	1.8
Expert supervisors	809	2.4	2.8
Experts	1,237	3.7	4.3
Skilled managers	946	2.9	3.3
Skilled supervisors	1,704	5.2	5.9
Skilled workers	6,615	20.0	23.0
Non-skilled managers	407	1.2	1.4
Non-skilled supervisors	1,531	4.6	5.3
Non-skilled workers	11,638	35.2	40.6
Total	28,726	87.0	100.0
Missing	4,306	13.0	
TOTAL	33,032	100.0	

Weighted data, n = 33,032

Source: ESS 2006

In section 4.3.2.1 I have outlined that Wright does not only offer a 12-class model of society but that he also detects various combinations of groups that he summarizes to what he labels different class formations. Out of these formations, according to Wright three are more possible than others: a three-class formation with a middle class coalition that acts as a buffer between working class and bourgeoisie (model 1); a two-class version that depicts pure ideological polarization between working class and bourgeoisie (model 2); and another two-class version in which working and middle classes have merged and stand vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie in a non-polarized class formation (model 3).

Table 11: Class formations according to Wright

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Bourgeoisie	12.3	31.1	13.8
Middle class	18.8	-	86.2
Working class	68.9	68.9	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Entries are valid percentages

Weighed data, n = 28,726

Source: ESS 2006

The above table reveals that in model one (class polarization with middle class buffer) the bourgeoisie comprises 12.3 percent and the middle class 18.8 percent of all interviewees, while still more than two thirds of the respondents are considered working class in this formation. In model two (pure ideological polarization) the numbers of bourgeoisie and middle class are simply added while the working class remains at a size of 68.9 percent of ESS respondents. In model three (non-polarized formation) the working class merges with the middle class resulting in a new middle class comprising almost nine out of ten persons within European societies whereas just under fourteen percent are grouped as part of the bourgeoisie. In total, the three-class scheme summarized in model one seems to be the most enlightening of the three possible class formations according to Erik O. Wright.

Using Wright's three-class scheme to check for cross-national variation in class composition, we find that both the bourgeoisie and the middle class are clearly greater in number in the Northern and Western (13.9 and 20.0 percent) than in the Southern and Eastern regions of Europe (9.3 and 15.6 percent) while the working class is much larger in the South/East (75.1 percent) than in the North/West (66.1 percent). Two remarkable exceptions to this rule of thumb are Austria with its comparatively numerous working class (76.1 percent), Poland with its big middle class (20.3 percent) or Slovenia with its numerically extensive bourgeoisie (14.3 percent). Again, however, the NW/SE divide in Europe becomes obvious.

5.2.1.2 EGP class scheme

Another measure for the analysis of class belonging is offered by John Goldthorpe and colleagues (Erikson/Goldthorpe 1992, Goldthorpe 1996). Similar to Wright's class model, the so called EGP scheme is based on ISCO coding and can be calculated from the ESS 2006 data quite easily. The SPSS syntax provided by Leiulfsrud et al. (2010) suggests two different ways of calculating the EGP class scheme: the so called Ganzeboom version, originally programmed by Harry Ganzeboom and applied to the first round of SPSS data, and a so called Trento version programmed by the authors of the Leiulfsrud et al. paper. Much like the syntax used for the Wright scheme, both versions for calculating the EGP scheme use the variables F12 (Employment relation), F13 (Number of employees), F16 (Responsible for supervising other employees), F17 (Number of people responsible for in job) and F18 (Allowed to decide how daily work is organized). Based on these items a new variable taking eleven possible values is created.

Table 12 shows that, similar to the Wright class scheme, almost nine out of ten respondents to the ESS 2006 could be classified into one of the eleven groups according to their current or former occupational status. Although the two versions do not result in different classifications ($r = 0.987$) the table below illustrates that in the Ganzeboom version the service classes as well as the group of unskilled industry workers are considerably bigger than in the Trento version whereas in the latter there are more non-manual employees and skilled workers. Altogether about one third of the respondents to the ESS 2006 can be classified as higher- and lower-level service class (I and II – between 29.5 and 34.8 percent), a little less are part of the intermediate class comprised of employees and supervisors (IIIa, b and V – between 24.8 and 30.2 percent), another scant third are skilled, semi- and unskilled workers (VI, VII a and b – between 30.6 and 31.3 percent) and about one tenth are part of the petty bourgeoisie (IV a, b and c – 9.0 to 9.8 percent).

Table 12: Social classes in Europe according to the EGP class scheme

	Ganzeboom version			Trento version		
	Frequencies	Percent	Valid %	Frequencies	Percent	Valid %
I Higher-level service class	4,238	12.8	14.4	3,500	10.6	11.8
II Lower-level service class	6,014	18.2	20.4	5,226	15.8	17.7
IIIa Routine non-manual (a&c)	2,756	8.3	9.4	3,626	11.0	12.3
IIIb Routine non-manual (s&s)	3,512	10.6	11.9	4,216	12.8	14.3
IVa Self-employed w/ employees	881	2.7	3.0	894	2.7	3.0
IVb Self-employed w/o employees	1,165	3.5	4.0	1,077	3.3	3.6
IVc Self-employed farmers	812	2.5	2.8	724	2.2	2.4
V Manual supervisors	1,039	3.1	3.5	1,065	3.2	3.6
VI Skilled workers	2,751	8.3	9.4	3,547	10.7	12.0
VIIa Unskilled industry workers	5,600	17.0	19.0	4,954	15.0	16.8
VIIb Unskilled farm laborers	645	2.0	2.2	724	2.2	2.5
Total	29,412	89.0	100.0	29,553	89.5	100.0
Missing	3,620	11.0		3,479	10.5	
TOTAL	33,032	100.0		33,032	100.0	

Weighted data, n = 33,032

Source: ESS 2006

If we use the data of the Trento version to examine class formations in various European societies, we find some remarkable differences between the countries observed. The share of people who are members of either of the service classes is much larger in the established democracies in the North/West (34.8 percent) than in the South/East (22.3 percent): with a share of 15.9 and 13.3 percent of the population respectively, the service classes in Spain and Portugal are less than half the size of the service classes in Sweden (38.2 percent), Denmark (38.8 percent) or Belgium (39.2 percent) and only one third the size of the service class in the Netherlands (44.4 percent). Except for Belgium (23.9 percent) and Finland (24.2 percent), whose share of non-manual employees and manual supervisors is quite low, a similar difference between the North/West (31.9 percent) and the South/East (24.7 percent) can also be observed for the intermediate classes. On the other hand, the working class is more than twice as big in countries like Portugal (49.2 percent), Hungary (48.9 percent) or Bulgaria (48.2 percent) – South/East total is 43.5 percent – than it is in Norway (20.1 percent), the Netherlands (20.8 percent) or Ireland (21.4 percent) – North/West total is 24.8 percent. The share of self-employed persons, eventually, follows no clear regional pattern with countries like Spain (16.4 percent), Poland (14.3 percent), Cyprus (15.0

percent), Ireland (12.5 percent), Portugal (12.3 percent) and Finland (11.7 percent) among the top and Estonia (3.2 percent), Slovakia (5.2 percent), Bulgaria (5.3 percent) and Hungary (5.9 percent) but also Denmark (6.0 percent), France and Sweden (both 6.5 percent) among the bottom ranks. In total, however, the North/West-South/East divide also becomes obvious when the EGP scheme is used for class differentiation.

5.2.2 INTERSECTIONAL GROUPS

In recent years, approaches analyzing social structures exclusively from the perspective of class hierarchies have more and more become subject to criticism. Different scholars have scathed traditional models for ignoring the horizontal, non-occupation-oriented mechanisms of stratification in today's societies and suggested new approaches to get a grip on the problem of social inequalities (in plural). As outlined in section 4.3.2.2, several of these approaches can be summarized under the term intersectional models. These models discover those identities that form at the junctions of different vertical and horizontal categories of social inequality – e.g. class, gender, “race”/ethnic minority status, sexual orientation, age, etc. – as being the carrier of shared social group interests. One of the major problems of all intersectional analyses is to cope with the problem of selecting which of these categories are considered relevant for social stratification. This is, not least, an empirical problem because, in quantitative studies, it affects both stages of data collection and data analysis. Which questions should be asked? And how should the items be analyzed? Unfortunately only few publications deal with the problem of measuring intersectionality in quantitative studies (Steinbugler et al 2006, Bowleg 2008, Dubrow 2008, Warner 2008), which is why the state of research in this area is still underdeveloped and only few hints at how to deal with the mentioned problem are offered. Therefore it seems to be left to the researcher to find an adequate strategy of category selection and measurement. As far as this study is concerned, I decided to take a path that is (a) founded in the more conceptual part of the state of research and that is (b) pragmatic in the sense of empirical feasibility. In all further analyses of this thesis I therefore include the “classic” triad of stratification categories comprising class, gender and “race”/ethnicity (e.g. Berger/Guidroz 2009, Andersen/Collins 2010) as well as the category age which I, following Kottmann (2008), consider to be an especially relevant but often neglected

category of social stratification, that will become even more important in the years and decades to come. All other categories that might possibly contribute to the formation of intersectional groups are left out of the analyses of this thesis.

The ESS 2006 contains several items for gauging all of these characteristics. The measurement of class has already been described above, for the analyses of intersectional groups measures will therefore simply be borrowed from Wright's three-class formation model. Information about a person's gender is based on item F2 of the ESS questionnaire, in which the interviewer was asked to categorize the respondent under one of the two options "male" or "female". This subjective classification was successful in 99.9 percent of all cases, only 18 persons were not classified adequately in terms of gender for whatever reason. In total, 52.2 percent of the respondents to the ESS 2006 are female, 47.8 percent are male.

The ESS 2006 furthermore comprises various items for approaching the respondents' ethnicity. The adequate measurement of ethnicity has long been a subject to scientific controversy and debate and remains conflictual also in recent publications (e.g. Jacobs et al. 2009, Burton et al. 2010, Perchinig/Troger 2011). As Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Warner (2010) notice, the measurement of ethnicity possibly comprises five dimensions: legal status (citizenship), economic opportunities (work permit), subjective identity (ethnic self-assignment), integration into host society (language) and immigrant origin (own and ancestor's birthplace). Except for the topic of economic opportunities, all of these dimensions were also covered in the ESS 2006 (see Billiet 2002). Item C26 asks for the respondent's citizenship, item C31 asks for the language most frequently spoken in the respondent's home and item C32 wants to know whether the respondent belongs to an ethnic minority group. Given that there does not seem to be a system of classification without shortcomings and imperfections, I follow the recommendations of Jacobs et al. (2010: 85f.) to use measures of immigrant origin (country of birth) in order to capture the category ethnicity in my data. More precisely, I consider a person to be of immigrant origin if either she or at least one of her parents has been born outside of the country in which the interview was conducted (i.e. the respondent's country of residence). Altogether the ESS 2006 comprises a share of 14.7 percent of respondents with an immigrant origin.

As a measure of age, the ESS 2006 contains two questions asking for a respondent's month and year of birth. From these two variables and the information about the time at which the fieldwork was conducted, an age variable could be calculated. This way, more than 99 percent of all cases could be assigned an unambiguous numerical value. According to the calculated age variable, at the time the fieldwork was conducted the youngest respondent to the ESS 2006 was 14 years and two months old whereas the oldest respondent was 101 years and four months old. The median age of the ESS 2006 sample is 45.8 years (SD = 18.3) which is considerably higher than the median age of the EU population (2006: 39.9 years). This is caused by the fact that under-15-year-olds have not been considered in the survey for obvious reasons. For the composition of intersectional groups, age is measured in three different age groups (younger than 30, 30 to 59, 60 and older) which I consider equivalent to three distinct generations. In total, 21.6 percent of all respondents to the ESS 2006 are under 30 years old, 52.6 percent are between 30 and 59, and 25.9 percent are 60 years and older.

Table 13: Intersectional groups in Europe along the axes class, gender, ethnicity and age

	< 30 years				30 to 59 years				> 60 years				TOTAL
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		
	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	
Bourgeoisie	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.0	4.3	0.9	2.0	0.5	2.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	12.4
Middle class	1.2	0.2	0.9	0.2	5.8	1.0	4.1	0.8	2.6	0.3	1.6	0.1	18.8
Working class	5.8	1.2	5.7	1.2	13.0	2.6	19.1	3.1	6.2	0.8	9.2	1.1	68.9
TOTAL	7.4	1.5	6.8	1.4	23.2	4.4	25.2	4.4	11.3	1.4	11.6	1.3	100.0

Weighted data, n = 28,572

Source: ESS 2006

Taken together, the four constitutive categories which all can only take two or three values result in the existence of 36 different intersectional groups. Out of the respondents to the ESS 2006 86.5 percent could be classified into one of these groups. This indicates that the differentiation into intersectional groups is suited for empirical analysis. The numerically biggest group are middle-aged working-class native women (19.1 percent) followed by middle-aged working-class native men (13.0 percent) and older working-class native women (9.2 percent). The by far smallest group are young bourgeois immigrant women who account for only 0.04 percent of all respondents (12 persons), followed by young

bourgeois immigrant men (29 persons) and older bourgeois (36 persons) and middle-class (41 persons) immigrant women who both account for a about 0.1 percent of all respondents. Additional analyses reveal some other interesting aspects of intersectional group composition. Firstly, we find that there are no major differences between classes when it comes to ethnicity. This means that the share of bourgeois, middle-class and working-class people among immigrants and natives are nearly equal. A totally different picture reveals when it comes to the relationship between class and gender: while 17.6 percent of the male respondents belong to the bourgeoisie, 22.5 percent to the middle class and 59.9 percent to the working class, only 7.2 percent of the female respondents are members of the bourgeoisie and 15.2 percent are members of the middle class but 77.6 percent belong to the working class. This reveals a clearly lower socio-economic status of women compared to men in Europe (the gender difference is highly significant at a $p < .001$ level). Also the factors age and class seem to be related. Among the youngest age group (< 30) more than four out of five respondents (80.7 percent) were classified as members of the working class, but only 4.9 percent are part of the bourgeoisie. The share of bourgeois respondents among the over-30-year olds, on the other hand, is about 14 percent whereas only about two thirds in this age group can be categorized as working class. While the factors gender and immigrant origin are unrelated, the share of women among respondents who are older than 60 years (54.0 percent) is higher than among the under-30-year-olds (49.1 percent) which indicates a connection between the categories gender and age. Furthermore, immigrant origin is also related to age: while native respondents to the ESS 2006 are on average 47.2 years old, immigrants have a mean age of only 43.7 years.

If we, as before, compare the size of various intersectional groups in different European societies, we find major differences between regions. As especially stunning I regard the fact that the observed North/West-South/East divide we found for traditional class formations – above-average sized bourgeoisie and below-average sized working class in the Northern and Western democracies – seems to be much more prevalent among men above 30 as well as among women between 30 and 59 (irrespective of immigrant origin) when intersectional groups are examined. For young persons of both genders as well as elderly women this divide is almost inexistent. All in all, class differences between the North/West

and the South/East seem to diminish among the youngest generation independent of gender and ethnicity. Thus, the NW/SE-pattern we observed for class affiliation alone is obviously put into perspective when non-vertical factors are taken into consideration. These observations support the assumption that horizontal categories of stratification should be included in the analysis of participatory in/equality in order to gather new enlightening insights.

5.2.3 MILIEUS

Despite the indicated benefit of intersectional models in the analysis of social stratification, not only the addition of factors like gender and ethnicity to the established vertical models of stratification can lead to a consolidation of our analyses. Also the inclusion of socio-cultural factors into stratification models might lead to illustrative findings. As I have described in section 4.3.3.2, there are several ways to consider these socio-cultural aspects, e.g. by drawing on everyday-aesthetic schemes like Schulze (1992) did in his works about what he labels the “experience society”. Also Spellerberg (1996) mentions the expressive dimension of lifestyles (taste in music, furniture and literature) in her studies. As, however, the ESS 2006 questionnaire does not contain any set of items asking for this aspect of cultural preferences, I decided to base my calculations concerning the formation of milieus more on the theoretical considerations of Vester et al. (2001) who split society into different groups according to their value orientations along what they call an axis of differentiation. This “evaluative dimension” can also be found in Spellerberg’s typology of lifestyle groups and reflects the increasing focus on values in postmodernization approaches to democracy and political behavior as offered by scholars like Ronald Inglehart or Christian Welzel (Inglehart 1997, 2007, Welzel 2006, Welzel/Inglehart 2009). In contrast to the vertical dimension of stratification, I must come up with an own typology of milieus in order to examine the socio-cultural dimension of inequality in this thesis.

The ESS 2006 comprises a 21-item battery on individual value orientations (GS1, A-U) based on the works of Shalom Schwartz (1992, 1994) who developed a socio-psychological theory of universal value contents and structure as well as a set of questions to account for ten different human values (conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security). In order to empirically determine a

fixed number of value milieus, I conducted a cluster analysis, the common technique used for finding structures in datasets and build groups of similar objects (mostly cases, i.e. persons) based on these structures.⁵⁶ In a first step, I decided to run a hierarchical cluster analysis (agglomerative clustering) on a random subsample of the ESS 2006 data comprising one percent of all cases⁵⁷ using Ward's method as a clustering algorithm and squared Euclidean distance as a measure of similarity in order to decide on the number of clusters. The variables entered in the analysis were z-standardized centered values scores that were calculated using the SPSS syntax as proposed by Schwartz (n.d.). Based on the information retrieved from analyzing the dendrogram (increase in distance by further combination of clusters) I settled for a six cluster solution. In a second step, I then conducted a k-means cluster analysis using the saved cluster centers from the hierarchical cluster analysis (drawn from an external file) with the specified number of six clusters on the whole ESS 2006 dataset.

Cross-tabulating the cluster solution with the initial scores of the value items following Schwartz finally enabled me to interpret the results with regard to the primary purpose of finding evidence for the existence of distinct value milieus in the ESS 2006 data. One major aspect of finding these milieus lies in the process of interpretation which is again closely related to the task of labeling the milieus. As a result of my calculations, members of cluster one can be characterized by their strong support for security, conformity and tradition whereas self-direction and especially stimulation and hedonism are fiercely rejected. Therefore I decided to call this the milieu of "vintage conservatives" who share a strong need for security and completely disapprove of people who always seek fun and distraction in their lives. Members of cluster two emphasize tradition as an important part of their lives, too. Nevertheless they also consider benevolence and universalism as crucial aspects of their own value system. As they reject the attitudes of those people who are only oriented towards power and achievement, I labeled this group "modest do-gooders". The members of cluster three neither score especially high nor particularly low on all of the ten values scores. As they do not attract attention in terms of any of the orientations, I decided

⁵⁶ More general information about the method of cluster analysis can be found in the respective literature (e.g. Aldenderfer/Blashfield 1984, Backhaus et al. 2006, Bacher et al. 2010, Everitt et al. 2011).

⁵⁷ Due to the large sample size of the ESS 2006 the hierarchical cluster analysis could not be performed for the complete sample at once.

to tag this group “everyday people”. Respondents grouped together in cluster four stand out because they reject the values of benevolence and universalism while forcefully trying to get into power positions. Not showing any deviations from the average in any of the other value scores, the members of cluster four were called “power-hungry egoists”. The extreme rejection of security and conformity values as well as their sympathy for benevolence, universalism, self-direction and stimulation associated with a strong urge for independence and adventures unifies the members of cluster five who I want to label “progressive egalitarians”. Last but not least, the members of cluster six reject conformity and traditions as well as universalism, they want to be remunerated for their individual achievements and have fun in their rare leisure time. “Modern overachievers” seems to be a good label for the people summarized in this group.

Table 14: Value milieus in Europe, own calculations

	Frequencies	Percent	Valid %
Vintage conservatives	5,178	15.7	16.0
Modest do-gooders	4,039	12.2	12.5
Everyday people	7,600	23.0	23.5
Power-hungry egoists	7,383	22.4	22.8
Progressive egalitarians	4,131	12.5	12.8
Modern overachievers	3,988	12.1	12.3
Total	22,318	97.8	100.0
Missing	714	2.2	
TOTAL	33,032	100.0	

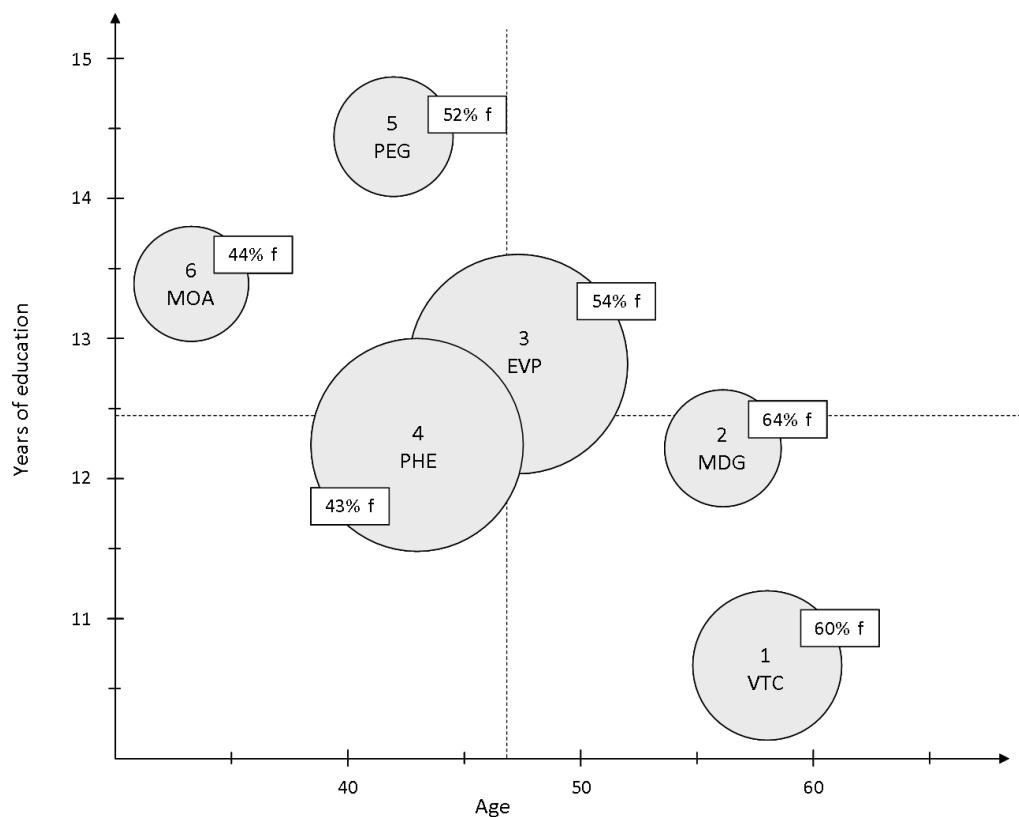
Weighted data, n = 33,032

Source: ESS 2006

Table 14 shows that almost all respondents of the ESS 2006 could be classified into one of the milieus according to their value orientations, only 714 persons (2.2 percent) have to be left out of the further analyses. The table also reveals that the largest two milieus to be found in our dataset are the everyday people (23.5 percent), which could be more or less expected, and the power-hungry egoists (22.8 percent), which does not draw a very positive picture of European societies if we consider that every fourth person does not seem to care about her fellow human beings at all. The other four milieus are comparatively equal in size, only the group of vintage conservatives (16.0 percent) is about three to four percentage points larger than the remaining three milieus (modest do-gooders, progressive

egalitarians, modern overachievers). As both Schulze and Spellerberg discovered a significant effect of both vertical and horizontal stratification factors on a person's belonging to a specific milieu, I also checked for differences in class (which is measured using education as an interval-scaled proxy variable), gender and age among the value milieus in the ESS 2006.

Figure 19: Value milieus by education, gender and age



Note: VTC = Vintage conservatives, MDG = Modest do-gooders, EVP = Everyday people, PHE = Power-hungry egoists, PEG = Progressive egalitarians, MOA = Modern overachievers

Dashed line indicates averages (years of education = 12.46, age = 46.70)

Source: ESS 2006

Figure 19 reveals that all three factors have an effect on a person's belonging to one of the six milieus. The vintage conservatives are characterized by their low degree of formal education and their old age (more than ten years above average). Furthermore, the comparatively high share of women (60%) is particularly striking. The latter observation also applies to the group of modest do-gooders (64% female) who are also older than but almost as well educated as the average. The milieu I labeled "everyday people" lives up to

its name in all respects: its members share not only their average value orientations, they are also average (in a statistical sense) in terms of age, education and gender. Power-hungry egoists are quite similar to everyday people when it comes to social demographics, they are just a little younger and a little worse educated than the average person. With 43 percent, also the share of women in this group is lower than in any of the other groups: power-hungry egoists are predominantly male. Although the mean age of the progressive egalitarian is almost equal to that of the power-hungry egoist, the former is clearly better educated (14.4 vs. 12.2 years of formal education). A female proportion of 52 percent is almost exactly equal to the average in the ESS 2006 sample as well as in European societies at large. Finally, with an average age of 33 years the modern overachievers constitute by far the youngest of the value milieus. Their education is lower than that of the progressive egalitarians but still clearly above average, women are nonetheless underrepresented in this group: only 44 percent of all of its members are female. Altogether these findings show that, although value milieus are theoretically based on different arenas and mechanisms of stratification than classes or intersectional groups – orientation instead of (re-)production, (mis-)recognition instead of exploitation or social closure – they can still be classified and distinguished in an empirical scheme that builds on vertical and horizontal (but not socio-cultural) factors like education, gender and age.⁵⁸ It seems that, contrary to the theoretical expectations of some scholars, socio-cultural orientations do not replace but complement other factors as determinants of stratification.

Let us, last not least, also throw a glance at the distribution of value milieus within various European societies and look for possible differences in their size across countries. Members of the vintage conservative milieu live mainly in the South and East (22.1 percent) but also to a considerable amount in Norway (19.5 percent) and Ireland (18.4 percent). Only few vintage conservatives, on the other hand, can be found in the established democracies of the North and West (11.5 percent) but also in Hungary (9.8 percent) and Slovenia (13.3 percent). Modest do-gooders are numerous in Finland (21.3 percent), France (18.9 percent), Spain (18.1 percent) and Estonia (14.4 percent) which in the first instance contradicts a

⁵⁸ I also tested, if the proportion of people with immigrant origin differs within the various value milieus. However, the numbers were quite similar for all milieus, only among vintage conservatives the share of immigrants is considerably lower (12.2 percent) than among all other groups (between 14.4 and 15.7 percent).

clear pattern of distribution. However, they hardly exist in other countries like Bulgaria (3.2 percent), Slovakia (5.0 percent), Poland (5.4 percent), Portugal (5.6 percent) and Slovenia (5.9 percent) which indicates a gap between the South/East (8.5 percent) and the North/West (12.8 percent). As expected, it was difficult to find a clear trend for the European distribution of everyday people in our data (23.2 percent in the N/W, 21.8 percent in the S/E). Especially in Slovakia (9.7 percent) there are very few everyday people which indicates that this country is more polarized than others when it comes to value orientations. The group of power-hungry egoists is larger in the younger democracies of Eastern and Southern Europe (33.1 percent) than in the Northern and Western countries (20.8 percent). Against this trend, only few power-hungry egoists live in Spain (17.8 percent) while many live in Ireland (28.3 percent). When it comes to the progressive egalitarians and modern overachievers, the latter of which are present especially in Austria (27.4 percent), the North/West-South/East divide is also obvious: 15.8 percent of the Northern/Western population are progressive egalitarians and equally many are modern overachievers, but only 4.5 percent of the Southern/Eastern population are progressive egalitarians and 10.1 percent are modern overachievers. In sum, the North/West-South/East pattern of stratification that had already started to dissolve in an intersectional perspective is reanimated when milieus are considered to be the most significant major social groups. This seems to indicate that country differences also have to be regarded in any further analyses of participatory in/equality.

6 PARTICIPATORY IN/EQUALITY IN EUROPE: EMPIRICAL RESULTS

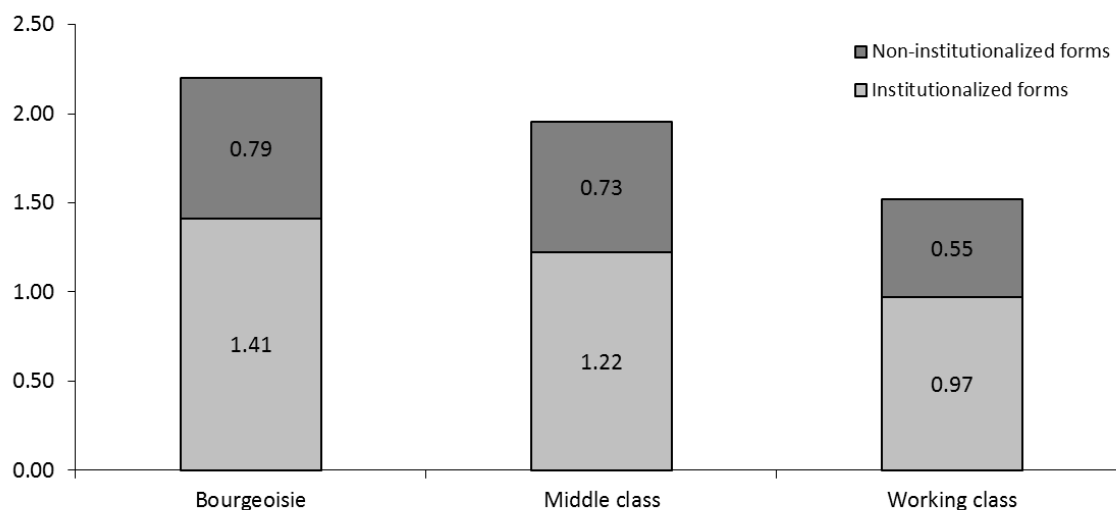
In this chapter, I present the findings of the empirical analyses. Its primary objective is to deliver some illustrative data that enables the reader to comprehend how, as expressed in the research question guiding this study, participatory in/equality is shaped in Europe at the outset of the 21st century. It will enable us to understand, which stratification models are best suited to provide insights into the complex issue of public involvement in opinion formation and decision-making processes. And it will help us to judge whether the topic of in/equality in political participation is relevant from the normative perspective of pluralist democratic theory. Throughout the analyses of this chapter special attention will be bestowed to the observed changes in political action repertoires – not only the relationship between social inequality and overall political participation but the impact stratification exerts on particular types and forms of participation will be examined. Concerning stratification factors I will consider the group variables as described in the previous chapter. Therefore these group variables also determine the structure of this section to a considerable amount: in a first step, I will analyze participation in its relation to class; secondly, I will scrutinize the effect of intersectional groups on political activism; and thirdly, the political involvement of different milieus will be examined.

Political participation will be measured in its different types using a summation index of the number of forms of activity a person participated in. Following this strategy three indices were calculated for the types of overall, institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of activism. These will act as the outcome variables in the following calculations. Additionally, the relationship between group affiliation and every single form of participation – namely voting, contacting politicians, working for political parties or other organizations, wearing campaign badges, signing petitions, attending lawful demonstrations or joining boycotts – will be examined. This enables us to observe if any relations between group affiliation and political participation, i.e. any possible aspect of participatory in/equality, is obscured by both theoretically and empirically combining the single forms of activism into the two types of institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation.

6.1 *POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND CLASS*

For the examination of the relationship between political participation and social class I decided to use two different models: a simple three-class version as provided by Erik O. Wright and a more complex seven-class version following John Goldthorpe. Both schemes emanate from the assumption that vertical stratification still plays an important role for the distribution of opportunities and the realization of life chances in contemporary societies. However, the Wright model makes a clear three-fold distinction between upper, middle and lower classes while the Goldthorpe model adds more complexity by differentiating between higher- and lower-level service classes, adding a petty bourgeoisie and considering employees and skilled as well as semi- and unskilled workers separately.

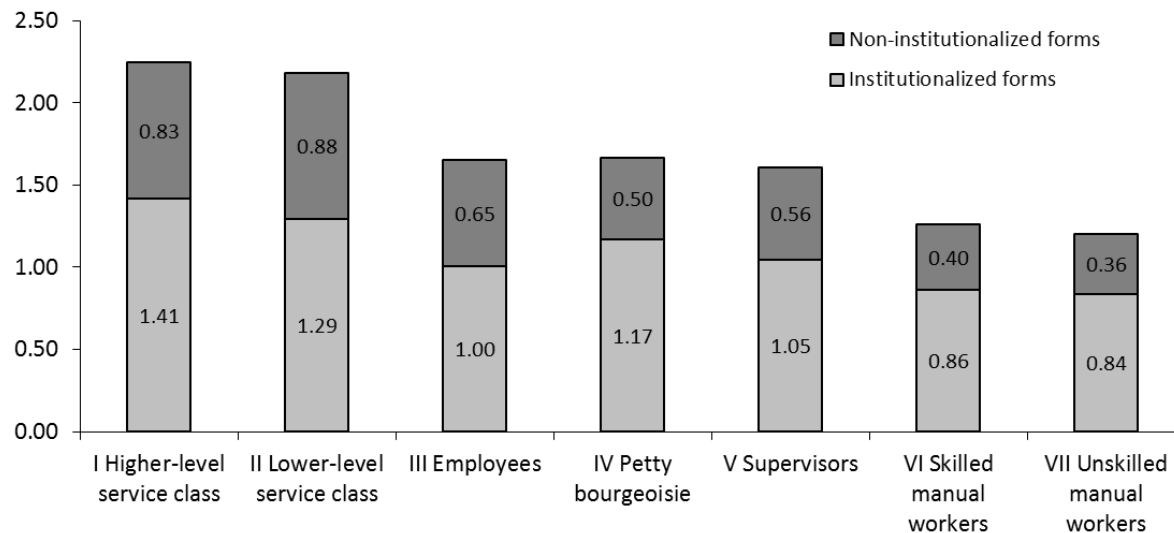
Figure 20: Overall, institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation by class in Europe (Wright's three-class scheme)



Source: ESS 2006

Let us in a first step throw a glance at the effect of class on political participation at large as well as its impact on different types of participation (institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized forms). As the bar chart in figure 20 reveals, obvious class differences in participation can be observed when the average number of acts is treated as the outcome variable of our analysis. On average, a member of the bourgeoisie has been involved in 2.20 participatory acts throughout the year previous to the interview for the ESS 2006. This is a considerably higher amount than members of both the middle ($M = 1.95$) and working class ($M = 1.52$) declared to have participated in within the same period of time. Basically the same differences as for overall participation can be found in the data when institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms are observed separately. While the average bourgeois respondent to the ESS 2006 claims to have participated in 1.41 institutionalized acts, the average middle class interviewee says she has been part of 1.22, the average working class person of 0.97 activities. For non-institutionalized forms, the difference between bourgeoisie ($M = 0.79$) and middle class ($M = 0.73$) almost seems to diminish while members of the working class ($M = 0.55$) are still considerably less active in this area.

Figure 21: Overall, institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation by class in Europe (EGP seven-class scheme)



Source: ESS 2006

If we, in a next step, take the seven-class version of the EGP model as the baseline of our analysis, we can observe several illustrative details which remained concealed in the simpler three-class scheme provided by Wright. Concerning overall participation, we find that the two service classes are the most active groups with the very similar means of 2.24 and 2.17 participatory activities respectively. Clearly less active than the service classes but also considerably more active than the working class ($M_{\text{skilled}} = 1.26$, $M_{\text{unskilled}} = 1.20$) are the intermediate classes consisting of employees and supervisors as well as the petty bourgeoisie who score averages between 1.60 and 1.67 on the participation index. Examining different types of activism separately adds further insights to the previous findings: although the service classes are by far the most active group, the higher-level service class is more involved in institutionalized ($M = 1.41$ vs. $M = 1.29$) while the lower-level service class is more involved in non-institutionalized forms of participation ($M = 0.88$ vs. $M = 0.83$). Likewise, also the petty bourgeoisie ($M = 1.17$) is much more active than employees ($M = 1.05$) and supervisors ($M = 1.00$) in institutionalized, but much less ($M = 0.50$) involved than employees ($M = 0.65$) and supervisors ($M = 0.56$) in non-institutionalized forms of activism. Workers, however, be they skilled or unskilled, always remain the group with the least engagement in political activism (between 0.84 and 0.86

institutionalized and between 0.36 and 0.40 acts in non-institutionalized forms of participation).

The previous remarks have revealed some indications of a class pattern in political participation. Nevertheless, the rather sketchy interpretations of the data suggest that – additional to a mere visual analysis – some more sophisticated statistical methods should be applied in order to be able to judge whether the observed class differences in average participation rates are relevant. Put differently, what we want to know is how significant and strong these class effects on participation are in statistical terms. The adequate technique for examining the connection between class and political participation, more specifically: the class difference in the average number of participatory acts is the analysis of variance (ANOVA) which is generally used for comparing the means of several conditions or groups. However, an ANOVA can only be conducted if several conditions are met (e.g. Bortz 2010):

- while the independent variable can be measured on an ordinal or nominal scale, the dependent variable must be measured on an interval scale or higher
- the compared conditions or groups have to be independent
- the values of the dependent variable have to be normally distributed in the population
- the error variances of the compared groups have to be nearly equal (*homoscedasticity*).

Clearly, in our data the first condition is met: the group variables are measured on a nominal scale and the participation index variable is measured on an interval (even a ratio) scale because its values are ordered, the distances between the values are equal and the scale has a true zero point. As the data of the ESS 2006 do not result from a panel study and every respondent can only be part of one of the groups that are constituted by the independent variables, also the condition of independence is met. However, as a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test reveals, the scores of the dependent variable (mean number of participatory acts) are not normally distributed for overall, institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of activism in our sample. Additionally Levene's tests for all the stratification models used in this study show that the variances differ significantly for the observed groups.

We find that, obviously, two of the four assumptions of ANOVA are violated in my data. For this case, two options are available: the first is to use so called non-parametric tests

because these techniques do not demand the same data parameters that procedures like ANOVA do. If the differences of the means between several independent groups shall be analyzed, the Kruskal-Wallis test is the method of choice. It builds on rank values instead of the original scores of the dependent variables⁵⁹ and allows for interpretations even if the assumptions of normal distribution and homogeneity of variances are violated (Corder/Foreman 2009). The second option of dealing with the problem is to reevaluate the assumptions of ANOVA and see whether and how violations affect its results. In this sense, Bortz (2010: 214) notes that, with an increase in sample sizes, all the assumptions of ANOVA generally become less important and the technique turns out to be very robust against any kind of violations. Deviations from normality can be usually be neglected as effects of non-normality on significance levels are low (Moder 2007). Additionally, alternative F-ratios like the one provided by Brown and Forsythe (1974) can help the researcher to circumvent the problem of heterogeneity of variance by weighting variances not by group size, but by the inverse of the group size as a proportion of the total sample size, when the F-statistic is calculated. Also for post-hoc tests there are several procedures, for example the Games-Howell test, that can account for unequal sample sizes and heteroscedasticity (Field 2005: 357).

For testing the existence of class differences in political participation, I therefore decided to use one-way independent ANOVA but sort of double-check my findings using non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis (and Mann-Whitney-U post-hoc) tests. The analysis – for the sake of simplicity I focus on the Wright three-class model in the first instance – reveals that there is a significant but weak effect of class on overall political participation ($F_{(2, 10641.079)} = 382.58$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .014$). The class effect, however, is a little stronger in institutionalized ($F_{(2, 10395.016)} = 453.27$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .036$) than in non-institutionalized forms of participation ($F_{(2, 10946.272)} = 138.53$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .011$).⁶⁰ To follow up these findings I furthermore conducted several Games-Howell post-hoc tests in order to find out where exactly the differences between groups indicated by the ANOVA lie and how strong

⁵⁹ That means that the initial scores are ranked independent of the group they belong to. From the sums of ranks for each group the test statistic for the Kruskal-Wallis test, H , is calculated.

⁶⁰ Given the heterogeneity in variances revealed by the Levene's test, the Brown-Forsythe F-statistics are reported. Almost identical significance levels and effect sizes were also found in a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test. In the following I only report the results of non-parametric tests if any deviations from the parametric ANOVA are discovered. This has, in order to come to the point, not been the case in any of the calculations to follow.

these differences are. It appears that, as far as overall participation is concerned, all of the group means are significantly different from all other group means at a $p < .001$ level. While the same observation applies for institutionalized forms of participation, a difference that is non-significant at the $p < .001$ -level ($p = .024$) shows up when non-institutionalized forms of activism are analyzed: as I have already presumed on the basis of the visual analysis, the ANOVA confirms that the differences in participation levels of the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.79$) and the middle class ($M = 0.73$) in non-institutionalized activism are not statistically significant.

If the same tests as above are applied to the ESS 2006 data using the EGP seven-class scheme, the picture starts to become a little more differentiated. Just as for The Wright three-class scheme an ANOVA reveals the statistical significance of the EGP 7-class model for overall participation ($F_{(6, 18850.331)} = 360.05$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .070$). Also the differences in participation levels between the classes in institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of activism are significant. Other than for the Wright class scheme, however, the differences in effect sizes between institutionalized ($F_{(6, 19021.144)} = 293.80$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .058$) and non-institutionalized ($F_{(6, 19091.953)} = 235.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .045$) participation in the EGP scheme are comparatively low. Games-Howell post-hoc tests reinforced the impression of the visual analysis that the overall participation levels of the higher- and lower-level service class are not significantly different ($p = .508$), also the means of employees, the petty bourgeoisie and supervisors (p between .768 and .999) as well as those of skilled and unskilled workers ($p = .216$) do not vary significantly. Taken together, there seem to be three groups of participants in our data: the active service class, the moderately active intermediate classes plus the petty bourgeoisie as well as the rather inactive working class.

When it comes to institutionalized forms of participation, a highly significant class difference between the higher- and the lower-level service class emerges. Members of the petty bourgeoisie participate in institutionalized forms more frequently than members of the intermediate classes of employees and supervisors – which themselves show similar participation levels ($p = .664$) – but still significantly less frequently than members of the service classes. The working class remains the group of the homogenously ($p = .736$) inactive also in institutionalized activism.

If finally non-institutionalized forms of activism are examined, the difference between the two service classes disappears again ($p = .185$). However, they differ from the intermediate classes and the petty bourgeoisie which themselves are quite similar to each other: there are non-significant group differences between the petty bourgeoisie and supervisors ($p = .331$) and only slightly significant differences between employees and supervisors ($p = .024$); only the differences in participation levels between employees and the petty bourgeoisie are significant at a $p < .001$ level. Also for non-institutionalized forms of political participation the working class uniformly has to be considered the most uninvolved group ($p = .211$).

After the analysis of class differences in participation levels within different types of political activism, I now want to turn to the analysis of single forms of participation in order to further refine the empirical results. Tackling the examination of group differences in single forms of participation also means that the nature of the variables, especially the dependent variable, in our analyses has to be reconsidered. While the participation index used in the calculations so far was measured on an interval scale, the single forms are empirically captured with a dichotomous variable. This has implications for the applicability of certain methods of analysis. The most obvious statistical technique to be applied when the relationship between nominal variables shall be investigated would be the analysis of contingency tables (Backhaus et al. 2006). Dichotomous variables, however, are a special form of nominal variables which in some cases – for example if they take the values 0 (= does not apply) and 1 (= does apply) – might be considered as ordered, showing “equal differences” between the two values and having a true zero point. In this case, the dichotomous variable can be treated as an interval variable and the calculation of, for example, a mean makes perfect sense.⁶¹ As Gerald H. Lunney (1970) proved, dichotomous variables can therefore also be used as dependent variables in an ANOVA if certain conditions – more than 20 degrees of freedom if the smallest response category contains at least 20 percent of all cases, else more than 40 degrees freedom – are met. Given the size of the sample I use for the empirical analyses of this thesis, I consider it possible to use

⁶¹ For example, for a dichotomous variable such as gender as measured in the ESS 2006 (with 0 = male and 1 = female) an average of 0.52 means that 52% of all respondents are female (see also Morgan et al. 2001).

ANOVA also for the examination of group differences in single forms of participation. Nevertheless, I will start the analyses of the single forms of participation with some contingency tables before I proceed to the more complex technique.

The analysis of single forms of participation in the first instance shows that all activities covered by the ESS 2006 questionnaire are stratified by class. Table 15 reveals differences in the level of involvement of various classes following the Wright model: the bourgeoisie exhibits higher participation rates in all forms of involvement than the middle class which again is more active than the working class. Nonetheless, the figures in the table also show that there are obvious nuances between the single forms of involvement. For institutionalized forms like voting, contacting, working in political parties and working in other organizations the effect of class seems to be strong and quite linear. This means that the difference between the participation levels of the bourgeoisie and the middle class is quite similar to the difference between the participation levels of the middle class and the working class. This resembles Wright's first possible class formation, the model of class polarization with a middle class buffer. For non-institutionalized forms of participation, on the other hand, the relationship between class and level of involvement follows a different pattern. As far as petitions and boycotts are concerned, we can observe that the difference between the bourgeoisie and the middle class is much smaller than the difference between the middle class and the working class. These forms indicate a divide between the upper classes and the lower class as implied by Wright's second model of possible class formations, the model of pure ideological polarization. Last but not least, wearing campaign badges and attending demonstrations are two forms of participation that appear to be almost unaffected by class. If anything, these forms also comply best with the model of pure class polarization that has already been found for petitions and boycotts.

Table 15: Single forms of participation and class in Europe (Wright's three-class scheme)

	Bourgeoisie	Middle class	Working class
Voting	84.3	79.1	70.6
Contacting	24.3	18.6	11.4
Political party or action group	6.9	4.8	3.0
Another org or association	25.7	19.6	12.2
Campaign badge	8.7	8.7	6.9
Petition	34.0	31.4	25.1
Lawful demonstration	9.2	8.8	7.4
Boycott	27.1	24.4	15.8

Weighted data, n = 28,483 – 28,692

Source: ESS 2006

When more different class categories are included in the analysis, the linear effect loses much of its supposed clarity and the whole picture of a class effect on participation becomes more differentiated: in voting, contacting and party as well as other organizational work members of the higher-level service class (I) are more active than members of the lower-level service class (II), whereas the opposite is true for the remaining forms of activity (wearing a campaign badge, signing petitions, attending demonstrations, joining boycotts). Furthermore, the petty bourgeoisie (IV) is the third-most active group in the four institutionalized forms whereas, when it comes to non-institutionalized forms of participation, the non-manual employees (III) take this rank. The only exception to this rule are demonstrations, which are more frequently attended by supervisors (V) than by employees or the petty bourgeoisie. The members of the working class (VI, VII) comprise the least active social group in all forms of activism with semi- and unskilled workers generally being even less involved than skilled workers. The gap between skilled and semi- and unskilled workers is especially big when it comes to party work and joining boycotts, the only two forms in which semi- and unskilled workers are slightly more involved than skilled workers are working in an organization other than a political party and wearing campaign badges.

Table 16: Single forms of participation and class in Europe (EGP seven-class scheme)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Voting	85.3	82.7	71.7	77.9	75.6	66.0	64.3
Contacting	23.7	19.2	11.6	17.1	11.3	9.7	9.3
Political party or action group	6.4	5.9	2.9	5.2	3.7	2.5	1.8
Another org or association	26.2	21.6	14.1	16.4	13.7	8.0	8.5
Campaign badge	8.6	11.5	7.6	6.7	5.9	4.7	5.0
Petition	36.7	37.9	30.5	21.0	27.0	17.4	16.5
Lawful demonstration	9.2	10.6	8.2	7.0	8.7	5.7	5.6
Boycott	28.6	28.7	19.0	15.3	14.7	12.4	9.4

Weighted data, n = 28,483 – 28,692

Source: ESS 2006

But is the class effect on political participation we observed on the basis of the percentages entered in the tables above significant, i.e. does it follow a pattern that also exists in the population or does it just occur by chance? And how strong is the relationship between class and forms of participation? As outlined above, I use ANOVA to find answers to these questions. Starting with the Wright three-class scheme, the analyses reveal significant effects of class on all single forms of participation. These effects are moderate for voting ($F_{(2, 13416.596)} = 236.06$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .014$), contacting ($F_{(2, 9765.126)} = 198.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .018$), other organizational work ($F_{(2, 9811.978)} = 203.19$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .018$) and joining boycotts ($F_{(2, 10416.819)} = 160.81$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .013$) and almost negligible for party work ($F_{(2, 9112.266)} = 49.48$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .005$), wearing campaign badges ($F_{(2, 10964.812)} = 13.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .001$), signing petitions ($F_{(2, 10995.980)} = 79.48$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .006$) and attending demonstrations ($F_{(2, 10971.602)} = 9.63$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .001$). Games-Howell post-hoc tests illustrate that the differences between the various classes are highly significant ($p < .001$) in all institutionalized forms of participation. On the other hand, there are only slightly significant differences between the bourgeoisie and the middle class for petitions ($p = .029$) and boycotts ($p = .011$) while these differences are non-significant for campaign badges ($p = .998$) and demonstrations ($p = .825$). For demonstrations, we furthermore find that the difference between the bourgeoisie and the working class ($p = .002$) as well as the difference between the middle class and the working class ($p = .003$) are not significant at a $p < .001$ level. The similarity of participation levels of the upper two classes, which I also observed for non-institutionalized forms of activism when the participation index was

treated as the dependent variable, is therefore mainly caused by the balanced rates of involvement in forms of participation like wearing campaign badges and attending demonstrations.

If we now switch from the Wright three-class model to the EGP seven-class scheme as a measure of vertical stratification, a quite similar picture of the relationship between class and single forms of participation comes to the fore. The ANOVAs for the EGP scheme reveal moderate effects for voting ($F_{(6, 18370.815)} = 153.49, p < .001, \eta^2 = .030$), contacting ($F_{(6, 18761.521)} = 100.80, p < .001, \eta^2 = .021$), other organizational work ($F_{(6, 17737.771)} = 143.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .029$), signing petitions ($F_{(6, 17928.282)} = 183.02, p < .001, \eta^2 = .036$) and joining boycotts ($F_{(6, 19328.202)} = 177.73, p < .001, \eta^2 = .034$) but only weak effects for party work ($F_{(6, 16746.005)} = 36.83, p < .001, \eta^2 = .008$), wearing campaign badges ($F_{(6, 20165.275)} = 39.68, p < .001, \eta^2 = .008$) and attending demonstrations ($F_{(6, 17143.916)} = 21.60, p < .001, \eta^2 = .004$). Post-hoc tests show that the class differences between the EGP classes within single forms of participation are very complex. For voting and other organizational work we find significant differences in activism between the higher-level and the lower-level service class, while there are similarities between the intermediate class (employees and supervisors) and the petty bourgeoisie which are again different from the homogenous working class. For contacting and party work, on the other hand, the service class and the petty bourgeoisie are quite similar in terms of participation levels, but differ from the intermediate and working class which exhibit alike levels of activism. Among the non-institutionalized forms, the smallest class differences appear for demonstrations: only the working class differs relevantly from all the other classes (except for the petty bourgeoisie which is similar to the working class when it comes to demonstrations). Petitions are most frequently signed by members of the service class followed by the intermediate class, the petty bourgeoisie and the working class. Members of the lower-level service class wear campaign badges more often than members of the higher-level service class and the petty bourgeoisie or employees. Supervisors and workers wear campaign badges most seldom of all groups. But the intermediate class is not only torn apart as far as badges are concerned. Also boycotts are joined more frequently by employees than by supervisors which, in return, are more similar to the petty bourgeoisie in these terms. The most active group in boycotts, however, is still the service class while the working class is as usual the least

involved group in this form of activism. Although more complex in detail, the separate analyses for the single forms of participation finally reveal that members of the higher classes are always more active than members of the intermediate class (which are more involved in non-institutionalized forms) and the petty bourgeoisie (which are more involved in institutionalized forms). Whichever way you look at it, the least active group in all forms of participation is always the working class.

After having examined class inequalities in various forms of activism, I now want to conduct some concluding analyses in order to understand whether the observed class inequalities emerge differently in European societies.⁶² As the findings of chapter four indicate, especially the differences between the Northern and Western countries on the one hand and the Southern and Eastern countries on the other appear to be of interest. As far as overall participation is concerned, separate ANOVAs drawing on Wright's three-class model of stratification reveal that there is a significant class effect on political activism in both regions of Europe ($p < .001$). However, the class effect seems to be slightly stronger in the North/West ($F_{(2, 9765.126)} = 198.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .028$) than in the South/East ($F_{(2, 2865.112)} = 92.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .020$). While in the South/East all group differences in overall participation are highly significant, there is only a moderately significant difference between the bourgeoisie and the middle class in the North/West ($p = .046$). Also for institutionalized forms of participation the analysis reveals significant results and brings forward effect sizes that are clearly stronger in the North/West ($F_{(2, 9029.990)} = 353.93$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .036$) than in the South/East ($F_{(2, 2954.502)} = 107.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .022$). In both regions the differences between all groups are significant at a $p < .001$ level. For non-institutionalized forms of participation we find similar and significant, but negligibly weak class differences in the North/West ($F_{(2, 9419.638)} = 71.39$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .007$) and South/East ($F_{(2, 2969.657)} = 30.92$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .007$). While the difference between the bourgeoisie and the middle class is non-significant ($p = .689$) when it comes to non-institutionalized forms of activism in the North/West, the bourgeoisie is significantly more active than the middle class in the South/East.

⁶² For the sake of simplicity and readability I focus on the different types of participation, i.e. the participation indices as dependent variables as far as comparative analyses are concerned. These analyses nevertheless provide valuable insights in trends that might follow different patterns in the various regions of Europe.

Similar to the Wright three-class scheme the region-specific analyses based on the EGP seven-class scheme show highly significant class differences for all types of participation in both the North/West and the South/East. For overall participation this effect is a little stronger in the Northern and Western ($F_{(6, 13622.395)} = 209.33, p < .001, \eta^2 = .053$) than in the Southern and Eastern regions ($F_{(6, 6284.524)} = 81.43, p < .001, \eta^2 = .043$). The class pattern for overall participation is generally very similar in the two regions: the service classes are more active than the intermediate classes and the petty bourgeoisie, which are similar to each other but more active than the working class. The only discrepancy between the regions can be found among the intermediate classes: while in the North employees appear to be more active than supervisors, the opposite is true in the South, where supervisors are a little more active than employees. As for overall participation, also for institutionalized forms of activism the data reveal a stronger class effect in the North/West ($F_{(6, 13470.229)} = 194.44, p < .001, \eta^2 = .051$) than in the South/East ($F_{(6, 6300.048)} = 65.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .034$). While in the established democracies of Northern and Western Europe the higher-level service class is significantly more active than the lower-level-service class, this difference cannot be observed in the South and East. Furthermore, in the North/West the lower-level service class exhibits quite similar participation levels as the petty bourgeoisie, whereas the intermediate classes are less and the working classes are least active in institutionalized activism. In the South/East, on the other hand, the main lines of division are to be found between (a) the service class, (b) the intermediate classes plus the petty bourgeoisie and the (c) working class. Different to institutionalized forms, there is no disparity in effect sizes between the North/West ($F_{(6, 14271.681)} = 114.92, p < .001, \eta^2 = .029$) and the South/East ($F_{(6, 6289.273)} = 51.58, p < .001, \eta^2 = .028$) as regards non-institutionalized forms of activism. The main group differences in the Northern/Western region can be detected between (a) the homogeneous service class, (b) the separate class of employees, (c) the group comprising the petty bourgeoisie and the supervisors and (d) the working class. In the South, these differences are basically similar except for the fact that the employees do not form a separate class there but merge with the petty bourgeoisie and the supervisors resulting in a bigger middle class with similar participation levels.

Summing up these findings, it appears that political participation is clearly stratified along the lines of class with the upper classes (bourgeoisie, service class) being highly active, the middle or intermediate classes being moderately active and the working class being only sparsely active in politics. Furthermore, institutionalized forms of participation are more stratified along the lines of class than non-institutionalized forms of activism. This difference in stratification can be partly traced back to the fact that institutionalized forms of activism are severely affected by class in Northern/Western Europe but not in the South/East while non-institutionalized forms of participation are way less stratified all over Europe. Interpreted from a dynamic perspective (that is: given the recent changes in political action repertoires), this might signify that political participation as a whole becomes increasingly equal in terms of class. However, one has to be aware of the fact that an equalizing effect might only be observed for the class difference between the bourgeoisie (or service class) and the middle or intermediate classes, whereas the members of the working class are still severely less involved in political activities than the members of all other classes are. The uplift of the middle class could in these terms conceal the increasing exclusion of the lower classes from political self-determination.

6.2 *POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND INTERSECTIONAL GROUPS*

After having scrutinized class differences in political participation in the previous section, I now want to examine the differences between various intersectional groups in terms of their levels of political activity. As outlined in section 5.3.2, I decided to focus on four categories constituting intersectional groups in the empirical operationalization: the “classic” categories of class, gender and ethnicity as well as age as a supposedly “upcoming” non-vertical stratification factor. All other possibly relevant differentiations or axes of stratification will be left out of the analysis mainly for the pragmatic reason that the number of possibly relevant groups simply explodes to an unmanageable amount if too many categories are included.⁶³ I therefore conducted the further calculations using 36 different

⁶³ This number quickly increases if additional to class, gender, ethnicity and age also categories like sexual orientation, health and culture (to name just a few) were added. If we assume that all of these seven categories take only two different values, this already results in a total number of 128 different groups that have to be compared with each other. Although nowadays statistical software packages will have no problem calculating

intersectional groups referring to Wright's three-class scheme (bourgeoisie/middle class/working class) as well as three variables measuring gender (men/women), immigrant origin (natives/immigrants) and generation (the young/the middle-aged/the elderly) as the basis for all further analyses.

If we start our study of the relationship between intersectional group affiliation and political participation with separate analyses for the four differentiations using the participation indices as dependent variables, we already get an idea of why we should expect the intersectional perspective to lead us to new insights in the field of participatory in/equality. As has already been shown in the previous section, class has a significant effect on all types of participation. This effect is stronger for institutionalized than for non-institutionalized forms of activism. To the contrary, t-tests⁶⁴ reveal significant but negligibly weak gender differences in political activism only in institutionalized forms of participation ($M_{\text{male}} = 1.08$, $M_{\text{female}} = 0.97$; $t_{(31286.038)} = 11.22$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .004$) while men and women take part to a similar degree in non-institutionalized activities ($M_{\text{male}} = 0.59$, $M_{\text{female}} = 0.60$; $t_{(32750)} = -1.46$, $p = .145$, $\eta^2 = .000$). Furthermore, while natives participate significantly more in institutionalized forms than immigrants ($M_{\text{native}} = 1.05$, $M_{\text{immigrant}} = 0.85$; $t_{(6216.702)} = 14.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .033$), immigrants are slightly more involved than natives in non-institutionalized forms of activism ($M_{\text{native}} = 0.59$, $M_{\text{immigrant}} = 0.64$; $t_{(6326.177)} = -3.76$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .002$). Ultimately, also the differences between the three generations are significant for both types of participation, yet much stronger in institutionalized ($F_{(2, 26005.646)} = 1071.39$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .058$) than in non-institutionalized forms ($F_{(2, 24403.027)} = 195.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .011$). Specifically, the young ($M = 0.71$) are involved significantly less than both the middle aged ($M = 1.10$) and the elderly ($M = 1.14$) in institutionalized forms while in non-institutionalized forms the elderly ($M = 0.46$) are significantly less active than the young ($M = 0.56$) and both the elderly and the young are significantly less active than the middle-aged ($M = 0.67$). Is it, after all, useful to consider non-vertical categories of stratification in my further analyses? Do gender, immigrant origin and generation make a difference in political participation if they are considered together with

the respective results, the interpretation of these results will inevitably end up in more confusion than enlightenment on behalf of both the researcher and the reader.

⁶⁴ A t-test is a parametric test for examining the differences in means between two groups. In this sense, a t-test is something like the „little sibling“ of an analysis of variance (ANOVA), which allows us to analyze the different means of more than two groups.

and related to the concept of class? The answer to this question is “yes”, and on the following pages I will try to present empirical evidence that supports this opinion.

Let us take a look at the relationship between intersectional group affiliation and overall activity as well as the two different types of participation. Table 17 indicates that an effect of intersectional group affiliation on political activity can be observed if we treat the mean number of acts as our dependent variable. The politically by far most active group in this calculation are the middle-aged bourgeois native women ($M = 2.43$) followed with already considerable distance by their male counterparts ($M = 2.28$). Behind these two groups, we find the other two middle-aged upper-class groups, i.e. middle-aged bourgeois immigrant women ($M = 2.18$) and men ($M = 2.17$), as well as middle-aged middle-class immigrant ($M = 2.15$) and native women ($M = 2.14$) and elderly bourgeois native men ($M = 2.16$). On the other end of the spectrum we find members of those intersectional groups who are least involved in overall political activism. The politically most inactive group are young bourgeois immigrant women ($M = 1.02$) followed closely by young middle-class immigrant men ($M = 1.04$) and young working-class immigrant women ($M = 1.09$). Only low levels of participation are furthermore reached by the other young working-class groups of immigrant men ($M = 1.21$), native men ($M = 1.27$) and native women ($M = 1.28$) as well as elderly working-class immigrant men ($M = 1.22$). These first examinations of the contingency table already reveal that the most active group is probably the middle-aged bourgeoisie (independent of gender and origin) while the most inactive group might be young immigrants (independent of gender, partly dependent on class).

Table 17: Overall and types of participation by intersectional group in Europe

		BOURGEOISIE				MIDDLE CLASS				WORKING CLASS			
		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
		N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I
OVERALL PARTICIPATION	Young (- 30)	1.85	1.69	1.58	1.02	1.74	1.04	1.75	1.87	1.27	1.21	1.28	1.09
	Middle-aged (30-59)	2.28	2.17	2.43	2.18	2.07	1.94	2.14	2.15	1.68	1.43	1.68	1.41
	Elderly (60 +)	2.16	1.84	2.05	1.97	1.81	1.77	1.67	1.80	1.49	1.22	1.45	1.64
INSTITUTIONALIZED FORMS	Young (- 30)	1.04	0.57	0.96	0.80	1.03	0.57	1.01	0.90	0.74	0.60	0.70	0.48
	Middle-aged (30-59)	1.51	1.21	1.46	1.24	1.30	1.14	1.26	1.12	1.10	0.85	1.05	0.79
	Elderly (60 +)	1.53	1.41	1.31	1.16	1.32	1.21	1.15	1.18	1.12	0.92	1.03	1.05
NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED FORMS	Young (- 30)	0.81	1.11	0.61	0.22	0.72	0.49	0.74	0.97	0.53	0.61	0.59	0.61
	Middle-aged (30-59)	0.77	0.95	0.97	0.96	0.77	0.80	0.86	1.01	0.58	0.59	0.63	0.62
	Elderly (60 +)	0.64	0.47	0.74	0.81	0.49	0.55	0.55	0.59	0.36	0.31	0.42	0.60

Note: N = native, I = immigrant

Source: ESS 2006

If we, in a next step, examine the two types of activism separately, we can observe a clear effect of intersectional group affiliation on involvement in institutionalized forms of participation. The most active groups in activities like voting, contacting and party or other organizational work are elderly ($M = 1.53$) and middle-aged ($M = 1.51$) bourgeois native men as well as middle-aged bourgeois native women ($M = 1.46$) and elderly bourgeois immigrant men ($M = 1.41$). Furthermore, also elderly middle-class native men ($M = 1.32$), elderly bourgeois native women ($M = 1.31$) as well as middle-aged middle-class native men ($M = 1.30$) and women ($M = 1.26$) are among the most active participants in institutionalized forms of activism. Conversely, the least involved participants in this type of activism are young working-class immigrant women ($M = 0.48$) followed with some distance by young bourgeois ($M = 0.57$), middle-class ($M = 0.57$) and working-class immigrant men ($M = 0.60$). Also young working-class native women ($M = 0.70$) and men ($M = 0.74$) as well as middle-aged working-class ($M = 0.79$) and young bourgeois immigrant women ($M = 0.80$) exhibit very low levels of participation in institutionalized forms of activism. Altogether, especially the combination of class, ethnicity and generation seems to affect the activity level of a person: the most involved groups are clearly the bourgeois and middle-class natives above 30, the least involved groups on the other hand are the young and middle-aged immigrants, especially those with a working-class background.

Non-institutionalized forms of participation clearly follow a different pattern if related to intersectional group affiliation. Here the most active group are young bourgeois immigrant men ($M = 1.11$) followed by middle-aged ($M = 1.01$) and young ($M = 0.97$) middle-class immigrant women, middle-aged bourgeois native ($M = 0.97$) and immigrant ($M = 0.96$) women and middle-aged bourgeois immigrant men ($M = 0.95$). Furthermore, also middle-aged middle-class native women ($M = 0.86$) and immigrant men ($M = 0.80$) as well as young bourgeois native men ($M = 0.81$) are among the most active intersectional groups in non-institutionalized forms of activism. In contrast, the group that is least involved in non-institutionalized activities are young bourgeois immigrant women ($M = 0.22$). This number, however, should be interpreted with some caution because the respective group consists of only twelve persons in the sample. Other comparatively inactive groups are elderly working-class immigrant ($M = 0.31$) and native men ($M = 0.36$), elderly working-class

native women ($M = 0.42$), elderly middle-class native ($M = 0.49$) and immigrant ($M = 0.55$) men, young middle-class immigrant men ($M = 0.49$) and young working-class native men ($M = 0.53$). Overall, young or middle-aged immigrants seem to participate in non-institutionalized forms of activism most frequently (especially if they have a bourgeois or middle-class background) while elderly middle- or working-class men are among the intersectional groups that are least involved in politics.

Similar to the class effects on political participation, I want to conduct some more sophisticated statistical analyses also for intersectional models in order to be able to distinguish significant from non-significant and strong from weak group effects. As suggested by different scholars writing about the adequate techniques to capture intersectionality in a quantitative research design, factorial ANOVA would be the best way to detect these group differences as interaction effects between master categories (Weldon 2006, Bowleg 2008, Dubrow 2008, Warner 2008).⁶⁵

Following these considerations, I chose to conduct a four-way independent ANOVA with class, gender, immigrant origin and generation as predictor variables measuring intersectional group affiliation. Both main effects as well as (two-, three and even four-way) interactions were considered. The analysis reveals an obvious difference between intersectional groups in overall political participation ($F_{(35, 22869)} = 32.96, p < .001, \eta^2 = .048$). The same observation can be made for intersectional group differences in both institutionalized ($F_{(35, 23010)} = 53.13, p < .001$) and non-institutionalized forms of participation ($F_{(35, 23085)} = 17.05, p < .001$). The total effect sizes, however, are considerably higher for institutionalized ($\eta^2 = .075$) than for non-institutionalized ($\eta^2 = .025$) forms of activism which indicates a higher effect of intersectional group affiliation on voting, contacting, party and other organizational work than on wearing campaign badges, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts.

⁶⁵ Note, that in factorial ANOVA the main effects of the master categories tend to decrease the effects of both first and higher-order interactions. Instead of using multiple factors in an ANOVA, Warner (2008: 458) therefore suggests to “change the structure of the factorial design such that the intersections represent different levels of a single factor.” However, as the interpretation of the results of a one-way independent ANOVA using a 36-value predictor variable quickly gets quite confusing, I decided to reject Warner’s suggestion.

Additional to the general effect of the model, also the effects of single factors – both main factors and interaction terms – were tested for all different types of political activity. The factorial ANOVA, which as a multivariate technique also considers the effects of all other factors in the model when the effect of a single factor is estimated, reveals a highly significant main effect of class on overall participation ($F_{(2, 22869)} = 73.41, p < .001$). The participation level of the working class ($M = 1.37$) is significantly lower than both the participation levels of the middle class ($M = 1.78$) and the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.91$). Additionally, I found a non-significant main effect of gender ($F_{(1, 22869)} = 0.06, p = .809$) on overall participation which indicates that the small difference between men ($M = 1.68$) and women ($M = 1.69$) probably occurs randomly in the ESS 2006 sample. Conversely, the analysis reveals a moderately significant effect of ethnicity ($F_{(1, 22869)} = 5.16, p = .023$) and a highly significant effect of generation ($F_{(1, 22869)} = 43.69, p < .001$) on overall activity. This means that natives ($M = 1.74$) are slightly more active than immigrants ($M = 1.63$) and that at least one – yet probably all – of the differences between the participation levels of the young ($M = 1.39$), the middle-aged ($M = 1.93$) and the elderly ($M = 1.74$) are significant.

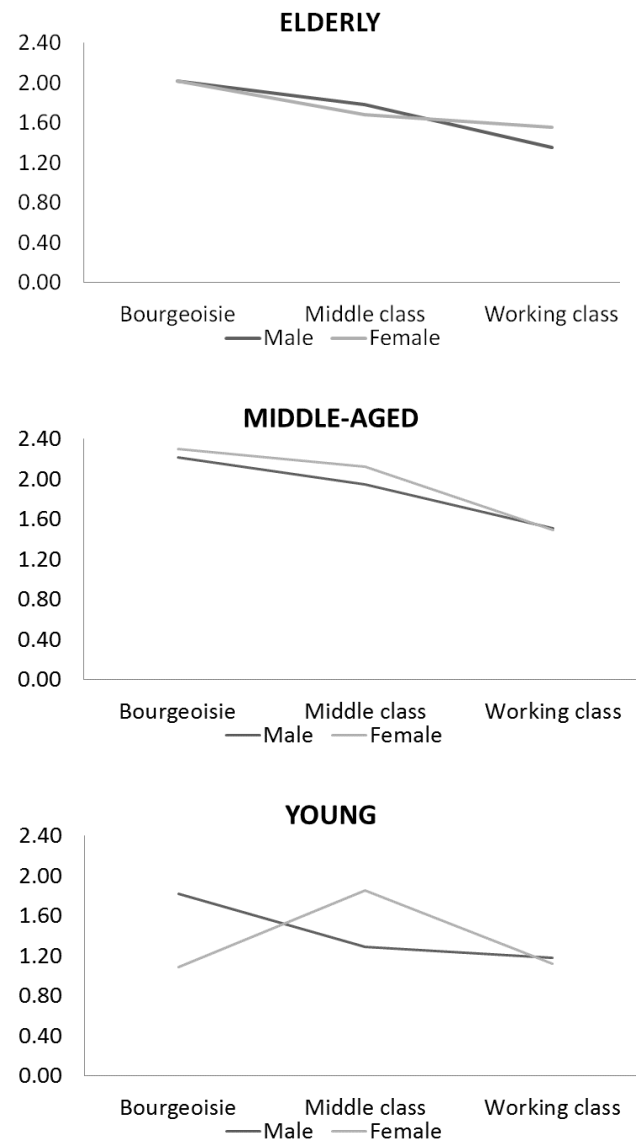
If we turn to interaction effects, we find that there is a significant effect of the interaction between class and gender on overall political participation ($F_{(2, 22869)} = 4.60, p = .010$). This indicates that members of different classes participate in politics to a different amount depending on whether they are men or women. Specifically, I found that while members of the working class participate in politics to a similar degree independent of their gender ($M_{\text{male}} = 1.35, M_{\text{female}} = 1.39$), a person's gender plays a role when related to the other classes: while bourgeois men ($M = 2.02$) exhibit higher participation levels than bourgeois women ($M = 1.80$), working class women ($M = 1.89$) are more active than working class men ($M = 1.68$).

Additionally, there is a significant interaction effect on overall participation between class and generation ($F_{(4, 22869)} = 3.81, p = .004$). This effect implies that the effect of class on participation is different for various age groups. In particular, the ANOVA reveals that, among the older generations, the bourgeoisie ($M_{\text{middle-aged}} = 2.26, M_{\text{elderly}} = 2.02$) is always more active than the middle-class ($M_{\text{middle-aged}} = 2.04, M_{\text{elderly}} = 1.73$) and the working-class ($M_{\text{middle-aged}} = 1.50, M_{\text{elderly}} = 1.45$). This pattern does not persist for the youngest

generation. Here, the middle class ($M = 1.57$) is more active than the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.45$) whereas the working-class ($M = 1.15$) clearly remains the least involved of all groups.

Finally, we can also observe a significant interaction effect between class, gender and generation on overall participation in our data ($F_{(4, 22869)} = 5.15, p < .001$). This means that the interaction effect between gender and class is different for the three age groups (see also figure 21). Among the elderly, bourgeois men and women have almost equal participation levels ($M = 2.02$), while middle-class men ($M = 1.78$) are more active than middle-class women ($M = 1.68$) and working-class women ($M = 1.55$) are more active than working-class men ($M = 1.35$). Among the middle-aged, on the other hand, working-class men ($M = 1.51$) and women ($M = 1.49$) have very similar participation levels, while within both the bourgeoisie and the middle class women ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 2.30, M_{\text{middle class}} = 2.12$) are more active than men ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 2.21, M_{\text{middle class}} = 1.95$). Lastly, among the young, bourgeois women ($M = 1.09$) have significantly lower participation levels than bourgeois men ($M = 1.82$), while middle-class women ($M = 1.86$) are much more active than middle class men ($M = 1.29$). Within the young working class, the participation levels of men ($M = 1.18$) and women ($M = 1.12$) differ only marginally.

Figure 22: Three-way interaction effect between class, gender and generation on overall political activity



Source: ESS 2006

If we now turn to the various types of political activity, we find different patterns for institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation. For institutionalized forms, the ANOVA in the first instance reveals a significant main effect of class ($F_{(2, 23010)} = 72.84, p < .001$) and shows highly significant differences between the participation levels of all three classes: the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.16$), the middle class ($M = 1.08$) and the working class ($M = 0.85$). In a second step we find a non-significant main effect of gender ($F_{(1, 23010)} = 1.00, p = .318$), yet highly significant main effects of both ethnicity ($F_{(1, 23034)} =$

31.61, $p < .001$) and generation ($F_{(2, 23034)} = 78.29$, $p < .001$) on political activism. While men ($M = 1.04$) and women ($M = 1.01$) do not differ significantly in their mean levels of participation, natives ($M = 1.10$) appear to be clearly more active than immigrants ($M = 0.95$). Furthermore, young people ($M = 0.74$) are visibly less active in institutionalized activities than both the middle-aged ($M = 1.15$) and the elderly ($M = 1.19$).

Additional to the main effects, the analysis of variance reveals moderately significant two-way interaction effects between class and generation ($F_{(4, 23010)} = 3.05$, $p = .016$), gender and ethnicity ($F_{(1, 23010)} = 6.43$, $p = .011$) as well as ethnicity and generation ($F_{(2, 23010)} = 4.29$, $p = .014$) on participation in institutionalized forms of activism. In particular this means that

- a) among the middle-aged and the older generations, members of the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.35$) are more active than members of the middle class ($M_{\text{middle-aged}} = 1.18$, $M_{\text{elderly}} = 1.19$) and the working class ($M_{\text{middle-aged}} = 0.92$, $M_{\text{elderly}} = 1.03$), while among the young the middle class ($M = 0.86$) is more active than the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.77$) and the working class ($M = 0.60$);
- b) native women ($M = 1.06$) participate considerably less than native men ($M = 1.15$) while immigrant women ($M = 0.97$) participate (slightly) more than immigrant men ($M = 0.93$) and
- c) whereas elderly natives ($M = 1.21$) do not differ significantly from elderly immigrants ($M = 1.17$) in terms of participation in institutionalized forms of activism, middle-aged ($M = 1.24$) and young ($M = 0.86$) natives are significantly more involved than middle-aged ($M = 1.05$) and young ($M = 0.63$) immigrants.

Figure 23: Three-way interaction effect between class, gender and generation on institutionalized political activity



Source: ESS 2006

As for overall participation, also for institutionalized forms of activism a significant three-way interaction effect between class, gender and generation can be observed ($F_{(4, 23010)} = 4.55, p = .001$). Again, this means that the interaction effect between gender and class is different for the three age groups (see figure 23 above). Among the elderly, bourgeois men ($M = 1.47$) have much higher participation levels than bourgeois women ($M = 1.23$), while middle-class men ($M = 1.25$) are just a little more active than middle-class women ($M = 1.14$) and working-class women ($M = 1.04$) are quasi as active as working-class men ($M =$

1.01). Among the middle-aged, on the other hand, the gender gap almost diminishes in all classes: bourgeois men ($M = 1.35$) are as active as bourgeois women ($M = 1.34$), middle-class men ($M = 1.19$) are as active as middle-class women ($M = 1.16$) and working-class men ($M = 0.95$) are just slightly more active than working-class women ($M = 0.89$). Finally, among the young there is no gender gap between bourgeois men and women ($M = 0.77$), whereas middle-class women ($M = 0.99$) are much more active than middle-class men ($M = 0.77$) and working-class men ($M = 0.64$) are a little more active than working-class women ($M = 0.55$).

In a last step, I now check if also non-institutionalized forms of participation are affected by intersectional group affiliation. At first glance, we find significant main effects for class ($F_{(2, 23085)} = 33.75, p < .001$) and generation ($F_{(2, 23085)} = 33.42, p < .001$) while the effects of gender ($F_{(1, 23085)} = 1.31, p = .252$) and ethnicity ($F_{(1, 23085)} = 1.73, p = .189$) are not statistically significant. The ANOVA reveals that in non-institutionalized activities there are highly significant differences between the participation levels of the working class ($M = 0.52$), the middle class ($M = 0.70$) as well as the working class and the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.76$) while the variation between the latter two classes is not significant at a $p < .05$ -level. Furthermore, women ($M = 0.68$) turn out to be virtually as active as men ($M = 0.64$) and natives ($M = 0.64$) appear to be almost as active as immigrants ($M = 0.68$), whereas the middle-aged ($M = 0.78$) are significantly more active than both the young ($M = 0.65$) and the elderly ($M = 0.55$) in non-institutionalized forms of involvement. If we also consider the effects of different factors together, we find significant two-way interaction effects between class and gender ($F_{(2, 23085)} = 5.67, p = .003$), class and generation ($F_{(4, 23085)} = 2.82, p = .024$) and gender and generation ($F_{(2, 23085)} = 5.46, p = .004$). This implies that

- a) we can observe a class effect that is different for men and women: while among men members of the working-class ($M = 0.49$) are less involved in non-institutionalized activities than members of the middle-class ($M = 0.62$) and the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.83$), among women the middle-class ($M = 0.78$) is the most active group while the working-class ($M = 0.56$) and the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.69$) are clearly less involved;
- b) the effect of class takes various forms for the generations: while the participation levels of the elderly bourgeoisie ($M = 0.68$) are higher than those of the elderly middle ($M = 0.53$) and working class ($M = 0.43$) and the same is true for the middle-aged classes (M

bourgeoisie = 0.91, $M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.85$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.58$), among the young the middle class ($M = 0.71$) is more active than the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.68$) and the working class ($M = 0.56$) and

- c) there is a gender effect in non-institutionalized activism that is different for the generations: while women are more active than men among both the elderly ($M_{\text{female}} = 0.62$, $M_{\text{male}} = 0.48$) and the middle-aged ($M_{\text{female}} = 0.84$, $M_{\text{male}} = 0.73$), young men ($M = 0.72$) are clearly more involved in forms of participation like wearing badges, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts than young women ($M = 0.58$).

Additional to these two-way also two significant three-way interaction effects between class, gender and ethnicity ($F_{(2, 23085)} = 3.89$, $p = .021$) as well as class, gender and generation ($F_{(4, 23085)} = 6.91$, $p < .001$) reveal from the data. The first of these interactions indicates that the gender differences we find for the three different classes vary with reference to how old a person is (see figure 23). Among the elderly, middle-class women and men are almost equally active ($M = 0.54$) while bourgeois and working class women ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 0.80$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.52$) are considerably more active than men ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 0.57$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.34$).

Figure 24: Three-way interaction effect between class, gender and generation on non-institutionalized political activity

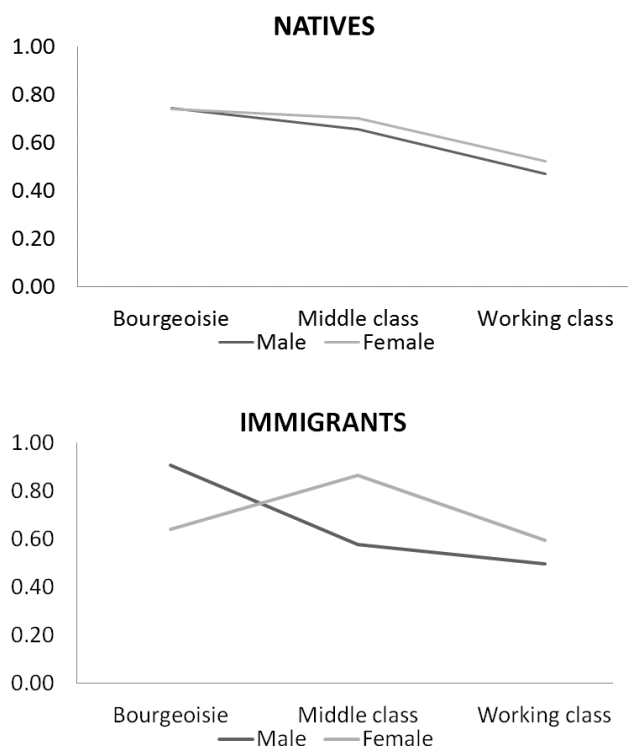


Source: ESS 2006

Among the middle-aged, on the other hand, working-class women ($M = 0.60$) and men ($M = 0.57$) are almost equally active, while bourgeois and middle class women ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 0.97$, $M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.94$) are considerably more active than men ($M_{\text{bourgeoisie}} = 0.86$, $M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.76$). Finally, among the young, bourgeois men ($M = 1.05$) are much more active than bourgeois women ($M = 0.32$), while middle class women ($M = 0.87$) are considerably

more active than middle class men ($M = 0.56$) and working class men and women are involved to an almost equal amount ($M = 0.56$).

Figure 25: Three-way interaction effect between class, gender and generation on non-institutionalized political activity



Source: ESS 2006

The second three-way interaction effect in the model means that the class differences we find for the different genders vary with reference to whether a person is a native or an immigrant (see figure 25). Among natives, bourgeois women and men are equally active ($M = 0.74$) while middle and working class women ($M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.70$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.52$) are always marginally more active than men ($M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.66$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.47$). The class effect among natives is similar for the genders. Among immigrants, on the other hand, bourgeois men ($M = 0.91$) are much more active than bourgeois women ($M = 0.64$), while middle- and working-class women ($M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.87$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.60$) are considerably more active than men ($M_{\text{middle class}} = 0.58$, $M_{\text{working class}} = 0.50$).

Finally, a difficult to describe four-way interaction effect between all four factors in the model could be detected for non-institutionalized forms of participation ($F_{(4, 23085)} = 3.73$, p

= .005) indicating that the three-way interaction of class, gender and generation varies with respect to whether natives or immigrants are considered.

Additional to the analysis of group differences in participation levels within different types of political activism, in the previous section I also conducted calculations for single forms of participation in order to refine the first findings. Given the complexity that an exhaustive interpretation of separate four-way factorial ANOVAs for eight different forms of political participation would entail, I want to refrain from reporting the results of these analyses in detail and instead refer to tables 18 and 19 below in order to facilitate the traceability of my comments. I furthermore decided not to report multidimensional contingency tables, as a meaningful interpretation of the data summarized in these tables also becomes almost impossible. Without crunching too many numbers, I will therefore (a) examine which single forms of participation are more and which are less affected by intersectional group affiliation and (b) check which of the effects we observed for the different types of activism can be ascribed to which single form(s) of participation.

Among institutionalized forms of activism, voting appears to be the by far most stratified form in terms of intersectional group affiliation ($F_{(35, 23061)} = 80.43, p < .001, \eta^2 = .109$). All other forms like contacting ($F_{(35, 23211)} = 18.71, p < .001, \eta^2 = .027$), working for an organization other than a political party ($F_{(35, 23215)} = 16.58, p < .001, \eta^2 = .024$) and especially working for a political party ($F_{(35, 23267)} = 6.80, p < .001, \eta^2 = .010$) already lag behind considerably. As far as the relevance of specific factors is concerned, the analyses conducted above revealed group differences between the bourgeoisie, the middle class and the working class (main effect class), between immigrants and natives (main effect ethnicity) and between age groups (main effect generation) as well as different class effects for diverse age groups (interaction class*generation), different gender and age effects for immigrants and natives (interactions gender*ethnicity and generation*ethnicity), and a different interaction effect between class and gender for different age groups (interaction class*gender*generation) for institutionalized forms of participation. Detailed analyses of the activities voting, contacting, party work and other organizational work reveal that, out of these effects, the highly significant main effects of class and generation as well as the highly significant interaction effect of class, gender and generation can be found in every

single institutionalized form of participation. A highly significant main effect of immigrant origin as a proxy measure of ethnicity is only present in voting and a moderately significant effect of ethnicity can be detected in contacting whereas there appear to be no group differences between natives and immigrants in party and other organizational work. The weak interaction effect between class and generation can only be found in contacting and other organizational work, the interaction effect between gender and ethnicity is only present in contacting and the interaction effect between ethnicity and generation only occurs in voting and contacting. Other effects like the three-way interaction between class, ethnicity and generation or the four-way interaction between class, gender, ethnicity and generation that are highly significant in single forms do not reach significance level when the summation index for institutionalized activism is treated as a dependent variable.

Table 18: Four-way factorial ANOVA for institutionalized forms of participation

	Inst. forms		Voting		Contacting		Party work		Other Org	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
(Constant)	5604.1	***	8330.5	***	802.5	***	130.4	***	783.7	***
Class	72.84	***	25.39	***	47.24	***	3.24	*	40.38	***
Gender	1.00		0.44		1.58		3.10		0.96	
Ethnicity	31.61	***	180.76	***	4.62	*	0.05		1.68	
Generation	78.29	***	186.07	***	8.11	***	7.47	***	11.42	***
Cla*Gnd	1.32		0.01		0.62		3.56	*	2.39	
Cla*Eth	0.37		3.09	*	1.46		0.58		0.68	
Cla*Gen	3.05	*	1.92		3.78	*	1.92		8.77	***
Gnd*Eth	6.43	*	1.20		5.30	*	0.71		3.58	
Gnd*Gen	2.51		2.28		6.55	***	0.03		0.74	
Eth*Gen	4.29	*	21.84	***	5.56	**	0.70		0.18	
Cla*Gnd*Eth	1.27		0.15		4.69	**	0.98		1.33	
Cla*Gnd*Gen	4.55	***	2.74	*	6.45	***	6.00	***	4.97	***
Cla*Eth*Gen	1.02		5.61	***	7.45	***	0.56		0.78	
Gnd*Eth*Gen	1.30		0.65		6.76	***	1.37		0.35	
Cla*Gnd*Eth*Gen	1.93		3.33	**	9.92	***	0.71		3.58	**
η^2	0.075		0.109		0.027		0.010		0.024	
n	23,010		23,061		23,211		23,215		23,267	

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Source: ESS 2006

If in a next step we consider non-institutionalized activities, we find low effects sizes for all single forms of participation. The most stratified of these forms in terms of intersectional

group affiliation is joining boycotts ($F_{(35, 23173)} = 18.30, p < .001, \eta^2 = .027$) followed by signing petitions ($F_{(35, 23169)} = 12.06, p < .001, \eta^2 = .018$), attending demonstrations ($F_{(35, 23215)} = 8.86, p < .001, \eta^2 = .013$) and wearing campaign badges ($F_{(35, 23212)} = 4.42, p < .001, \eta^2 = .007$). As regards relevant predictors in the factorial ANOVA for non-institutionalized activities, in the above calculations the main effects of class and age, the two-way interactions between class and gender, class and generation and gender and generation, as well as the three-way interactions between class, gender and ethnicity and class, gender and generation and the four-way interaction between all factors turned out to be significant. Detailed analyses of non-institutionalized activities reveal that the main effect of generation as well as the interaction effect between class, gender and generation can be found for all four forms of involvement. Moreover, a main class effect is only obvious for petitions and boycotts whereas we find an interaction effect between class and gender only for wearing badges and demonstrations. Two-way interactions between class/gender and age occur merely for boycotts while the four-way interaction between class, gender, ethnicity and generation was significant for wearing badges and signing petitions. Although other factors like the two-way interaction between ethnicity and generation was significant for all single forms except boycotts, no such effect appeared for non-institutionalized participation when measured by a summation index.

Table 19: Four-way factorial ANOVA for non-institutionalized forms of participation

	Non-inst. forms		Badge		Petition		Demo		Boycott	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
(Constant)	1806.8	***	256.2	***	1419.3	***	395.5	***	1093.6	***
Class	33.75	***	0.10		26.87	***	2.57		42.83	***
Gender	1.31		0.62		5.48	*	6.34	*	1.28	
Ethnicity	1.73		0.13		0.43		2.99		5.48	*
Generation	33.42	***	13.03	***	21.10	***	17.35	***	27.51	***
Cla*Gnd	5.67	**	3.78	*	0.55		21.25	***	1.35	
Cla*Eth	0.04		2.56		0.33		1.14		0.74	
Cla*Gen	2.82	*	0.83		1.94		0.33		6.23	***
Gnd*Eth	0.02		0.64		2.08		4.07	*	0.15	
Gnd*Gen	5.46	**	0.87		0.42		1.74		15.00	***
Eth*Gen	0.28		3.42	*	4.53	*	4.63	**	0.17	
Cla*Gnd*Eth	3.89	*	0.71		1.06		13.19	***	1.12	
Cla*Gnd*Gen	6.91	***	3.20	*	4.57	***	5.54	***	5.37	***
Cla*Eth*Gen	1.53		1.37		3.10	*	1.39		2.17	
Gnd*Eth*Gen	1.95		0.15		2.31		2.16		2.62	
Cla*Gnd*Eth*Gen	3.73	**	3.22	*	4.79	***	2.27		1.30	
η^2	0.025		0.007		0.018		0.013		0.027	
n	23,085		23,212		23,169		23,215		23,173	

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
Source: ESS 2006

Towards the end of this section, I again want to conduct some region-specific analyses of the ESS 2006 data in order to find out whether there are different participation gaps between intersectional groups in Northern/Western and Southern/Eastern European societies. As regards overall participation, the two separate four-way factorial ANOVAs reveal that there is a significant effect of intersectional group affiliation on political activism in both regions of Europe ($p < .001$). However, this effect seems to be slightly stronger in the North/West ($F_{(35, 21366)} = 30.79$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .048$) than in the South/East ($F_{(35, 11292)} = 12.94$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .039$). If we look at the model of the ANOVA, we find that in the North/West only the main effects of class, ethnicity and generation are significant while all interaction effects remain non-significant. Basically the same is true for the South/East except that besides class, ethnicity and generation here also the interaction effect between gender and generation takes a significant value. What makes the two regions different is that in the North/West the bourgeoisie ($M = 2.10$) and the middle class ($M = 2.08$) are almost equally active in politics while the working class ($M = 1.59$) is

clearly less involved in participatory activities. To the contrary, in the South/East the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.46$) is more active than the middle ($M = 1.09$) and the working class ($M = 0.97$). In both the North/West and the South/East natives ($M_{N/W} = 2.07$, $M_{S/E} = 1.35$) are more active than immigrants ($M_{N/W} = 1.78$, $M_{S/E} = 1.00$) and the middle-aged ($M_{N/W} = 2.13$, $M_{S/E} = 1.29$) are more active than both the elderly ($M_{N/W} = 1.90$, $M_{S/E} = 1.16$) and the young ($M_{N/W} = 1.75$, $M_{S/E} = 1.07$). The significant two-way interaction between gender and generation reveals that in the South/East young women ($M = 1.15$) are a little more actively involved in politics than young men ($M = 0.99$), while middle-aged women and men are equally active ($M = 1.29$) and elderly men ($M = 1.33$) are much more active than elderly women ($M = 1.00$). A similar observation cannot be made in the North and West.

If institutionalized forms of participation are considered separately, the factorial ANOVA reveals significant effects that are clearly stronger in the North/West ($F_{(35, 21509)} = 55.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .083$) than in the South/East ($F_{(35, 11389)} = 20.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .060$). Again, the main effects of class, ethnicity and generation are significant in both models for the Northern/Western and the Southern/Eastern countries. In the North/West additionally the two-way interaction effects between class and ethnicity as well as ethnicity and generation are significant; in the South/West there are significant two-way interaction effects between gender and ethnicity as well as gender and generation. The difference between the two regions once more emerges from the fact that there is only a negligible difference between the participation levels of the bourgeoisie ($M = 1.27$) and the middle class ($M = 1.25$) in the North/West while this difference is significant in the South/East ($M = 1.10$ vs. 0.86). Also in institutionalized forms of activism natives ($M_{N/W} = 1.32$, $M_{S/E} = 1.04$) are more active than immigrants ($M_{N/W} = 1.00$, $M_{S/E} = 0.76$) in both the North/West and the South/East. Furthermore, in both regions there is only a marginal difference between the activity levels of the middle-aged ($M_{N/W} = 1.26$, $M_{S/E} = 0.97$) and the elderly ($M_{N/W} = 1.29$, $M_{S/E} = 0.98$) while the young are clearly less involved in institutionalized political activities ($M_{N/W} = 0.93$, $M_{S/E} = 0.75$). When it comes to regional differences in interaction effects, we find that in the North/West the native bourgeoisie is much more involved in institutionalized forms of participation than the native middle class, while among immigrants the middle class is clearly more involved than the bourgeoisie. Additionally, among natives in this region, the middle-aged are the most active group whereas among immigrants the elderly

are more active than the two younger generations. In the South/East, on the other hand, we find that among natives, men participate more than women while among immigrants women participate more than men. Moreover, among the male population we examine that the older a man is the more active he becomes, whereas among women the generation of the today middle-aged is more active than both the elderly and the young (which exhibit almost equal levels of involvement). Neither the gender-ethnicity nor the gender-generation interaction effect can be observed in the North/West.

Other than for institutionalized activism, we only find a marginally stronger effect of intersectional group affiliation on involvement in non-institutionalized forms of participation in the North/West ($F_{(35, 21629)} = 17.07, p < .001, \eta^2 = .027$) than in the South/East ($F_{(35, 11432)} = 6.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .019$). When it comes to significant main and intersectional effects in the model, however, some differences between the regions reveal. While, for example, the factors class and generation exert significant impact on non-institutionalized activism in both regions, we find a significant difference between men and women only in the North/West and a significant difference between immigrants and natives only in the South/East. In the Northern and Western region additionally the two-way interaction effects between class and gender as well as gender and generation are significant; in the Southern and Eastern region, in contrast, there is a significant two-way interaction effect between class and ethnicity. Again the specific differences between the North/West and the South/East cannot be comprehended until we take a closer look at the single effects. As a start, we find that the class effect that occurs in both regions has its roots in a difference between the two upper classes ($M = 0.84$) and the working class ($M = 0.63$) in the North/West while it is caused by a difference between the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.37$) and the two lower classes ($M = 0.23$) in the South/East. As far as the generation effect is concerned, the closer analysis reveals that the younger ($M_{N/W} = 0.82, M_{S/E} = 0.32$) and middle-aged ($M_{N/W} = 0.87, M_{S/E} = 0.32$) generations are more active than the elderly ($M_{N/W} = 0.62, M_{S/E} = 0.19$) in both regions while the difference in activity levels between the former is negligible. Furthermore, we find women are significantly more involved than men in non-institutionalized activism in the North/West ($M_{\text{male}} = 0.72, M_{\text{female}} = 0.82$) but not the South/East ($M_{\text{male}} = 0.29, M_{\text{female}} = 0.27$) and that natives are more active than immigrants in the South/East ($M_{\text{native}} = 0.31, M_{\text{immigrant}} = 0.25$) but not in the North/West

($M_{\text{native}} = 0.75$, $M_{\text{immigrant}} = 0.78$). When it comes to regional differences in interaction effects, we find that in the South/East the gender differences within the classes are only marginal, while in the North/West bourgeois men ($M = 0.84$) are more active than middle-class men ($M = 0.73$) but bourgeois women ($M = 0.83$) are less active than middle-class women ($M = 0.95$). Furthermore, in the North/West, young ($M = 0.84$) and middle-aged men ($M = 0.81$) show similar participation rates but are more active than elderly men ($M = 0.50$) while middle-aged women ($M = 0.93$) are by far more active than both young ($M = 0.79$) and elderly women ($M = 0.75$). This difference between genders does not occur in the South/East. Nonetheless, also in the Southern and Eastern societies we find a region-specific interaction effect: here bourgeois natives ($M = 0.38$) are more active than middle-class ($M = 0.33$) and working-class natives ($M = 0.23$). Among immigrants, however, the bourgeoisie ($M = 0.35$) is more involved in non-institutionalized activism than the working class ($M = 0.24$), while the middle class ($M = 0.14$) is almost inactive.

Summing up the findings regarding the differences in political participation levels between intersectional groups seems more demanding than it was for the class effects presented in the previous section. Clearly, a more complex notion of social stratification makes interpretations of its connection to political activism more difficult. Nevertheless, the previous analyses made clear that (a) political participation is stratified along the lines of intersectional group affiliation and (b) as for class, institutionalized forms of participation are more stratified along the lines of intersectional group affiliation than non-institutionalized forms of activism. More specific interpretations reveal that, additional to class, also the main effect of generation is significant for both types of participation while ethnicity only plays a role in institutionalized activities (natives more active than immigrants) and gender does not exert any influence on either form of activism. Furthermore, it is interesting that in both types of participation there is a different class effect for the youngest than for the two older generations: while among people older than 30 the bourgeoisie is always more active than all other classes, the middle class is more active than the bourgeoisie among respondents under 30. If this difference is caused by a generation effect, this might imply that participation in total becomes more equal. However, I cannot rule out a lifecycle effect here, so interpretations should always be

careful. A second commonality between institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms is the interaction effect between class, gender and generation. This effect further specifies the class-generation interaction and indicates that the higher participation rates of the young middle class compared to the young bourgeoisie might be mainly caused by the activism of young middle-class women while among young men the traditional class hierarchy in political participation (bourgeoisie – middle class – working class) still seems to be quite manifest.

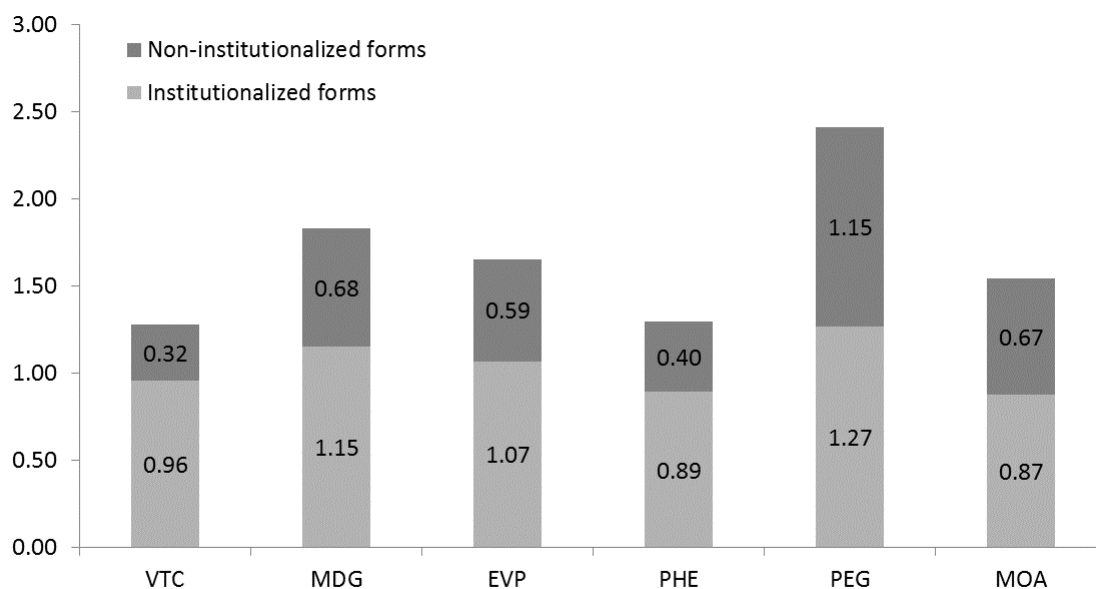
If we, finally, also give some consideration to the differences in significant effects between the two types of activism, we find that in institutionalized forms (a) native men are more active than native women while immigrant women are more active than immigrant men and that (b) young and middle-aged natives are more active than young and middle-aged immigrants while there is no difference between elderly natives and immigrants. The interaction effects seem to describe in more detail the ethnicity gap that has already been observed for institutionalized activism when only the main effects were observed. For non-institutionalized forms, we find that there is indeed a gap between men and women which, however, only comes to the fore if gender is examined together with class and generation: the analyses show that young bourgeois women are much less actively engaged than young bourgeois men but older lower-class women are clearly more involved than their male counterparts.

As far as regional differences are concerned, we can sum up that the stated rise of the middle-class – more specifically its approximation to the bourgeoisie in terms of participation levels – is a phenomenon occurring mainly in established democracies. While in the North/West a two-class constellation of activism emerges (active bourgeoisie and middle class, uncoupled working class), we still find a rather “traditional” three-class constellation of participatory stratification in the South/East. Furthermore, our analyses reveal that women are more active in non-institutionalized forms of action in the North/West, whereas this is not the case in the South/East. To the contrary, ethnicity plays a role as an explanatory factor for non-institutionalized participation (to the disadvantage of immigrants) in the South/East but not in the North/West. As regards generation effects, no regional differences unfold in our data.

6.3 *POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND MILIEUS*

In a final step of my empirical analysis, I want to scrutinize the differences between lifestyle groups or milieus in terms of their levels of political participation. To this end, I defined six different milieus labeled vintage conservatives, modest do-gooders, everyday people, power-hungry egoists, progressive egalitarians and modern overachievers in section 5.3.3. These milieus can be distinguished on the basis of their specific value orientations. The basis of the differentiations between milieus or lifestyle groups was laid by scholars like Gerhard Schulze, Stefan Hradil, Annette Spellerberg or Michael Vester who argue that, beginning with the early 1990s, people's life chances are no longer determined by their socio-economic status but rather by their specific socio-cultural dispositions. Social stratification should therefore rather be examined along expressive and evaluative attitudes than along the lines of class affiliation. Additionally, however, all milieu- or lifestyle-oriented analyses of social structure found that these expressive and evaluative attitudes are affected by "classic" inequality factors like occupational status (incl. education and income, i.e. class), age and gender. In this sense, also my own horizontal classification of value milieus based on the data of the ESS 2006 reveals clear patterns of vertical stratification. Although this fact should therefore be kept in mind also when the relationship between value milieu affiliation and political activity is analyzed, I will not include class, generation, gender and ethnicity as factors in the following analyses – simply because the original socio-cultural theories of stratification explicitly speak of value orientations to replace (and not complement) other in/equality factors in the first place. Therefore, I want to extract the effect of milieu affiliation on political participation without "contaminating" it with other vertical or horizontal effects.

Figure 26: Overall and types of participation by value milieu in Europe



Note: VTC = Vintage conservatives, MDG = Modest do-gooders, EVP = Everyday people, PHE = Power-hungry egoists, PEG = Progressive egalitarians, MOA = Modern overachievers

Source: ESS 2006

For starters, I want to take a look at the relationship between affiliation to value milieus and overall political activity as well as the two different types of participation. Figure 26 shows that the by far most active of the observed milieus are the progressive egalitarians ($M = 2.41$) followed with considerable distance by modest do-gooders ($M = 1.83$), everyday people ($M = 1.65$) and modern overachievers ($M = 1.54$). Very low participation rates are obtained by power-hungry egoists ($M = 1.30$) and vintage conservatives ($M = 1.28$). These observations reveal that, interestingly, the overall participation rates of different value milieus do not follow a clear pattern structured by class, gender or age. While the milieu with the highest level of formal education (progressive egalitarians) is also the most active, the second-most active milieu (modest do-gooders) is the one with the second-lowest educational level. Similarly, of the two least active groups one exhibits the lowest (power-hungry egoists), the other the highest (vintage conservatives) share of women. Finally, out of two milieus with almost equal average age, one (progressive egalitarians) shows the highest overall participation rates whereas the other (power-hungry egoists) is among the most inactive groups. Already these cursory analyses reveal that using value orientations as

a factor constituting social groups adds considerable new insights to the analysis of participatory in/equality, which could not have been gained by relying solely on “traditional” measures of stratification like class, gender or age.⁶⁶

If we, in a next step, consider the different types of activism separately we find that the sequence of milieus with regard to their activity rates basically remains the same as for overall participation. Also in institutionalized forms, the progressive egalitarians ($M = 1.27$) are the most active milieu. However, the distance to the two successive groups – the modest do-gooders ($M = 1.15$) and the everyday people ($M = 1.07$) – is clearly smaller. The only remarkable difference between institutionalized and overall participation is that in the former both vintage conservatives ($M = 0.96$) and power-hungry egoists ($M = 0.89$) are more involved than modern overachievers ($M = 0.87$). In non-institutionalized forms of participation, on the other hand, the gap between progressive egalitarians ($M = 1.15$) and the successive groups – this time modest do-gooders ($M = 0.68$), modern overachievers ($M = 0.67$) and everyday people ($M = 0.59$) – is impressive. Eventually, power-hungry egoists ($M = 0.40$) and especially vintage conservatives ($M = 0.32$) almost seem to drop out of non-institutionalized forms of engagement.

But how significant is the overall effect of value milieu affiliation on political participation? Are some forms of activism more unequal in terms of socio-cultural group affiliation than others? And which group differences are really relevant? As for class models, I decided to conduct a one-way independent ANOVA in order to examine variations in political involvement between value milieus. The analysis of milieu differences in participation revealed that there is a significant but weak effect of milieu affiliation on overall political participation ($F_{(5, 23908.724)} = 395.73, p < .001, \eta^2 = .062$). Contrary to the effects of class and intersectional group affiliation, the milieu effect is considerably weaker in institutionalized ($F_{(5, 25597.34)} = 157.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .025$) than in non-institutionalized forms of participation ($F_{(5, 23262.855)} = 471.83, p < .001, \eta^2 = .073$).⁶⁷ To follow up these results, I conducted some Games-Howell post-hoc tests in order to find out

⁶⁶ Even controlling for the factors class, gender, age and ethnicity in a factorial ANOVA, both the main effect of value orientations persists and the relationship between the participation levels of the various milieus remains constant.

⁶⁷ Due to the fact that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is violated (as revealed by a Levene's test), again the results of the Brown-Forsythe F-statistics are reported. Additionally, almost identical significance levels and effect sizes were found conducting a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test.

which of the differences between the various milieus are significant. It turned out that, for overall participation, the two least active groups vintage conservatives and power-hungry egoists do not differ significantly ($p = .954$). Also, the participation rates of the two moderately active groups everyday people and modern overachievers are similar when interpreted at a very high standard ($p = .002$). For institutionalized forms of participation, the only non-significant difference between groups can be found comparing power-hungry egoists and modern overachievers ($p = .910$). Again these two groups are the least active groups in our analysis. For non-institutionalized forms of participation, on the other hand, the only non-significant group difference exists between modest do-gooders and modern overachievers ($p = .996$) which – next to progressive egalitarians – are the politically most active milieus in my study.

After the analysis of milieu differences in participation levels within different types of political activism, let us now turn to the analysis of single forms of participation in order to further refine the empirical results. The findings depicted in table 20 reveal that for voting the highest participation levels can be found among modest do-gooders, followed by vintage conservatives and everyday people. Political egalitarians and, again with some lag, power-hungry egoists participate in elections to an already lower percentage. What stands out, though, is the low turnout of modern overachievers: barely every second respondent to the ESS 2006 who can be classified as a member of this group reports to have taken part in the preceding national elections. The different participation rates of the milieus indicate that, while voting does not seem to be influenced by education or gender, it is obviously affected by age: older people turn out in elections to a much greater share than young people do.

Table 20: Forms of participation and value milieus in Europe

	VTC	MDG	EVP	PHE	PEG	MOA
Voting	74,9	79,9	74,3	65,6	71,7	54,9
Contacting	9,4	14,7	14,3	10,4	21,4	13,1
Political party or action group	2,1	4,0	3,6	3,1	6,8	3,6
Another org or association	9,2	16,6	14,6	10,1	26,7	16,1
Campaign badge	3,5	8,1	6,6	4,6	16,0	9,4
Petition	16,4	29,9	27,0	18,3	44,7	30,4
Lawful demonstration	3,3	8,7	8,0	5,5	17,1	9,0
Boycott	9,3	21,4	17,3	12,0	37,0	18,1

Note: VTC = Vintage conservatives, MDG = Modest do-gooders, EVP = Everyday people, PHE = Power-hungry egoists, PEG = Progressive egalitarians, MOA = Modern overachievers

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Weighted data, $n = 32,032 - 32,269$

Source: ESS 2006

Nevertheless, with regard to its relation to milieus, voting appears to follow a very unique pattern of distribution that changes entirely if other forms of participation are examined. While modest do-gooders, the most regular voters in our analysis, also appear to be quite active in other forms of participation, vintage conservatives take part in politics mainly via elections. For all other forms of activism, vintage conservatives exhibit the lowest participation levels of all the observed milieus. The milieu I labeled everyday people, on the other hand, really lives up to its name: everyday people show average participation rates in both institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of participation. The next group, the one I labeled political egalitarians, reveals a participation pattern that is completely different to that of the vintage conservatives. While showing only average turnout rates in elections, this milieu is by far the most active in all other forms of participation. For some forms of involvement like wearing campaign badges and attending demonstrations the participation level of the members of this milieu is almost twice as high as the participation level of the second-most active group. Power-hungry egoists, on the other hand, show low levels of involvement in all forms of participation and achieve only marginally higher percentages than vintage conservatives. Finally, modern overachievers were the most inactive group when only turnout in elections was considered. However, when it comes to other forms, they come much closer to the average and even exhibit the second-highest activity levels for the non-institutionalized forms of participation wearing campaign badges, signing petitions and attending demonstrations.

The question that remains now is: are the differences in political participation levels we observed between the various milieus significant? And how strong is the relationship between milieu affiliation and the single forms of participation? Just as for the examination of class differences, I use one-way independent ANOVA in order to answer these questions. The analyses reveal significant effects of milieu affiliation on all single forms of participation. These effects are considerable for joining boycotts ($F_{(5, 23786.579)} = 295.71, p < .001, \eta^2 = .046$) and signing petitions ($F_{(5, 26103.353)} = 258.99, p < .001, \eta^2 = .040$), still moderate for voting ($F_{(5, 28224.297)} = 169.10, p < .001, \eta^2 = .026$), other organizational work ($F_{(5, 22461.225)} = 144.20, p < .001, \eta^2 = .023$), wearing campaign badges ($F_{(5, 21018.447)} = 126.73, p < .001, \eta^2 = .021$) and attending demonstrations ($F_{(5, 21654.666)} = 129.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .021$) yet almost negligible for contacting politicians ($F_{(5, 25979.813)} = 71.23, p < .001, \eta^2 = .011$) and party work ($F_{(5, 23349.700)} = 31.20, p < .001, \eta^2 = .005$).

Games-Howell post-hoc tests illustrate two distinct patterns of participation levels for the various milieus. One applies to voting, where modest do-gooders show the highest participation rates followed by the group of vintage conservatives and everyday people (with similar turnout rates), progressive egalitarians, power-hungry egoists and – far behind – modern overachievers. The second pattern applies, with some minor variation, to all other forms of participation. Here the by far highest participation levels can be found among the progressive egalitarians followed by a group of milieus that generally consist of modern overachievers and modest do-gooders and commonly also contains the milieu of the everyday people. The lowest participation levels in all forms of participation except voting are scored by vintage conservatives who sometimes differ from the next-to-last power-hungry egoists (as for party work and all non-institutionalized activities) and at other times constitute a homogenous group with the power-hungry egoists (as for contacting and other organizational work).

Let us, at last, conduct some additional analyses in order to understand whether the observed milieu differences in various types of political participation emerge separately in

all of the four European regions.⁶⁸ The analyses reveal that there is a significant socio-cultural group effect on overall participation both European regions that is even stronger in the Northern and Western ($F_{(5, 20137.084)} = 165.51, p < .001, \eta^2 = .035$) than in the Southern and Eastern societies ($F_{(5, 4249.971)} = 49.12, p < .001, \eta^2 = .021$). The main difference between the two regions as regards overall participation is that in the North/West vintage conservatives and power-hungry egoists on the one hand and modest do-gooders, everyday people and modern overachievers on the other form two groups of milieus with similar activity levels while in the South/East the activity levels of modern overachievers more resemble those of vintage conservatives and power-hungry egoists whereas the activity levels modest do-gooders and everyday people remain similar. In the North and West modern overachievers therefore belong to the moderately active participants while in the South and East they are part of the politically almost inactive. In contrast to overall participation, institutionalized forms of activism are equally – and only moderately – stratified by milieu affiliation in the North/West ($F_{(5, 20837.068)} = 54.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .012$) and the South/East ($F_{(5, 5092.670)} = 36.95, p < .001, \eta^2 = .015$). The main difference between the regions as far as the relationship between socio-cultural group belonging and institutionalized activism is concerned is that, while the progressive egalitarians alone clearly are the politically most active group in the North and West, in the South and East all of a sudden modest do-gooders are not significantly less active than progressive egalitarians any more. For non-institutionalized forms of participation we find significant milieu differences in the South/East ($F_{(5, 3921.789)} = 57.21, p < .001, \eta^2 = .026$) and even stronger ones in the North/West ($F_{(5, 19935.184)} = 222.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .047$). While, however, in the South/East modern overachievers merge with modest do-gooders and everyday people as the second-most active group, the modern overachievers are clearly more active than the group of modest do-gooders and everyday people in the North/West (just like above, all unmentioned milieus are significantly different from each other).

The findings for milieu differences in political participation in many respects resemble the results of the previous two chapters on classes and intersectional groups. In sum, it appears

⁶⁸ For the sake of simplicity and readability I again focus on the different types of participation instead of the single forms of activism as far as comparative analyses are concerned.

that political participation is also stratified along the lines of milieu affiliation. More specifically, the findings reveal that the clearly most active milieu is the one labeled progressive egalitarians, a group that shares sympathy for values like benevolence, universalism and self-direction as well as stimulation and hedonism and rejects value orientations directed at security and tradition. Members of this milieu are highly active in all types of participation (institutionalized and non-institutionalized), only when it comes to voting other groups exhibit higher levels of activism. The second-most active milieu is called modest do-gooders, its members consider tradition but also universalism and benevolence to be important values. Power and achievement are not of interest for the members of this milieu. Modest do-gooders are active in all forms participation, they even have the highest turnout level of all milieus. Everyday people are average in all respects: they consider all values unexceptionally important and show mean activity levels in all forms of participation (although they rank above average in voting and contacting and below average in all non-institutionalized forms). High acceptance of achievement and hedonistic values as well as a rejection of attitudes comprising conformity, tradition and universalism is common among modern overachievers. Members of this milieu are comparatively active in non-institutionalized forms of political action but only infrequently cast a ballot or contact politicians or government officials. The least active milieus are the power-hungry egoists, who reject benevolence and universalism and highlight power as relevant value orientations, as well as vintage conservatives, who share a strong need for security and disapprove of people who always seek fun and distraction in their lives. While the former are involved in neither of the different forms of participation frequently, the latter are at least very regular voters. In total, the obvious differences between milieus not only reveal a high explanatory value of the socio-cultural approach to stratification when it comes to political activism.

In total, the findings show that value orientations cover aspects that cannot be replaced by other categories like class, gender, ethnicity or generation. Although the most active milieu (progressive egalitarians) has the highest and the least active milieu has (vintage conservatives) the lowest average level of formal education, and the mean age of progressive egalitarians is low while the mean age of the vintage conservatives is high, we

also find older and less educated groups (modest do-gooders) among the most active and young and higher educated groups (modern overachievers) among the less active groups.

We have seen that, like class and intersectional models, also socio-cultural approaches are able to explain the participation in different types of activism to some extent. In contrast to the former, however, it is not the institutionalized but the non-institutionalized forms of participation that are more stratified along the lines of milieu affiliation. Above all, boycotts and petitions seem to be used much more frequently by the members of some milieus than by those of others. Contacting and especially party work, on the other hand, are almost unstratified by socio-cultural attitudes. As the region-specific analyses showed, this milieu differences in non-institutionalized participation are much stronger in the North/West than in the South/East.

6.4 SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter has provided insights in a set of problems associated with the empirical analysis of “participatory in/equality”. Throughout the last pages I have scrutinized the relationship between a person’s affiliation to a major social group and the form and/or level of this person’s political activism. With reference to recent models of social stratification, three different kinds of major social groups were examined as regards their participation in politics: classes as measured by Erik o. Wright’s three-class and John Goldthorpe’s seven-class scheme; intersectional groups at the junctions of the four categories class, gender, ethnicity and generation; and milieus as measured by a data-based six-milieu model inspired by the empirical milieu or lifestyle-group models of Gerhard Schulze, Annette Spellerberg or Michael Vester. In these terms not only overall participation as measured by an eight-stage summation index was examined, but also activity levels in different types (institutionalized versus non-institutionalized) and single forms of participation (voting, contacting, party and other organizational work; wearing campaign badges, signing petitions, attending demonstrations, joining boycotts) were analyzed.

The in-depth analyses reveal that – independent of the specific approach that has been chosen for the study of social inequality – political participation is stratified along the lines of class, intersectional group and milieu affiliation. In particular, especially institutionalized

forms of participation seem to be affected by one's affiliation to a major social group when class and intersectional models of stratification are used to examine political activism. To the contrary, when a socio-cultural approach to stratification is chosen, non-institutionalized forms of activism exhibit a higher degree of social (i.e. participatory) inequality.

As regards class models, we found that in institutionalized forms members of the bourgeoisie (or service class) are more active than members of the middle (or intermediate) class and both are more active than members of the working class. This is, however, not the case in non-institutionalized activism. Here the gap between the bourgeoisie and the middle class disappears while the working class is still very inactive. Intersectional models help us refine these findings, as they reveal that the higher activity levels of the middle class in non-institutionalized forms of participation are mainly caused by the higher level of involvement of young people (under 30), especially young women. Furthermore, the intersectional analyses show that immigrants are much less involved in political activism than natives. This is the case because of the low participation rates of young and middle-aged immigrants (under 60), especially young and middle-aged immigrant men. Milieu models do not refine these findings further but introduce completely new dimensions of stratification to the analysis, which reveal that not only socio-economic resources and socio-demographic characteristics but also socio-cultural orientations play a role in defining major social groups and finding group differences in political participation. Especially when it comes to non-institutionalized activism, universalist and benevolent value orientations – as to be found among progressive egalitarians and modest do-gooders – appear to positively affect political participation levels.

The region-specific analyses for all stratification models reveal a higher level of class, intersectional group and milieu inequalities in the Northern and Western than in the Southern and Eastern European countries. In all the observed models, however, differences between the North/West and the South/East could only be found for the type of activism that also shows the higher degree of stratification (institutionalized activism for class and intersectional models, non-institutionalized activism for milieu models). This might indicate, that specific trends in participatory in/equality are not necessarily a European, but maybe rather a Northern or Western European phenomenon.

So far I have merely described my findings without discussing them with regard to the current state of research, that is: the existing literature on the topic of participatory in/equality. But how can I interpret the empirical results presented above in reference to the presuppositions introduced in chapter 4.4? In the first instance, I proposed three mutually exclusive basic presuppositions that drew on the studies of Miguel Caínzos and Carmen Voces (2010). The authors tested the so called “death of class”-hypothesis (Pakulski/Waters 1996), more specifically they ask whether and how class affiliation affects a person’s capability to participate in politics. I extended Caínzos’ and Voces’ considerations to my broader perspective on political activism and formulated

- a *hypothesis of robust association*, which assumes that new class models would still predict political participation to a considerable amount, if vertical forms of stratification in European societies prevailed (*BP1*);
- a *hypothesis of differentiation*, which assumes that intersectional and socio-cultural models would be better suited to understand participation than new class models, if vertical forms of stratification in European societies were supplemented non-vertical inequalities (*BP2*);
- a *hypothesis of independence*, which assumes that none of the inequality models would illuminate our understanding of participation, if political activism in Europe were not stratified at all (*BP3*).

To start with, in light of the data presented above it seems obvious to reject the latter of these presuppositions without further discussion. Clearly, all of the presented models illustrate the relationship between social stratification (however it may be conceptualized) and political participation. However, we find that new class models explain overall participation only to a negligible extent ($\eta^2 = .014$), which indicates that the hypothesis of robust association at least has to be put into perspective if not rejected. Intersectional ($\eta^2 = .048$) and milieu models ($\eta^2 = .062$), on the other hand, prove to be much better suited to understand the overall political participation of different social groups. I therefore plead to reconsider and enhance traditional class models when it comes to the reproduction of social inequality through political activism. Although I consider it naïve or even dangerous to

speak of a “death of class” as a main structuring principle of society given the results of my study, it seems obvious that conceptualizing stratification – and with it political in/equality – simply on the basis of factors like occupation, income or education neglects some major developments in the design of social relations. While society is still characterized by vertical structures to a certain extent, non-vertical factors have gained influence on people’s practices leading to a differentiation also of political involvement.

Additional to the basic assumptions, also three more specific presuppositions were introduced at the end of the conceptual/theoretical part II of this study. These specific presuppositions take into account the differentiation between different types of participation, namely institutionalized and non-institutionalized activism. Based on the works of Samuel Barnes et al. (1979), I hypothesized that we can find *no difference* between these two types – irrespective of whether we focus on participatory in/equality from a class, intersectional or milieu perspective (*SP1*). The numbers resulting from the calculations of chapter five clearly refute this assumption: although the difference between the effect of class on institutionalized engagement on the one hand and the impact of class on non-institutionalized activism on the other remains small if the Wright ($\eta^2 = .036$ vs. $.011$) or EGP class scheme ($\eta^2 = .058$ vs. $.045$) are considered, we find considerable differences between participation types for intersectional ($\eta^2 = .075$ vs. $.025$) and milieu models ($\eta^2 = .025$ vs. $.073$). These numbers can also be used to handle the other specific presuppositions:

- Assumption number two asked whether the emergence of non-institutionalized activism led to an increase (*SP2a*) or a decrease (*SP2b*) in class-related participatory inequality. The figures resulting from my analyses indicate that the degree of class-related inequality is larger in traditional forms of involvement like voting, contacting and non-party organizational work than in new ones (with the negligible exception of boycotts). This finding strongly supports the presupposition stating a decrease in class-related inequality.
- Assumption number three stated that institutionalized activism is more stratified along the lines of intersectional group affiliation, whereas non-institutionalized forms of participation are more stratified along the boundaries of milieus (*SP3*). Our data impressively confirm this hypothesis by revealing a much greater impact of

intersectional group membership on declining (essentially voting) and a more pronounced effect of milieu affiliation on emerging activities (above all boycotts and petitions).

In sum, the findings based on the specific presuppositions reinforce the impression that it is necessary to differentiate between various types and forms of engagement in order to fully understand the dynamics of participatory in/equality in Europe. They point out the declining relevance of class-related stratification without stating its extinction as becomes clear from the results of the intersectional analyses. And they reveal the strength of value-based models of in/equality when applied to an outcome of social stratification such as political participation.

PART IV

A PART OR APART?

7 CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

This study examined the relationship between social stratification and political participation, or what I label participatory in/equality, in times when the ways in which individuals interfere with opinion formation and decision-making processes change fundamentally. I scrutinized the influence these changes exert on who becomes politically active and who does not. The main research question guiding the efforts of this study therefore was: How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires? To this end, three research tasks were formulated: one conceptual, one theoretical, and one empirical.

The *conceptual* task of this study was to find out which kind of changes can be observed in the field of political participation during the past three decades. My analyses revealed that there are constant and variable elements of political participation. Constant elements constitute the invariant aspects of participation that are indispensable for any form of activity to be classified as political – a formally unrestricted number of individual *protagonists*, some form of intentional and transitive *activity*, and a *political* context shaped by conflictual power relations and aimed at a broader audience. The variable elements of participation, on the other hand, change over time along the dimensions target, frequency, regularity, source, style, structure and content. My analyses revealed that institutionalized

forms of action (nation-state-oriented, bounded by institutional rules, geared to permanent and long-time engagement, enacted top-down, organized collectively and hierarchically, focused on issues of distribution) decline while non-institutionalized forms of action (oriented towards both state and non-state actors at various levels of governance, institutionally unrestricted, allowing for spontaneous, short term and proactive engagement, unorganized or within loose networks, consider both lifestyle and identity issues) seem to enjoy growing attendance during the last decades.

The *theoretical* task of this study covered two aspects. First, I wanted to understand why participatory in/equality should be considered problematic/necessary for democratic decision-making. Presenting three different approaches from democratic theory, I could show that only proceduralist pluralism (e.g. Dahl 1989, 1998), which regards equal participation as representativeness of interests, fulfils the preconditions of a normative justification of participatory equality: in contrast to democratic elitism, proceduralist pluralism is generally open to different forms of political activities that take place in the context of interest politics; other than participationism, proceduralist pluralism accounts for the individual right to non-participation that legitimizes the dropping out of single individuals without haphazardly treating this as inequality. For pluralists, participatory equality is necessary because democracy (as equal consideration of interests) can only be realized if persons/groups introduce their interests to the political system themselves.

The second theoretical question covers the objective to find out how participatory in/equality can be assessed adequately in empirical studies. To answer this question, I had to translate the normative concept of interest (as in interest protection, cf. proceduralist pluralism) into an empirical one. Based on soci(oligic)al theory (e.g. Schmitter 1981, Swedberg 2005), I defined interests as individual and conscious, yet inarticulate dispositions that guide human action and are mediated by society. I refined my argument by drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus (of which interests are to be considered the intellectual and "quasi-conscious" dimension) in order to theoretically explain (a) how interests as "structuring structure" organize human activity by constraining the space of likely courses of action, and (b) how interests as "structured structure" are formed by lived experiences that are again mainly determined by a person's position within social structure (her belonging to a specific social group). Emanating from this idea, I presented the three

main contemporary approaches to the analysis of social stratification: new class models highlighting the persistent relevance of vertical stratification along the lines of occupation (and education); intersectional models stressing the societal importance of non-vertical parameters like gender, generation and ethnicity additional to class; and socio-cultural models emphasizing value orientations as the contemporarily most relevant aspects of societal structuring.

Finally, the *empirical* task of this study was to draw on the conceptual and theoretical considerations in order to answer the question whether – and if so, which kind of – participatory in/equality exists in the different types and forms of political activism. Based on data from the third round of the European Social Survey 2006, I used contingency table analyses (CTA) as well as analyses of variance (ANOVA) to find that inequality plays a role in political activism regardless of which model of stratification is used as the basis of the empirical analyses. In particular, institutionalized forms of activism like voting, contacting, and non-party organizational work seem to be affected by a person's group membership, if – and this is an important condition and constriction – class or intersectional models are used as the basis of societal stratification. To the contrary, if a socio-cultural model to stratification is chosen, non-institutionalized forms of activism like wearing campaign badges or stickers, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts exhibit a higher degree of social (i.e. participatory) inequality. In sum, the analyses of chapter five reveal a declining, but especially in combination with horizontal factors still relevant effect of class on political participation, as well as an increasing relevance of value orientations as parameters of social stratification that appears when applied to research on political activism.

If scrutinized in more detail, we find that, when it comes to *class models*, the upper classes are more active than the middle classes and the middle classes are again more involved than the lower classes as far as institutionalized activism is concerned. However, this finding does not hold for non-institutionalized forms of participation. Here the upper and middle classes do not differ in terms of activity levels any more, while the lower classes still (or even more) lag behind. *Intersectional models* help us refine these findings by enhancing them with variables measuring group membership in terms of gender, generation and ethnicity/immigrant origin. We find that the higher activity levels of the

middle classes in non-institutionalized forms of participation are mainly caused by the higher level of involvement of young people (under 30), especially young women. Furthermore, the intersectional analyses show that immigrants are much less involved in political activism than natives. This is caused by the low participation rates of young and middle-aged immigrants (under 60), especially young and middle-aged immigrant men. *Milieu models* are not suited to enhance the findings of class and intersectional models further. Rather, they introduce new dimensions of stratification to the analysis, revealing that social group membership is defined not only in terms of socio-economic resources and socio-demographic characteristics but also along socio-cultural orientations. Especially when it comes to non-institutionalized activism, universalist and benevolent value orientations – as to be found among the milieus of progressive egalitarians and modest do-gooders – appear to positively affect political participation levels and illustrate participatory in/equality if these groups are compared to other milieus like the more traditional, security-oriented vintage conservatives or the achievement-oriented power-hungry egoists.

After this very brief summary of the main results, I now want to turn to what follows from the findings of my research if interpreted against the background of a broader political and societal context. Within these concluding remarks, I give some hints at other research areas located at the intersection of politics and society dealing with what I would more universally label the “inequality problem”. Furthermore, I devote some space to the discussion of potential remedies to this problem as provided in the literature before I finally derive from this discussion an agenda for future research in the field.

7.1 *POLITICS, SOCIETY AND THE INEQUALITY PROBLEM*

If we take the research question guiding this study seriously, it at first glance appears reasonable to answer: “Not as bad as some politicians, journalists and scholars want to make us believe.” Viewed from a dynamic perspective we, on the one hand, find that emerging forms of activism like signing petitions and attending demonstrations, in which more and more people have been participating during the past decades, are generally less stratified in terms of class – i.e. along the lines of occupation, income and education – than traditional forms of participation like voting or contacting. Furthermore, the group of

under-30-year-olds who can also be considered the future generation of participants – and, as a sidenote, especially young women – are much more involved in these up-and-coming non-institutionalized forms of involvement than their parents or grandparents. So far, so good. But has inequality in political participation thereby effectively vanished into thin air? Is the social stratification along the lines of class really water under the bridge? Can we simply put the matter of unequal activism to rest and dedicate ourselves to a new chapter?

Although the idea seems tempting, I would advise to be cautious not to jump to a hasty conclusion, as we can find several pieces of information in our findings that argue against the “death of class” or, even more generally, the “end of inequality”-thesis. First of all, while class seems to explain only a small amount of variation in political participation, the data of the ESS 2006 reveal clear and significant differences between groups as regards their activity levels. Especially in voting, which after all remains the crucial form of involvement in collective opinion formation and decision-making processes, the participation gap between the upper, middle and lower classes is remarkably huge: turnout in elections is almost 15 percentage points higher among members of the bourgeoisie compared to members of the working class. Besides, more than twice as much upper class than lower class members contact politicians or work in parties or other political organizations regularly. Obviously, class is everything but insignificant when we talk about participation in institutionalized political activities.

Additional to the constant class bias in voting, also other factors affect the dynamics of participatory in/equality. While, for example, both the share of naturalized immigrants and non-citizen residents in (Western) European societies has constantly been growing during the past years (see <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>), my findings show that immigrants – especially young and middle-aged men – are much less involved in political activities than natives. This means that not only is a growing share of the population excluded from political decision-making in legal terms (following from a lack of political rights that come with the acquisition of citizenship), but also that those, who have the legal opportunity to participate, refrain from making use of this right. That this development affects mainly young people and therefore might potentially become even more prevalent in the future, renders its jeopardizing impact on democracy still higher.

A third argument against an “end of inequality”-thesis derives from the fact that not only the important traditional, but also the newer non-institutionalized forms of participation exhibit significant group differences in activity levels. Especially as regards value milieus, involvement is very unequal, with people sharing universalistic or benevolent attitudes being much more active than power- and achievement-oriented individuals. Moreover, this effect of milieu affiliation is particularly obvious in political consumerism, measured in the ESS 2006 as joining boycotts, which has to be regarded as (at least one of) the most constantly increasing form(s) of activism during the past decades (Bennett 1998, Micheletti et al. 2004, Stolle et al. 2005).

Finally, the impression that a “requiem“ for political inequality would be premature and therefore inaccurate also gets validated by extending the scope to research focusing on the intersection of politics and society in areas other than participation. As, for example, studies on the representation of various social groups in parliaments reveal, especially members of the working class (Phillips 1995, Carnes 2012), women (Lovenduski 2005, Kittilson 2006, Krook 2010), and ethnic minority citizens/immigrants (Togeby 2008, Bird et al. 2011, Sobolewska 2013) are severely disadvantaged as far as the share of MPs who have a working class background, are female or of immigrant origin is concerned. Although clearly an exception, even the first intersectional analyses on the topic of descriptive representation of disadvantaged groups have been published recently (Hardy-Fanta 2011, Hughes 2011).

In all of these studies, however different their focus might be, one finding is undisputed: social group affiliation is relevant with regard to both the inclusion in political institutions as well as the protection of interests, and members of socially disadvantaged groups like lower-class citizens, women or immigrants are much less likely to be represented appropriately than members of the privileged groups are. Inequality in politics (in a more than system-oriented understanding) is thus a problem to be permanently considered and attentively observed, as it reproduces the stratification patterns that exist in society at large and thereby decides over the existence or absence of people’s opportunities to achieve their individual life objectives.

7.2 CURING THE MALAISE OF PARTICIPATORY INEQUALITY

In this section, I give some hints at possible measures that might reduce inequality in political participation. In doing so I differentiate between such measures that aim at the *reduction of institutional and structural constraints* (re)producing participatory inequality and measures that aim at the *promotion of participation* enabling new, equal patterns of activism to emerge. Some of these measures are more specific, others are more general in nature. After all, however, only a mixture between these actions can advance changes towards more equality in political activism.

One prominent idea to overcome participatory inequality at the institutional level (voting system) is the introduction of *compulsory voting* (Lijphart 1997, Keaney/Rogers 2006). Its advocates argue that not only would turnout levels in general rise with the introduction of compulsory voting⁶⁹; additionally, electoral participation would also become more equal by raising the turnout levels of those groups that are usually less likely to cast a ballot, i.e. lower-class citizens (Hill 2000), women (Engelen/Hooghe 2007) and young people (Wattenberg 2007). Nonetheless, other scholars present empirical evidence showing that the relationship between turnout and factors like gender, education or age is not affected by compulsory voting (Quintelier et al. 2011). As the effect of compulsory voting is contested and the measure itself only affects electoral participation, it remains questionable whether one can expect healing properties for participatory inequality here.

Another effort to reduce institutional barriers often mentioned in the literature concerns the reform of electoral law, especially as far as the *expansion of the franchise to non-citizens* is concerned. The allocation of voting rights on the basis of other factors than nationality, for example place of residence or “denizenship” (Hammar 1994), is a claim that has become popular among scholars and human rights activists alike and is deemed to have an effect on both the electoral and non-electoral participation of immigrants independent of their citizenship status. Complementary to the expansion of the franchise, also a *simplified access to citizenship* could boost immigrant political participation and thereby reduce the ethnicity-based dimension of participatory inequality.

⁶⁹ From a different perspective, Hooghe and Pelleriaux (1998: 421) claim that turnout levels in Belgium would drop from 91 to 59 (!) percent, if compulsory voting were abolished.

On a structural level, it seems indispensable in order to overcome the stratification of activism to remove societal barriers *like discrimination in the educational system and the labor market* which predominantly affect lower-status citizens, women and immigrants. Both school and workplace are important institutions as they deliver the linguistic and organizational skills as well as the social bonds and networks, which facilitate different forms of political participation (Campbell 2006). Also on a societal level, *constraints referring to ingrained stereotypes* like gender roles and racist prejudices, which undermine equal opportunities by denying certain social groups the ability to comprehend political processes in the first place, must be addressed and finally transcended. While these recommendations might seem imprecise and maybe even random, it appears crucial to also tackle the key problem of social inequality and its sources – i.e. the determinants and mechanisms of stratification themselves –instead of just addressing the effects, that is: the topic of unequal participation.

As soon as these primary barriers are removed, policy makers should turn to the promotion of both new and old forms of activism. One step in this direction would be to *strengthen established and create new modes of participation, deliberation and autonomy*, especially for adolescents, in as many areas of everyday life (school, workplace, family, peer groups, leisure activities, etc.) as possible (Roth 2011). In a new “wave of democracy”, elements of co-and self-determination have to be invigorated broadly, above all in neighborhoods and communities, in order to render participation not the exception but the rule, the “normal condition” of social practices. In order to prepare people for their role as participants, the *expansion of civic education programs* and the *constant monitoring of these programs* are proposed (Schlozman et al. 2012). Maybe the most important condition of this proposal is to guarantee that all members of society are targeted by these programs already at an early age. In practice, this means to start civic education programs already at compulsory school age and finish basic training at about the age of fifteen. So far, policy makers throughout Europe seem to ignore this fact as civic education is mainly taught at the upper-secondary level (ECPSA 2010).

The final issue I want raise here is to discuss the role *new information and communication technologies* (ICTs) can take in equalizing participation. Is the internet capable of diminishing the stratification patterns in political activism? Although I cannot

present the whole plethora of literature currently evolving in this area of study here, I daresay that the state of the art seems to be divided: while studies for the US seem to be sceptical (e.g. Best/Krueger 2005, Krueger 2006, Oser et al. 2013), some European studies indicate some degree of „equalization“, at least in socio-economic terms, through the use of ICTs in political participation (Gibson et al. 2005 for the UK, Anduiza et al. 2010 for Spain). At the moment it appears too early to draw final conclusions about the relationship between online activism and participatory in/equality. First studies, however, give hope to the internet enthusiast and advise the student of participation to follow up the current debate.

7.3 TRACING OUT A RESEARCH AGENDA

To conclude this dissertation, I want to briefly say some words about what the focus of research should be in the future. The major goal of my analyses was to go back to square one and understand and describe in detail the nature of participatory in/equality (What is it? Why is it a problem? How can it be measured? Is there in/equality, to what level and in which types and forms of participation?). I chose this approach because, when going through the current state of research on the topic of participatory in/equality, I felt that most recently scholars have hastily turned to answering the “why”-question while answers to the more important “what”-question, which should be the starting point of any further analysis, were still widely lacking. Inequality is more than just a difference in participation levels between income quintiles or persons with various educational degrees. It is a complex and constantly contested structuring principle of society, and both the complexity and controversies have to be considered before any further considerations or analyses can be conducted.

Out of these general thoughts also arise the desiderata for future research in the field. As the “what”-question has now been treated extensively, scholars should now turn to answering the question, *why participatory in/equality arises* in the first place. What are the conditions promoting the emergence of stratification patterns in political activism? Existing studies give hints to factors that could be responsible for different aspects of participatory inequality:

- 1) At the macro-level, institutional aspects like the electoral law or the voting and/or party system as well as societal, historical and cultural aspects such as demographic development, gendered organizational structures, the national political culture or traditional role models or stereotypes inscribed to the collective memory of an nation or group might serve as explanatory factors for unequal participation;
- 2) At the meso-level, explanations could focus on party- or movement-specific recruitment practices and the topic of mobilization in general as well as the social capital approach highlighting the role of networks and intermediary organizations for political activity.
- 3) At the micro-level, approaches scrutinizing the effects of (political) socialization, political efficacy, interest and motivation, or trust in actors and institutions might refine the descriptive findings of this study.

Additional to asking the “why”-question, a deeper understanding of *how being a member of a socially disadvantaged group translates into* specific patterns of activism that, after ample consideration, must be regarded as *participatory inequality* is needed. While it seems common sense in the social sciences that quantitative methods are better suited to explain social phenomena, their in-depth description is more a strength of a qualitative approach. Recently, some seminal studies have investigated political participation of the poor in Germany (Klatt/Walter 2011) and of immigrants in Belgium (Le Texier 2006), both with a focus on urban districts characterized by a high share of either unemployed and/or welfare-dependent people or a comparatively numerous immigrant population. Although this qualitative approach to investigating participatory in/equality still receives only scant attention, future studies will have to make use of techniques like interviews, focus group discussions and the like in order to deepen our knowledge of the different approaches to participation of various social groups.

In sum, it seems necessary to broaden our idea of what we treat as forms of participation and how we conceive participatory in/equality in order to find meaningful explanations and possible remedies for the phenomenon using the quantitative analyses that are so dominant in the field. Additionally, it will be essential to expand the applied methodological strategies by qualitative techniques in order to transcend the purely explanatory and correlational approach of statistics and gather more in-depth knowledge and understanding. Only if we consider social science research as an ever incomplete process that can merely

capture its object from multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives, we can achieve scientific progress.

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ABSTRACT

English:

In this dissertation I study participatory in/equality, loosely defined as the relationship between political participation and social stratification, in the context of a shift in civic activism with the goal of answering the question: How is participatory in/equality shaped given the recent changes in political action repertoires? To this end, I deal with three specific research tasks.

A first conceptual task aims to understand which kind of changes can be observed in the field of political participation. Differentiating between constant and variable elements of participation, I find indications of a diversification of political action repertoires with declining demand for institutionalized forms of participation and increasing demand for non-institutionalized.

A second, theoretical task of this dissertation is directed at answering the questions (a) why participatory in/equality should be considered problematic/necessary for democratic decision-making and (b) how participatory in/equality can be assessed adequately in empirical studies. Drawing on three approaches in democratic theory (democratic elitism, participationism, proceduralist pluralism), I find that only the latter, which regards equal participation as representativeness of interests, fulfils the necessary preconditions of a normative justification of participatory equality. If equal consideration of interests is the goal, the genesis of interests is the key to comprehend how in/equality can be assessed empirically. With reference to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, I conceptually link interests to social group belonging and conclude that only theories of stratification can help us measure participatory in/equality. Consequently, I present three contemporary approaches that guide the further analyses: new class models, intersectional models, and socio-cultural (milieu) models.

In order to cope with a third, empirical task asking whether – and if so, which kind of – participatory in/equality exists in the different types and forms of participation, I apply these stratification models to political participation research. I find that inequality plays a role in political activism regardless of which model of stratification is used as the basis of the empirical analyses. In particular, especially institutionalized forms of activism like voting, contacting, party and other organizational work seem to be affected by a person's group membership, if – and this is an important condition and constriction – class or intersectional models are used as the basis of societal stratification. To the contrary, if a socio-cultural model to stratification is chosen, non-institutionalized forms of activism like wearing campaign badges or stickers, signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts exhibit a higher degree of social (i.e. participatory) inequality.

In conclusion of this dissertation, I broaden the view on the topic by giving some hints at other research areas located at the intersection of politics and society dealing with what I label the “inequality problem”. Furthermore, I devote some space to the discussion of potential remedies to this problem as provided in the literature before I finally derive from this discussion an agenda for future research in the field.

Deutsch:

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht partizipatorische Un-/Gleichheit, frei definiert als die Beziehung zwischen politischer Partizipation und sozialer Stratifikation, im Kontext eines alterierenden bürgerlichen Aktivismus. Dabei soll folgende Frage beantwortet werden: Wie gestaltet sich partizipatorische Un-/Gleichheit angesichts der jüngsten Veränderungen politischer Handlungsrepertoires? Zu diesem Zweck behandle ich drei spezifische Forschungsaufgaben.

Eine erste, konzeptuelle Aufgabe lautet, ein besseres Verständnis dafür zu entwickeln, welche Art von Veränderungen im Bereich der politischen Partizipation beobachtet werden können. Differenziert man zwischen konstanten und variablen Elementen der Beteiligung, so findet man Hinweise auf eine Diversifizierung politischer Handlungsrepertoires mit einer sinkenden Nachfrage nach institutionalisierten und einer steigenden Nachfrage nach nicht-institutionalisierten Partizipationsformen.

Eine zweite, theoretische Aufgabe dieser Dissertation ist die Beantwortung der Fragen (a) warum partizipatorische Un-/Gleichheit überhaupt als problematisch/notwendig für demokratische Entscheidungsfindung gelten soll und (b) wie partizipatorische Un-/Gleichheit adäquat in empirischen Studien erfasst werden kann. In der Analyse dreier demokratietheoretischer Zugänge – demokratischer Elitismus, Partizipationismus, prozeduralistischer Pluralismus – zeigt sich, dass nur der letztgenannte Zugang, der gleiche Partizipation als Repräsentativität von Interessen betrachtet, in der Lage ist, eine normative Rechtfertigung partizipatorischer Gleichheit zu liefern. Wenn gleiche Berücksichtigung von Interessen das Ziel ist, so ist die Entstehung von Interessen der Schlüssel dazu zu verstehen, wie Un-/Gleichheit empirisch erfasst werden kann. Mit Referenz auf Pierre Bourdieus Habituskonzept werden deshalb Interessen konzeptuell mit sozialer Gruppenzugehörigkeit verknüpft – mit der Schlussfolgerung, dass nur Theorien sozialer Stratifikation zur Messung partizipatorischer Un-/Gleichheit beitragen können. Folglich werden drei zeitgenössische Ansätze präsentiert, welche die weiteren Analysen anleiten: Neue Klassenmodelle, intersektionale Modelle und soziokulturelle (Milieu-)Modelle.

Um eine dritte, empirische Aufgabe entlang der Frage, ob – und falls ja, welche Art von – partizipatorische(r) Un-/Gleichheit in den verschiedenen Typen und Formen von Beteiligung existiert, bearbeiten zu können, werden diese Stratifikationsmodelle schließlich auf die politische Partizipationsforschung angewandt. Es stellt sich heraus, dass Ungleichheit im politischen Aktivismus relevant ist, und zwar unabhängig davon, welches Stratifikationsmodell als Basis der empirischen Berechnungen verwendet wird. Im Detail scheinen vor allem institutionalisierte Formen der Beteiligung wie das Wählen, die Kontaktaufnahme mit PolitikerInnen, sowie die Mitarbeit in Parteien und anderen politischen Organisationen mit der sozialen Gruppenzugehörigkeit einer Person in Zusammenhang zu stehen. Dies allerdings nur unter der Voraussetzung, und das bedeutet eine wesentliche Einschränkung des Befundes, wenn Klassen- oder intersektionale Modelle als Basis von Stratifikation gedacht werden. Im Unterschied dazu zeichnen sich, bei Anwendung eines soziokulturellen Stratifikationsmodells, vor allem nicht-institutionalisierte Formen des Aktivismus wie das Tragen von Abzeichen, das Unterzeichnen von Petitionen, der Besuch von Demonstrationen und die Teilnahme an Boykotten durch einen höheren Grad an partizipatorischer Ungleichheit aus.

Zum Abschluss der vorliegenden Dissertation erweitere ich noch einmal die Perspektive auf das Thema der Arbeit, indem ich einige Hinweise auf andere Forschungsbereiche an der Schnittstelle zwischen Politik und Gesellschaft gebe, die sich mit dem Phänomen, das ich als „Ungleichheitsproblem“ bezeichnen möchte, beschäftigen. Außerdem räume ich auch der Diskussion potenzieller Lösungen des Problems etwas Platz ein, bevor ich schließlich von dieser Diskussion eine zukünftige Forschungsagenda ableite.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Mag. Florian Walter

Born on 25.10.1978 in Wels, Austria
Department of Political Science, University of Vienna
Universitätsstraße 7/2; A-1010 Vienna
A-1010 Wien
florian.walter@univie.ac.at
<http://inex.univie.ac.at/members/florian-walter/>

Current position

Researcher and lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Vienna
Member of the research group *INEX - The Politics of Inclusion & Exclusion*

Research interests

Empirical study of democracy (participation & representation), contemporary democratic theory, theories of social in/equality, methods of the social sciences (quantitative and qualitative)

Education

- 2005 – Doctorate (Dr. phil.) in political science, University of Vienna,
Supervisors: Sieglinde Rosenberger, Gilg Seeber
Thesis: "A Part or Apart. Participatory In/equality within Changing
Political Action Repertoires" (expected graduation: February 2014)
- 1998 – 2005 Diploma (Mag. phil.) in political science, University of Vienna,
Supervisor: Sieglinde Rosenberger
Thesis: „Determinants and Effects of Turnout Decline. A
Longitudinal Analysis of Municipal Elections in Vienna, 1954-2001“
(graduated with distinction)

Professional experience

- 02/2013 – Researcher, Project „GIVING VOICE – Inclusion via Political
Parties“, funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and
Research (BMWF), Research program *Sparkling Science*
- 01/2012 – 01/2013 Freelance social scientist and lecturer, e.g. at the Danube-University
Krems and the University of Innsbruck
- 09/2011 – 12/2011 Researcher, Project „SOM – Support and Opposition to Migration“,
funded by the European Commission, 7th framework program (FP7)

09/2009 – 09/2011	Researcher, Project „GLO-PART – Young participation in glo-cal politics“, funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF), Research program <i>Sparkling Science</i>
03/2009 – 06/2009	Research visit at the University of Hamburg, Germany
03/2007 – 01/2009	Researcher, Project „Participatory Elites? (In)Equality of Political Participation in Austria“, funded by the Jubiläumsfonds of the Austrian National Bank
09/2005 – 02/2007	Researcher, Project „Political Participation and Education in Austria“, as part of the network <i>SOL - The Social Outcomes of Learning</i> coordinated by the OECD/CERI, funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK)

Grants and scholarships

2008	Short-term grant abroad (KWA), awarded by the University of Vienna
2008	Grant awarded by the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) for participation in the “ECPR Summer School for Methods and Techniques” in Ljubljana
2003	Academic excellence scholarship, awarded by the University of Vienna

Additional qualifications

2008	<i>Multiple Regression Analysis</i> , workshop at the ECPR Summer School in Methods and Techniques in Ljubljana, 30.7-16.8.2008
2007	<i>Triangulation of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods</i> , workshop organized by the Graduate Center of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Vienna, 11.-13.9.2007
	<i>Social Network Analysis</i> , workshop organized by the Graduate Center of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Vienna, 10.-12.4.2007
2007 – 2008	<i>SOQUA – Sozialwissenschaftliche Berufsqualifizierung</i> , training course organized by SORA – Institute for Social Research and Consulting, ZSI – Center for Social Innovation and FORBA - Working Life Research Centre

Recent publications

2013	Challenging the Boundaries of Democratic Inclusion? Young People`s Attitudes about the Distribution of Voting Rights / Florian Walter; Sieglinde Rosenberger;
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- Aleksandra Ptaszyńska, in: *Citizenship Studies*
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- 2007 Skilled Voices? Reflections on Political Participation and Education in Austria / Florian Walter; Sieglinde Rosenberger, OECD Education Working Paper, Paris.
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