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1 Introduction

As the first lines of this master's thesis are written, women make up 25.4% of parliamentarians worldwide (IPU 2021). While these averages of the percentage vary regionally – with Europe and the Americas at the top of the list (30% plus), and the Middle East and North Africa as laggards (17.7%) – this also means that the world's legislatures are still mostly dominated by men, and thus shaped by male interests, viewpoints, and experiences.

On normative grounds, given their share in the population, this systematic underrepresentation of women in politics speaks, first and foremost, against a notion of fairness. But what is more, it also challenges the 'democratic ideal of equal governmental responsiveness' (Verba et al. 1997: 1053). After all, in representative democracies, Members of Parliament (MPs) *should* be committed to 'the will of the people', thereby lending legitimacy to the political system (e.g., O'Brien & Piscopo 2019). And indeed, there is evidence that the presence of women in politics bolsters citizens' democratic satisfaction (Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler 2005).

Based on this normative argument, and particularly since Hanna Pitkin's (1967) seminal work *The Concept of Representation*, research has surged on the impact of the (numerical) presence of women in politics and now constitutes a distinct field of study (see O'Brien & Piscopo 2019 for a profound overview over the vast amount of theoretical contributions, their applications and empirical results). Most of this literature focuses on the link between *descriptive* representation, i.e. the similarity between representatives and the represented, and *substantive* representation, i.e. acting on behalf of those represented. This prioritization possibly reflects on the one hand, the importance Pitkin herself gave to substantive representation as ideal-typical responsive principal-agent relationship, in which the constituents are 'logically prior' (Pitkin 1967: 140), and on the other, the simple operationalizability of descriptive representation due to the high visibility of the composition of any legislature (Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler 2005).

This body of work generally posits a positive relationship between women's presence in politics and female politicians acting for, read: in the interest of, their female constituents.

While there are many studies which confirm this hypothesis (e.g., Bratton & Ray 2002; Celis 2006; Franceschet & Piscopo 2008; Kittilson 2008; Piscopo 2011; Swers 2005; Xydias 2007), others (e.g., Tremblay & Pelletier 2000) call the mechanism of MP's gender into question, finding little evidence for said relationship (see also Childs & Krook 2006 for a critique of its often-assumed universality).

That being said, any study on descriptive or substantive representation should consider parties' influence on both types of representation (O'Brien 2018). At the same time, extant literature on party politics has mostly regarded parties as unitary actors, and thus remained silent about the role of individual parliamentarians in the policy formation process (see Greene & O'Brien 2016). Those who do focus their analysis on representatives' policy preferences contend that party affiliation trumps gender. However, *within* parties, differences between female and male MPs seem to matter (e.g., Campbell et al. 2009; Lovenduski & Norris 2003; but see Espírito-Santo et al. 2020 for a recent contribution on the circumstances under which descriptive representation shapes policy representation).

In addition to those competing accounts mentioned above, research is also inconclusive about the reasons why female parliamentarians are more likely to represent women. While some attribute the gap to common or shared experiences due to gender identity (e.g., Mansbridge 1999), others bring in mechanisms of *sidelining* or *marginalization* by male politicians (e.g., Heath et al. 2005; Rincker 2009), or *mandate* effects, i.e. the perceived obligation to represent women (e.g., Franceschet & Piscopo 2008).

Furthermore, scholars have only recently begun to question the nature of the proposed link between women's presence in politics and their acting upon female voters (Celis & Childs 2014; Childs 2006; Childs & Krook 2009; Piscopo 2011). They argue that, rather than being straightforward or linear, it is 'complicated, mediated, and probabilistic' (Celis & Childs 2014: 3). Thereby, researchers not only point to the fallacy of equating only feminist (progressive) agency with substantive representation, they also call the notion of a specific threshold within

the ‘critical mass theory’ (Childs & Krook 2006)¹ into question. Indeed, the somewhat inherent notion of universal *women’s interests* did spark a vivid debate in the literature, which largely disagrees on what can be considered in the interest of women and whether these interests can be defined *a priori* (e.g., Beckwith 2014; Celis et al. 2014; Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2014; Schwindt-Bayer & Taylor Robinson 2011 for an overview). When it comes to the often-assumed linear impact of descriptive representation, authors stress that there is no automatic change, and that this view neglects individual actors who already (successfully) advocate for women as a group (Childs & Krook 2006, 2009; Dahlerup 2006). In sum, Gender & Politics scholars have produced a wide array of important theoretical and empirical contributions. What unites them is, ironically, their incongruence.

In generically asking how the presence of women in parliament influences the parliamentary issue agenda, I hope to bridge these different accounts within the scope of this thesis. In doing so, I seek to highlight that the different theoretical assumptions and empirical findings need not be mutually exclusive and that many of them could be merged into a coherent whole, once the historical perspective of women’s entry and gaining a foothold in politics is accounted for. To the best of my knowledge, this would be the first study of women’s evolution in parliament, spanning a time frame of more than 60 years (but for related work on party families see O’Brien 2018; on gender-inclusive language see Stecker et al. 2021).

Set out to bridge diverging assumptions and empirical results of the field, the thesis is structured as follows: First, the next section provides a brief literature review, in which the most important theoretical contributions on the representation of women are summarized, discusses the theoretical mechanism I establish behind women’s evolution in politics, and presents its underlying hypotheses. The research design, including case and data selection as well as the operationalization of variables, used to analyze whether the posited hypotheses hold, is described in the subsequent section. Eventually, section four reports empirical findings, before I close with concluding remarks and possible avenues for future research.

¹ Childs & Krook (2006: 523) are explicit in their use of the term to refer to a considerable amount of literature ‘that distorts the work of Kanter and Dahlerup but—through strong consistencies across accounts—plays a central role in structuring research on women and politics.’

2 Women As a Constituency, Their Descriptive and Substantive Representation

Although women are a very heterogenous group with diverse experiences and perspectives – they differ along the lines of e.g., religiosity, motherhood, stage in the life course, ideology, class, sexuality, ethnicity, marriage, experiences of assault or crime, saliency of their gender, etc. (see Celis et al. 2014; Dovi 2007; Reingold 2000: 48, but see also e.g. Hancock 2007 on *intersectionality*) –, their lives are nonetheless subject to similar structuring forces which entail similar consequences. As Beckwith (2014: 20) puts it: ‘Women’s lives are constructed in specific instances by political, economic, and social arrangements that (1) shape their life histories and life opinions, and (2) differ substantially from the shaping forces and trajectories of men’s lives.’ While this does not mean, as already said, that all women are the same, it demonstrates that the commonality among women as a group results from their life trajectories being utterly different from those of men, and more importantly, that these are deeply embedded in power relations. Not surprisingly, then, have scholars sought to capture this underlying notion of women’s interests (however defined, but see below), albeit often in an essentialist or deterministic fashion (Celis et al. 2014; Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2014 for a brief introduction).

Now, if those shared experiences were to find a political voice, human agency and deliberation is required. This is what Pitkin conceived of as substantive representation, that is, ‘acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them’ (Pitkin 1967: 209). Whereas one can certainly argue that any one legislator is equally apt to represent certain group interests responsively, several authors have made a good case for the significance of descriptive representation, i.e. the similarity on socio-structural characteristics, in that regard. 160 years ago, Mill (2011: 47) already asserted that ‘[...] in the absence of its natural defenders, the interest of the excluded is always in danger of being overlooked; and, when looked at, is seen with very different eyes from those of the persons whom it directly concerns.’ Similarly, Philipps (1995: 44) holds that in the implementation of policy, for omitted and under-represented groups it is of particular importance who acts in their name. Dovi (2007: 309) recapitulates the *overlooked interests* argument quite nicely: ‘[...] male representatives are not

always aware of how public policies affect female citizens.’ This is also why Mansbridge (1999: 641) calls for the inclusion of ‘shared experience imperfectly captured by descriptive representation’.

2.1 Representation as a Process of Rendering and Claims-Making

Yet, what Mansbridge (ibid.) already implies with her assertion that overlooked interests are only *imperfectly* captured by descriptive representation, is that there is a potential fallacy in assuming that because representatives e.g., look like me, they must have had and lived through similar or the same experiences as I did. In a similar vein, scholarly critique has been voiced that scrutinizes early theoretical and methodological conceptions of both descriptive and substantive representation. Central to this is, first and foremost, Franceschet & Piscopo’s (2008) distinction of substantive representation as a twofold concept, which needs to be understood as a process, as well as an outcome. The first primarily refers to agenda-setting, whereas the latter captures successful policy implementation or statutory change. In the words of Beckwith (2014: 33, emphasis in the original) the difference lies in ‘*representing* [...] or *securing* interests.’ Now, in response to Saward’s (2010) *The Representative Claim*, political scientists have increasingly viewed substantive representation, rather than numbers of bills passed, as a *deliberative process*, in which group interests are depicted and contested (e.g., Celis et al. 2014). Acting on behalf of a constituency thus involves ‘speaking about them’ (Saward 2010: 49). In a similar vein, a rethinking of descriptive representation, rather than the sheer number of female legislators, as rendering or performing substantive representation, that is, the arguments and information about the group brought forward (Piscopo 2011), can be located within the representative claims paradigm. Both specifications are important because they theoretically allow a diverse set of actors to undertake representation for a certain group and, moreover, help to overcome the (too narrow) notion of an exact reflection of traits between the representative and the represented (Celis et al. 2014; Piscopo 2011). Additionally, as Fernandes et al. (2021) highlight, the field lacks systematic theoretical and empirical studies on MPs’ characteristics and the use of legislative debates as channels of group agency. Nonetheless, because female representatives, by virtue of their gendered life experiences, are more or less aware of interests

that are of particular relevance to women as a group, I hold that female MPs should be more likely to make claims on behalf of their female constituency than their male counterparts.

H1: Female representatives are more likely than male representatives to make claims on behalf of women as a group.

2.2 Feminizing the Political Agenda²: From Token Women to Game Changers

As already mentioned, under certain circumstances, the significance of descriptive representation is even more pronounced and ‘its effects are most likely to be felt in the agenda-setting phase of the policy-making process’ (Greene & O’Brien 2016: 440). Inferring from the overlooked interests argument, women’s presence in politics should be particularly important for previously unarticulated group concerns. This is to say that, when issues are not (fully) crystallized – that is, (relatively) new on the agenda, not yet part of MPs’ public position, and not yet an organizing principle of parties’ policy proposals (Mansbridge 1999; Philipps 1995) – ‘being one of us’ (Mansbridge 1999: 629) can improve substantive representation through deliberation (see also Espírito-Santo et al. 2020). To be more precise, because women’s interests have not yet found their way into parties’ programmatic agenda, individual female parliamentarians have more leeway in their acting upon their constituency.

But which women will articulate those uncrystallized interests in legislative debates? To answer this question, conceiving of representation as a process of rendering and claims-making is yet again helpful in order to draw attention away from a vague gender-proxied notion of representation, as it instead places the role of certain *critical actors* (Childs & Krook 2009) at the center of analysis. Kanter’s (1977) work is seminal on this score. Although her assumptions and observations are based on a corporate setting, her work soon inspired political scientists to apply its assumptions on group interactions to political organizations (e.g., Thomas 1991 for an early adaption).

² See Childs (2006: 9) for a related differentiation between the feminization of the political agenda (process) and the feminization of legislation (outcome).

In her article, Kanter (1977) distinguishes four types of groups, which vary in their setup of ‘salient external master statuses such as sex, race, or ethnicity’³ (pp. 966) and therefore matter for our understanding of proportions and representation: uniform, skewed, tilted and balanced groups. In describing the particular makeup of these types of groups, Kanter’s characterization departs from *uniform* groups in which one hegemonic social type can be found that dominates the group and its culture. Uniform groups become *skewed* in settings where there are some members with other social characteristics, which Kanter (1977: 966) labels ‘tokens’, ‘because they are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals.’ In employing the term ‘token’ Kanter was explicit, as the word illustrates not only their rarity and newness, but also their highly visible ascribed features – such as *woman*-politician for example. When tokens begin to make up the minority⁴ among the dominant majority, Kanter refers to *tilted* groups. In *balanced* scenarios, eventually, these different subgroups can but need not evolve.

But what kind of behavior can now be expected from *new* members of another social type? When it comes to group members’ response to their token status, Kanter argues that, due to their increased visibility, tokens would, amongst others, attempt to lessen their differences with the dominant group. Yet, in taking this point further, Bratton (2005) develops a competing argument for political settings: Because female representatives purposefully find themselves serving in national assemblies, their being perceived as ‘representatives of their category’ should, in fact, encourage them to pursue making expert claims on behalf of women as a group (see also Yoder 1991 for a critique of Kanter’s mechanisms). In the words of Childs & Krook (2006, 2009), token women would then be those critical actors, who are particularly motivated to deliberate on ‘women-friendly’ (Childs & Krook 2006: 528) policy, even if they have

³ In saying ‘master status’, I interpret Kanter (1977: 966) as referring to the most salient of one’s social characteristics, not to the dominant status *within* a social type, given that she herself discusses the homogeneity of groups with respect to a certain external master status. Yet, aside from definitional considerations in theory, it is indeed quite difficult to imagine a situation in which the dominant status of a uniform group, is not in itself hegemonic in practice.

⁴ The difference between tokens and minority might not be very clear. Kanter (1977: 966) differentiates *skewed* (tokens) and *tilted* (minority) groups mainly based on the ratio of ‘dominants’ and those of another type within those two groups, which is 85:15 and 65:35 respectively. In this vein, we could think of tokens as very rare exemplary types (as mentioned in the main text), while minority members begin to blend in with the dominant majority and lose their high visibility (compare pp. 8 below; and Kanter 1977: 968).

minority status. They can do so on their own, that is, irrespective of the number of female MPs, or jointly promote common interests (Childs & Krook 2006, 2009).

Applied to the composition of parliaments, women's early presence in legislatures should represent a *skewed* setting, in which female MPs constitute the absolute exception from the norm of male dominance. It is then those token female MPs, as representatives of their category, who articulate and therefore bring uncrystallized and previously overlooked group interests onto the political agenda. At that time, the male-breadwinner model should have been the dominant form of societal organization, leaving most women out of the workforce (and thus politics), whilst caring and housekeeping at home.

In contrast to this period, which some would (nostalgically) label the 'golden-age' of the welfare state (Orloff 2009), politics has become more progressive in the decades following the political movements and transformations of the 1960s and 1970s (Abou-Chadi et al. 2021). Crucial to this restructuring which postindustrial welfare states underwent, Inglehart & Norris (2003) argue, was a cultural shift. To be more precise, in adapting Inglehart's (e.g., 1997) earlier *modernization theory*, Inglehart & Norris (2003) posit that conditions of increased economic security have fostered post-materialist values – that is, quality-of-life concerns, such as autonomy and self-expression, political participation, equality, the environment, etc. – among the citizenry, given that social protection was already in place. The decades after 1970 thus not only saw vast economic and political changes, they also gave rise to a broader endorsement of gender equality issues in the private, but particularly in the public sphere. On that note, Hien (2014) holds that moving away from the old care regime, i.e. the male-breadwinner model, has led to party feminization strategies in most European welfare states. The presence of women in elected office has therefore been increasing in most postindustrial countries and does not constitute the exception from the rule anymore. In interpreting Kanter (1977: 968), this means that women have lost their token status, given that '[...] their presence is taken for granted in the group or organization and incorporated into the dominant culture [...]']'.

Unlike what *critical mass theory* (in misinterpretation of Dahlerup 1988, see Childs & Krook 2006; Dahlerup 2006) claims, this line of thought invokes that culture rather than a sheer change in numbers might have modified the substantive representation of women (even though

it is empirically difficult to distinguish). Although alternations to the gender balance obviously play a central role, this does not imply that there is an automatic change once the share of female MPs rises above a certain threshold. How, then, do changes in the gender-balance in parliaments or within political parties alter the substantive representation of women?

Ennsner-Jedenastik (2017) shows that higher intra-group diversity within parliamentary parties significantly mediates the link between female legislators and their representation of women's interests. As the ratio of female and male parliamentarians within a political party becomes more balanced, female MPs less likely promote, what he calls 'stereotypically female issues' (pp. 216). In a similar vein, Espírito-Santo et al. (2020) find gendered policy specialization is depressed when women's interests are part of parties' policy stances and thus crystallized. In asking why female legislators might be less likely to promote policy of relevance to women, Franceschet & Piscopo (2008) stress potential label effects of (quota-mandated) representation. The authors illustrate that some women in parliament might shy away from women-friendly claims-making and rather prefer to represent a broader set of policy areas, because they fear their (mandated) presence would entail lack of respect, misogynistic characterization, or marginalization. However, scholars also account for the possibility that an increase in the descriptive representation of women might as well lead to spill-over effects on male MPs, affecting them to make claims on behalf on women as they become aware and learn about the significance of women's gendered experiences through their female colleagues (see e.g., Bratton 2005; Dahlerup 1988; Thomas 1991). Only recently, Höhmann (2020) empirically studied the conditions, under which women's presence in parliament permeates the legislative behavior of their male counterparts. However, contrasting earlier results, his findings reveal that, as the gender balance becomes more equal, male legislators decrease their propensity to act on behalf of women as a group, and rather leave the field to their female colleagues. Yet, he also shows that if male MPs address women's interests, they do so in a 'neutral', non-feminist, direction.

Summing up, I argue that the normalization of women's presence in legislatures – conditioned by societal modernization and cultural change – should represent a *tilted* setting, in which female MPs lose their token status and become incorporated into the dominant culture.

Thus, accounting for these possible alternation effects of a shift in women's presence, I expect that, compared to skewed legislative arenas, the relationship between representatives' gender and their policy representation should be less clear-cut, once female parliamentarians are incorporated into the dominant male culture and organization.

H2: The gender gap in claims-making on behalf of women as a group is smaller in a tilted than in a skewed legislative arena.

2.3 The Definition of Women's Interests: Which Women's Interests?

In an attempt to parsimoniously grasp MPs' 'acting for' a female constituency theoretically and methodologically, scholarly work has repeatedly resorted to using the concept of women's interests, as the literature review hitherto also reveals. Yet, as already mentioned, the definition and measurement of women's interests did spark a vivid debate among scholars and has, in receiving much attention from recent literature accounts, probably become a field of research on its own.

However, in order to elaborate on the different definitional efforts, another conceptual distinction is worthwhile at this point. It pertains to interests, issues and preferences, which are often used interchangeably to denominate the substantive representation of women. Beckwith (2014) distinguishes interests, which emanate from gender cleavages and social power relations, and are of basal nature, from issues and preferences. The former derive from interests and are part of strategic mobilization and organization practices, as well as policy-making, and thus 'more specific, immediate, and limited.' (Beckwith 2014: 24) The latter, in turn, concern the specific position on an issue. In the following, I will thus employ these similar terms carefully in their distinctiveness.

In studying women's interests, early scholars have referred to topics revolving around women's relegation to the 'private' or 'personal' sphere (e.g., Diamond & Hartsock 1981; Sapiro 1981). Consequent literature has since often treated interests such as e.g., suffrage, marriage, maternity, childcare, reproductive rights or freedom from violence as women's

interests (Beckwith 2014; Celis & Childs 2014; Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson 2014; Reingold 2000; Swers 2002). While these in fact illustrate how women's lives were and are structured and shaped by the division of labor into productive and reproductive work, this definition misses other important aspects of women's gendered trajectories. Therefore, another strand of literature studies for example women's interests as partakers of the workforce (Beckwith 2014; Celis & Childs 2014; Celis et al. 2014), or women's opportunities to change the status quo, enhance their own status and raise their autonomy (Bratton 2005; Celis et al. 2014, Reingold 2000; Schwindt-Bayer 2006). Other work again conceives of women's interests as social policy more broadly (see e.g., Enns-Jedenastik 2017), or analyzes a vast array of policy areas covering interests as diverse as the economy or religion (Dingler et al. 2018). All these conceptions have in common that they construe women's interests as given.

However, scholars have increasingly begun to question whether defining women's interests *a priori* is at all possible (see Celis & Childs 2014; Celis et al. 2014; Schwindt-Bayer & Taylor-Robinson 2011). As Reingold and Swers (2011) argue, in exogenously determining what women's interests are, researchers risk being too exclusive in their analysis and tend to overshadow that the emergence of women's interests is in itself an intensely political process. In asking which women's interests, Smooth (2011) takes this point even further and shows how intersecting identities diffuse what is conventionally understood as women's interests. In a similar vein, Celis et al. (2014) demonstrate that inductively classifying interests of relevance to women unearths a wide array of topics, which otherwise would have been missed: e.g., pensions, migration, media, sports, mobility, taxation, academia, war, and housing.

In addition to questioning an *a priori* existence of women's interests, another strand of research has begun to challenge the assumption manifest in many studies on the topic that women's interests need to be feminist in order to count as (good) substantive representation. That way, scholars point to the surge of conservative female MPs in many of the world's assemblies (e.g., Celis & Childs 2014, see also O'Brien 2018), who also claim to represent women as a group – albeit seemingly not in line with second-wave demands⁵. Scholars thus

⁵ *Second-wave feminism* refers to a movement of the 1960s, which aimed at achieving gender equality and overcoming the systemic subordination of women, i.e. patriarchy (e.g., Buchanan 2018).

stress that broadening the definition of women's interests to include conservative women or actors, opens up the analysis to consider that 'even' non- and anti-feminist⁶ utterances can be understood as acting on behalf of women (e.g., Celis & Childs 2012).

This brief summary of the rich literature on women's interests reveals that, yet again, the field remains inconclusive, as what constitutes women's interests remains up for debate. But, how can researchers then approach the study of women's substantive representation, if *a priori* classifications of women's interests prove unfruitful?

Celis and colleagues suggest that women's substantive representation can be approached through statements which are either voiced as (1) directly important to women, or (2) being of concern only to women as women, (3) involve gender differences or (4) effects, or (5) treat matters of gender equality (Celis & Childs 2014; Celis et al. 2014). Moreover, scholars can relatively safely deductively distinguish *non-feminist* from *feminist* preferences⁷: in essence, egalitarian positions, which aspire to transform the hegemonic-male status-quo are construed as feminist, whereas non-feminist preferences are regarded as resulting from and reinforcing traditional and stereotyped gender roles, albeit sometimes alleviating women's status within given boundaries (Celis & Childs 2014; Childs & Krook 2006; O'Brien & Piscopo 2019; Piscopo 2014). The difference between both types can be demonstrated, if one takes the case of abortion for example: if representatives were to consider abortion as an issue relevant to women, preferences could either include *pro-choice* or *pro-life*. While the former seeks to maintain personal choice and thereby enhances women's status as individuals (feminist), the latter sees women mainly as relational subjects and thus reproduces prevalent gender norms (non-feminist). Nonetheless, both are inherently women's issues.

Having now laid out extant definitions of women's interests, I again seek to argue that they can be bridged, if the historical perspective of women's early presence and gaining a

⁶ Deliberation can be considered as anti-feminist, if it 'explicitly contests feminist representative claims' (Celis & Childs 2012: 220)

⁷ While the literature generally distinguishes feminist and *gendered* claims (see e.g., O'Brien & Piscopo 2019; Childs & Krook 2006), I will treat them as feminist and non-feminist claims for the sake of clarity, given that readers might be confused with the term 'gendered' as a means to otherwise describe differences between women and men in every day words.

foothold in politics is accounted for. For the period of women's early presence, I thus posit that, in light of the predominance of the male-breadwinner model in many welfare states after World War II, parliamentarians will indeed articulate interests, which result from women's experiences as mothers, caregivers and housewives (see Dackweiler 2010; Leitner 2003; Orloff 2009). Moreover, because social values were not yet challenged, I assume that preferences on those issues will be non-feminist. In contrast, given the societal and political transformations from the 1970s onwards I outlined above, I expect that representatives in tilted legislative arenas broaden their interest representation to include a vast array of women's life experiences.

H3: In skewed legislative arenas, claims on behalf of women as a group more likely revolve around traditional and stereotypical gender roles. By contrast, in tilted legislative arenas, the content of claims on behalf of women as a group is more diverse.

H4: In skewed legislative arenas, claims on behalf of women as a group more likely promote non-feminist preferences than in tilted legislative arenas.

2.4 The Role of Political Parties: Ideology & Issue Ownership

Of course, in parliamentary democracies, legislators are not autonomous actors. They are instead constrained by the ideological profile and discipline enforced by their party. Hence, '[...] any account of women's descriptive or substantive representation must consider [parties'] influence' (O'Brien 2018: 29). Likewise, party politics scholars might gain from including intra-party diversity in their analysis of issue entrepreneurship and agenda-setting processes (Greene & O'Brien 2016).

Literature in this vein has generally assumed that the *extent* of women's descriptive and substantive representation can be ascribed to ideological differences between parties. However, as right-wing or conservative parties have begun to broaden their appeal by feminizing their caucus, and to actively engage in gender discourse (e.g., Celis & Childs 2014; Kantola & Saari 2014), this assumption does no longer seem to hold. Instead, scholars claim, ideological

differences now manifest themselves in the *content* of representative claims. To be precise, the framing of representative claims on matters of relevance to women is now posited to clearly correspond to party ideology. In this respect, the literature generally agrees that left parties more likely promote gender egalitarianism, whereas right parties tend to embrace traditional gender norms (see e.g., Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Caul 2010; Xydias 2013). In a comparative longitudinal study, O'Brien (2018) finds that 'radical' feminist claims are only addressed by communist or green parties (with liberals and social democrats trailing behind on this front). On the other hand, her results show that conservative parties, more than any other party family, champion women's traditional caring role.

Yet, the argument of a crystallization of interests, that is their (relative) newness on the agenda, as well as their absence from the public positioning of politicians and from parties' policy stances, would suggest another potential mechanism for the influence party ideology likely exerts on preference formation (see also Espírito-Santo et al. 2020): as long as interests are not part of parties' policy profile, representatives will voice their preferences independently – which might not always correspond to the general ideological direction of their party.

In line with the theoretical framework I put forth within this thesis, I again posit that these different accounts need not be mutually exclusive, if we were to consider the historical perspective. For the period of women's early presence I thus hold that, given female MPs' relative newness to the legislative arena, interests are not yet crystallized, i.e. they are not yet part of legislators' public position, and not yet an organizing principle of parties' policy proposals. Therefore, parties do not have a clear stance on them, which allows female MPs of different parties to address issues pertaining to those interests. On the other hand, with the normalization of women's presence, parties should have organized around these interests. The content of those claims should then clearly correspond to parties' ideological profile.

H5: Left parties more likely promote feminist preferences. This effect should be stronger in tilted than in skewed legislative arenas.

In a similar vein, the crystallization mechanism provides the rationale for another aspect of party competition: issue ownership. Conditional on the crystallization of women's interests with which they become one of the organizing principles of parties' policy proposals (see Espírito-Santo et al. 2020), the content of women's substantive representation should also correspond to parties' issue ownership.

The theory of issue ownership claims that parties' issue emphasis is strategically put on those policy areas, where their long-term attention to and performance on an issue has generated a reputation of competence (Budge & Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996; but see Walgrave et al. 2012 for a distinction between associative and competence issue ownership). This reputation of competence generally follows the left-right dimension. That is to say that left parties have a history of emphasizing issues such as social security, health, care, and the environment, while right parties are believed to own policy areas such as law and order, the European Union (EU), the economy, as well as asylum and integration (Seeberg 2017). Moreover, issue ownership can not only be aligned along the left-right dimension, but scholars have also found that individual party families have strategically emphasized different policy areas, which they are now assumed to own (e.g., Meyer & Müller 2013). In that regard, social democratic parties are typically deemed competent on welfare issues (Blomqvist & Green-Pedersen 2004). On the other hand, the Greens are known for their handling of the environment issue, while conservative parties tend to focus on economic policy and the EU (Wagner & Meyer 2014). Finally, issues such as law and order, as well as immigration are usually found among the radical right (Smith 2010; Wagner & Meyer 2014).

Following this line of thought, I thus posit that, once women's interests are crystallized and therefore accommodated in parties' ideologies, representatives will deliberate on issues of relevance to women as a group with respect to the issue ownership of their party. For example, in claiming to represent their female constituency, social democratic parties should therefore highlight the role of the welfare state in structuring and/or alleviating women's lived experiences. On the other hand, radical right parties will position themselves as protectors of 'national' women, who need to be 'saved' from a paternalistic culture, which they claim is

(exclusively) imported through immigration (e.g., Sauer 2020; as well as Farris 2017: 4, who coined the term '*femonationalism*').

H6: In tilted legislative arenas, claims on behalf of women are framed by parties' issue ownership, whereas this is less the case in skewed legislative arenas.

3 Research Design

3.1 Data & Case Selection

To test how the presence of women in parliament influences the parliamentary issue agenda, I take advantage of the novel 'Every single word' data set (Kroeber & Remschel 2020), which comprises the entire written parliamentary communication issued by the German Bundestag between 1949 and 2017⁸. Document types available range from requests to bills or proposals, while eligible authors of the respective parliamentary material vary from individual MPs to committees, or the government as well as ministries (for a detailed description see Remschel & Kroeber 2020).

Since the purpose of this thesis is to look at the behavior of individual representatives as well as at legislative debates as channels of group agency (see Fernandes et al. 2021 above), I analyze all types of requests (hereinafter parliamentary questions or PQs) submitted by individual MPs to the German government⁹. Parliamentary questions are a viable data source to study the substantive representation of women by individual representatives for several reasons: First, PQs are less constrained by party discipline (Fernandes et al. 2021; Höhmann 2020), lending legislators relative freedom in their selection and positioning on issues (Proksch & Slapin 2015). Moreover, parliamentary questions are, amongst others, employed as a low-cost means to demonstrate the recognition and advocacy of interests which are of importance

⁸ Data selection is due to data availability reasons. The data in use is indeed, to the best of my knowledge, the only accessible data set which covers such a long time span.

⁹ Remschel & Kroeber (2020) list the following types of requests included in their data set to be among those that can be tabled by individual parliamentarians: requests (*Anfrage, Interpellation*; only in the first legislative period), written requests (*Schriftliche Fragen*), urgent requests (*Dringliche Fragen*) and requests for the question time (*Fragen für die Fragestunde*).

to constituents (Fernandes et al. 2021; Wiberg & Koura 1994). Given that PQs attract more media attention than e.g., speeches (Wiberg & Koura 1994), their higher visibility additionally serves as a cue to the represented that their interests are acknowledged (Fernandes et al. 2021). This in turn, eventually, might additionally incentivize parliamentarians to act on behalf of their constituency to garner votes and enhance re-election prospects (e.g., Bailer 2011).

Germany is an interesting case to study how responsive legislators are to their electorate, given its prototypical (Manow 2007) mixed electoral system. In German elections about half of the representatives of the Bundestag are elected via party lists, whereas the other half enters parliament through a relative majority of direct votes in single-member districts. The latter are found to increase re-election prospects, as does a position on both lists (Manow 2007). Once in parliament, MPs are bound in their legislative activity by the standing orders of the German Bundestag. Individual representatives are allowed to table a maximum of four written questions per month and two requests for question time in oral form (Höhmnn & Sieberer 2020). Questions can be separated in two sub-questions each and need to be submitted to the president of the German Bundestag before each plenary week (Deutscher Bundestag 2021a). In their content, these questions need to be concise, as well as factual in their assertions, and make a short answer possible (ibid.). Urgent requests, in contrast, need not be submitted as early: the parliamentary president should have received them by noon the day before the plenary (Ismayr 2012: 333). With regard to the tabling of requests, Höhmnn & Sieberer (2020) note that, while it is indeed the individual legislator who submits a question, factions often intervene in the coordination and strategy of PQs.

Furthermore, Germany presents a rather typical case when it comes to the descriptive representation of women in European legislatures (e.g., The World Bank 2021 for a comparison from 1997-2019): since 1949 the percentage of female representatives has been increasing steadily – except for the legislative periods starting in 1969 and 1972 – and has reached 30% plus from 1998 onwards (see Table A 1¹⁰ in the Appendix for a detailed overview). Moreover, the variation in the make-up of representatives corresponds to previous findings on party

¹⁰ See Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2017).

families (e.g., O'Brien 2018): while the Greens and the Left made their debut in parliament with around 36% and 47% of female MPs respectively, the CDU/CSU as well as the FDP have failed to achieve 30% since their entry in the Bundestag, and the SPD has begun to steadily increase their share of women within their party by the early 80s (see Table A 2¹¹ in the Appendix for a complete list).

To account for the specifics of the German standing orders aforementioned, Kroeber & Remschel (2020) provide a separate reshaped data set, in which parliamentary questions were split per author and text unit where needed. This reshaped version of the data set contains more than 200,000 observations and includes information on the document running number (*Drucksache*)¹², document type and the full text of the PQ, as well as its addressee and issue date (along with the respective legislative period), the name of the legislator submitting the question, an answer to the question (where available) and a unique identifier for each MP. The identifier enables researchers to merge the *Every single word* data set with information on representatives' characteristics, such as e.g., gender, party affiliation or offices held, published by Bergmann et al. (2018a). However, the combination of both data sets reduces the period of observation to 17 (instead of 18) legislative periods, because data collection of the *MP Characteristics* data set includes information on its 3,588 individuals 'only' between 1949 and 2013 (for a detailed description of variables and coding see Bergmann et al. 2018b). The final data to be used comprises – after an initial cleaning procedure (removal of duplicates) – 205,646 observations¹³.

¹¹ See Feldkamp & Sommer (2003); since 13th legislative period see Deutscher Bundestag (2006a, b, c) if it deviates from previous source. For election years 2005 and 2009 see Deutscher Bundestag (2006d) and Deutscher Bundestag (2019).

¹² The document running number is assigned to parliamentary material debated by the German Bundestag and consists of the election period and a continuous unique identifier (e.g., 17/1234; see Deutscher Bundestag 2021b) with which it can be found and accessed via the website of the Bundestag (<https://dip.bundestag.de/>).

¹³ Within these 205,646 observations there are around 64% written requests, 35.5% requests for the question time and 0.5% urgent requests.

3.2 Operationalization

3.2.1 Dependent Variables

Representative Claim. To measure whether representatives act on behalf of their female constituency, I gauge their ‘speaking about them’ (cp. Saward 2010 above). As aforementioned, in construing women’s interests as given, researchers might risk being too exclusive in their analysis and might miss or overshadow certain identities or gendered trajectories. This is why, for the purpose of this thesis, I seek to classify women’s substantive representation in an inductive approach. To do this, I first hand-code a stratified random¹⁴ sample of 1,000 observations to assess whether MPs speak about women’s interests (1) or not (0). In evaluating this claims-making, I slightly adapt the classification by Celis and colleagues (Celis & Childs 2014; Celis et al. 2014) mentioned above. In order to count as substantive representation, the content of the respective PQ must either (a) address women directly, (b) revolve around women’s gendered experiences, (c) entail policy effects which affect women significantly more than men¹⁵, (d) involve gender differences, or (e) treat matters of gender equality.¹⁶

Given the large N of the data, not all 205,646 observations can be hand-coded, which is why I subsequently rely on automated text analysis and the statistical software R ^{17,18}. In a next step, I thus specify keywords for a dictionary-based approach relying on the hand-coded sample of 1,000 observations. Parliamentary questions are coded as representative claims if they feature at least one of the specified keywords. The results of this automated approach are then compared against my hand-coded results, and keywords are refined in several iterations, to identify false negatives, but more importantly, false positives. While a first dictionary identifies 9.9%

¹⁴ The stratified random sample includes 500 random observations for each type of legislative arena (skewed/tilted; fictional split at 1980)

¹⁵ Note that these PQs could generally be phrased for both genders or neither gender, while from the topic voiced in the PQ it is apparent that effects are disproportionately felt by women (e.g., part-time work, unpaid or paid care work and its conditions, etc.).

¹⁶ To give a brief example: in this first training sample topics such as e.g., child rearing, widows, lone parenting, gender budgeting, gender equality, equal pay, violence, taxes, alimony, abortion or employment were identified as substantive representation of women.

¹⁷ The *quanteda*-package allows to tokenize a text corpus, set words to lowercase, remove punctuation and language-specific stopwords from the text corpus, which makes the search for keywords, particularly in the German language, easier.

¹⁸ Höhmann (2020) uses a similar approach to measure the substantive representation of women.

(compared to 3.8% hand-coded) of those 1,000 PQs as representative claim, a refined version on the same training sample finds 4.5% and reduces the amount of false positives quite drastically. This revised dictionary¹⁹ is then used on another stratified random sample of 1,000 observations, but this time I only review positive results manually. Again, the automated approach tags too many positives (7.5%), whereas I classify 2.4% of those as claims-making on behalf of women. Identifying false positives and negatives and hence adapting the dictionary once again yields a ratio of 3.2% positive PQs, when applied to this second random sample of 1,000 cases. For the next revisions of the dictionary, due to time constraints, I restrict the identification of false positives to two subsets of those representative claims (coded as 1) the dictionary identified in the full data set (a total of 3.2% representative claims in the whole data set) of 100 observations each. This process reveals that the dictionary correctly identifies 70% of the representative claims on the first subsample of 100; another adaption of the dictionary and a search on the second set of 100 random representative claims yields 77% correct instances of substantive representation. A subsequent refinement of the dictionary reduces the percentage of representative claims in the entire data set to ~2.9%. A final revision of the dictionary is eventually achieved through a manual coding of a subset of 2,000 representative claims, which I use to test hypotheses 3-6 (see below). While keeping those observations I already manually coded to be representative claims set to 1, the final dictionary²⁰ finds 5,471 representative claims out of 205,646 parliamentary questions, which equals a rate of ~2.7%. The resulting dependent variable thus indicates (0) other parliamentary questions and (1) questions as representative claims.

As aforementioned, I hand-code a stratified random subsample of 2,000 representative claims to identify topics mentioned as well as their direction²¹. To do this, I record the main topic of the respective parliamentary question, specifying subtopics where necessary. Note however, that, given the specifics of the Bundestag's standing orders, most of these PQs are

¹⁹ Note that at this step I still keep keywords I deem too important to already be excluded as this stage, in order to not miss any cases, which might falsely be classified as negatives. This might explain the larger discrepancy between the automated and hand-coded approach.

²⁰ For a list of final keywords and the removal of certain strings, see Table A 3 in the Appendix.

²¹ These 2,000 observations are blind-coded, i.e. based solely on the text of the PQ (e.g., gender or party of MP not shown during the coding process).

rather short (one-sentence questions) and of rather technical nature (often referring to specific laws or amendments). In line with Celis et al. (2014), this inductive approach unearths quite a broad range of topics including e.g., the military, housing, employment, transportation, sports or migration, instead of the conventional classification of women's interests stereotyping their experiences and trajectories²².

Stereotypical. To assess, if and how representatives nonetheless talk about stereotypical women's interests, I review the topics coded and classify them as (0) non-stereotypical or (1) stereotypical. Stereotypical interests are those which result from women's experiences as mothers, caregivers and housewives. A classic example of a stereotypical claim are e.g., PQs which stress policies for family support, or which revolve around the provision of childcare. While in some cases, the classification is rather straightforward, there are others in which the differentiation is not as clear-cut. To give an example, I counted abortion as stereotypical interest if the legislator articulates claims focusing on the protection of unborn children as a more salient issue than abortion itself, but not if the PQ is centred on reproductive rights, i.e., if it is about the use of a certain abortion drug for example. Moreover, I code childcare issues as stereotypical interest, even if the direction of the representative claim would count as feminist (e.g., alleviating the care burden), since preferences are measured separately (see below). Accounting for this specification, also policies on widows or the work life balance are coded as stereotypical women's interests. Non-stereotypical representative claims involve e.g., the employment of women, women in sports or the military, women in executive positions, gender medicine, violence against women, or women in arrest.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of stereotypical issues over the more than 60 years covered in the data. While quite high at the beginning at around 80% of all issues (mainly revolving around widows and child benefit), there was a substantial drop in the 1960s and subsequent increase in the early seventies. After the mid-seventies, in contrast, stereotypical women's issues seem to be part of the deal ranging between 50% to 60% of all issues addressed within representative claims-making on behalf of women, yet not as exclusively as before. Note,

²² For an aggregated overview of topics coded, see Table A 4 in the Appendix.

however, that a higher share of stereotypical women's issues might not only reflect an inclination to view women's interests as being those of mothers, caregivers or housewives, but also a referring to these issues to change or ameliorate the status quo. This is to say that the issue might be stereotypical, but preferences could be feminist. These descriptive results allow a first tentative confirmation of Hypothesis 3 but need of course to hold in a multivariate model.

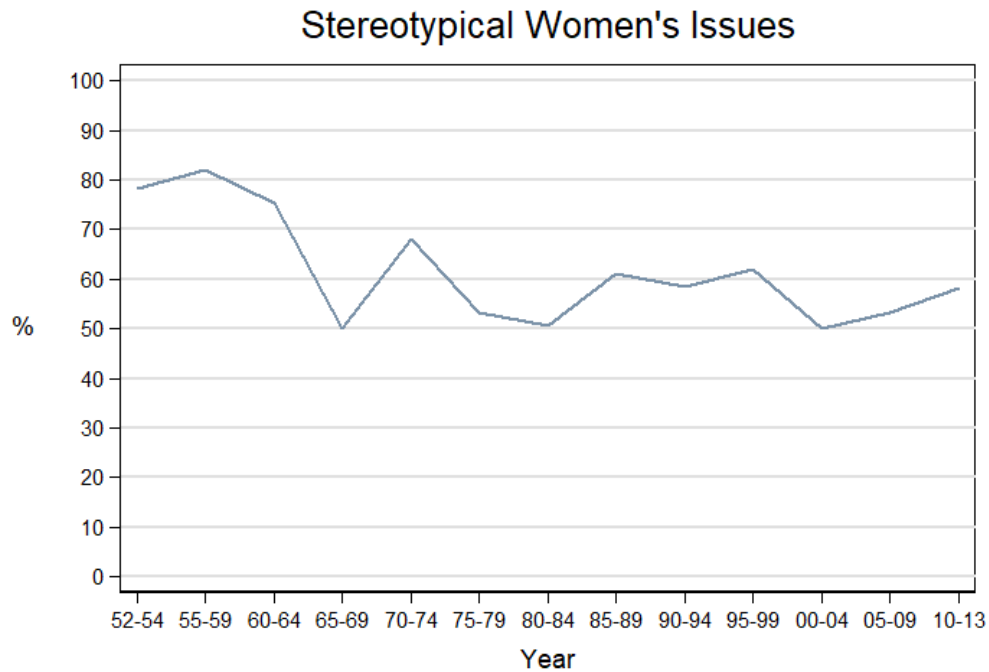


Figure 1: Percent of Stereotypical Issues out of Total Issues Addressed over Time
Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

Feminist Preference. To account for the directionality of representative claims, I document whether parliamentarians utter (0) anti-feminist, (1) non-feminist or (2) feminist preferences. In line with the literature (Celis & Childs 2014; Childs & Krook 2006; O'Brien & Piscopo 2019; Piscopo 2014; see also Höhmann 2020), I define egalitarian positions, which aspire to transform the hegemonic-male status-quo as feminist claims, while anti-feminist preferences are considered to occur, if they aim to explicitly contest feminist claims (e.g., restricting women's rights). Moreover, I view deliberation which does not seek to overcome given boundaries – even though sometimes easing women's status –, as well as claims not clearly

identifiable as either the former or the latter as non-feminist or neutral²³. Yet again, a classification in either category is not unproblematic. As already mentioned, PQs are usually not longer than a sentence, which leaves more room for semantic interpretation, given that oftentimes questions simply are what they are, and MPs do not seek to frame them in any direction. While some of them include several subordinated clauses, which might ease interpretation, it is not always clear, whether representatives are e.g., cynical or sarcastic in their arguing, allowing lots of leeway for coding errors²⁴. Given that coding mistakes such as classifying a PQ of e.g., a Green MP as anti-feminist would be rather severe, a trained coder was familiarized with the coding scheme and double-coded a small random subsample of 100 representative claims. The inter-coder reliability is $\alpha = 0.524$, probably owing to the nature of German parliamentary questions I described above. Therefore, results on preferences brought forward in this thesis need to be interpreted with caution.

Figure 2 displays how preferences on women's issues are distributed within the period of observation. As one would expect, representatives are mostly neutral on the issues they address. Both extremes are constantly below the share of non-feminist preferences. For the latter, a trend towards less neutrality is discernible (minus around 15% over time), even though percentages vary. While feminist preferences are increasing about 20% from 1952 to 2013 – with fluctuations and a sharp decline in the late 60s, anti-feminist utterances are steadily decreasing from the mid-seventies onwards. These descriptive findings might be an indication of a change in culture and values, but are at best speculative.

The dependent variable eventually used in the regression analyses results in values of (0) anti-feminist, (1) non-feminist/neutral, and (2) feminist.

²³ Non-feminist preferences in the data are voiced on issues such as e.g., women's or new-borns' health, maternity allowance, adoption, tax benefits for families or spouses, unemployment or pensions, just to name a few. An example for non-identifiable preferences, which are nonetheless coded as neutral, is the following PQ in which the MP asks the government about figures on couples on waiting lists for in vitro fertilization, who became pregnant naturally in the meantime: 'Liegen der Bundesregierung Zahlen darüber vor, wie viele Paare, die auf den Wartelisten für In-vitro-Befruchtung stehen, zwischenzeitlich auf natürlichem Wege schwanger geworden sind?' (see *Drucksache* 11/640)

²⁴ The variable thus also includes an 'other' category (99), which is treated as missing in the following analyses.

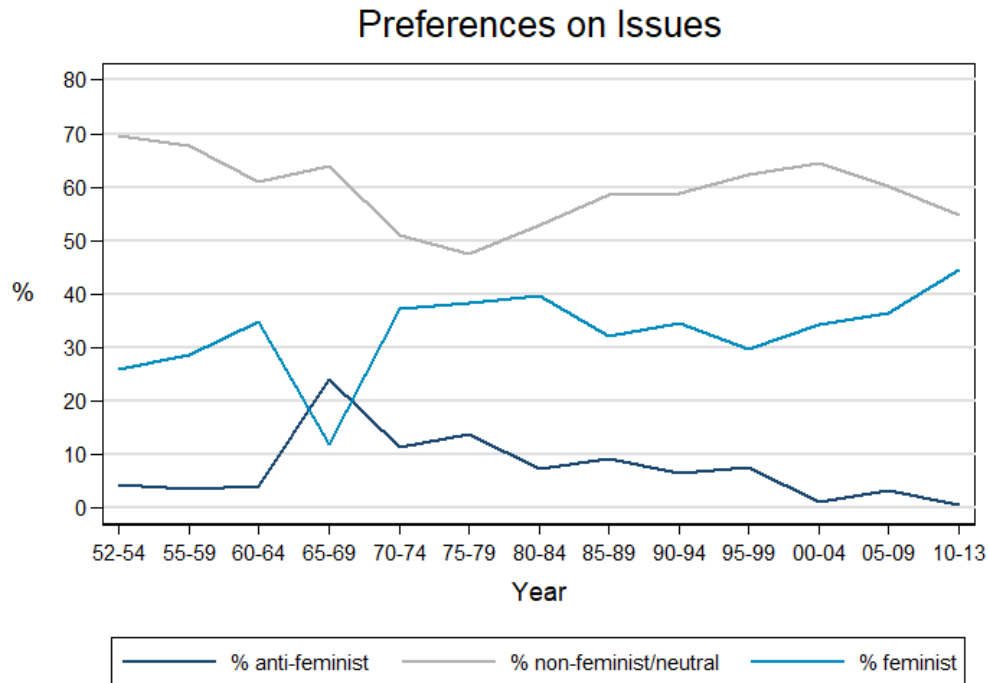


Figure 2: Percent Preferences on Issues over Time

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

Issue Ownership. The last dependent variable measures representatives' deliberation on issues of relevance to women with respect to the issue ownership of their party. To gauge issue ownership, I first match the issues I hand-coded with issue categories from the *Comparative Agendas Project* (CAP; Bevan 2019)²⁵. For every issue coded, up to three CAP major topics could be tagged. While the first tag is regarded as the main topic of the parliamentary question, tags two and three tap on topics which an exclusive one-issue coding would miss. For example, if the issue of a PQ stresses women's rights in deportations, CAP issue tag one would be 'Civil Rights', whereas the second issue tag captures that the representative claim is also about 'Immigration and Refugees'. Figures 3 and 4 present the share of the CAP issue categories coded in the data²⁶. Within CAP category one (main topic), social welfare is by far the policy area which is most appealed to by representatives with over 30% of all issues, followed by labor and employment topics (around 17%). At approximately 10% plus, issues such as civil rights,

²⁵ Issue categories for major topics and subtopics are made available via the master codebook of the *Comparative Agendas Project* (see Comparative Agendas Project 2015).

²⁶ Three issue categories were only coded for two observations in the data. Along with CAP tag one and two, health and immigration were recorded as third CAP tag each.

health, as well as law, crime and family are emphasized to a similar degree by the MPs. While the remaining policy areas also feature in representative claims-making, they do so only to a very marginal extent. The picture is a little bit different if we were to look at the second CAP category. Here, it becomes apparent that the respective main topic of the parliamentary question was most often accompanied by civil rights issues, while social welfare and health were also frequently tapped on by a PQ. Deliberation on women's issues dealt with immigration, labor and employment, or law, crime and family as secondary topic at roughly 10% or below, while other policy areas were again only marginally mentioned.

After matching the hand-coded issues with the CAP issue categories, I then generate a new variable to indicate whether an issue is owned by a party (1) or not (0), if at least one of the issue tags coded per PQ equals parties' emphasis on an issue they are viewed competent on. Based on the issues coded in the data set, Table 1 illustrates the issue ownership assigned to the parties²⁷.

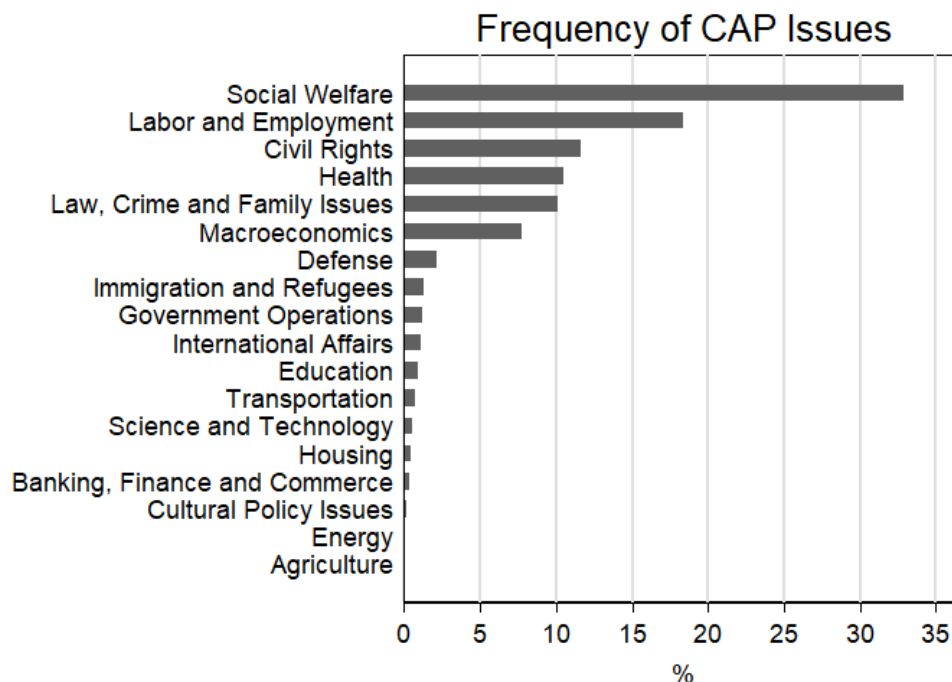
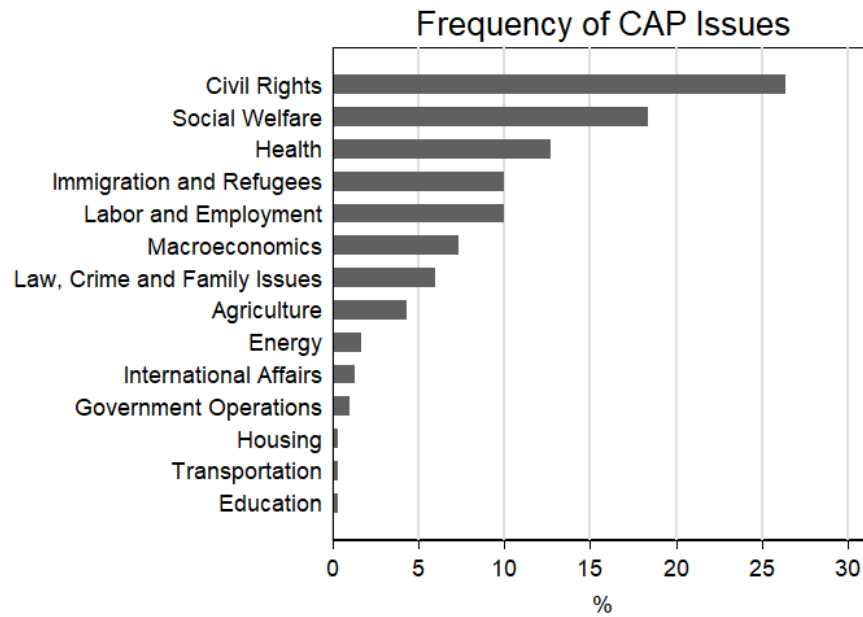


Figure 3: Frequency of CAP Issue 1

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

²⁷ Issue ownership was assigned according to information on issue emphasis of the German parties by Neundorff & Adams (2016), along with information presented in the literature review on issue ownership, as well as the authors own associative issue ownership.

**Figure 4:** Frequency of CAP Issue 2

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

Table 1: Issue Ownership assigned to the Parties

Issue	Issue Ownership		FDP	Greens	Linke/PDS
	CDU/CSU	SPD			
Macroeconomics			X		
Civil Rights				X	
Health		X			
Agriculture	X				
Labor and Employment		X			
Education					
Energy					
Immigration and Refugees					
Transportation					
Law, Crime and Family Issues	X				
Social Welfare		X			X
Housing					
Defense					
Banking, Finance and Dom. Commerce					
Space, Science, Techn. and Comm.					
International Affairs					
Government Operations					
Cultural Policy Issues					

3.2.2 Independent Variables & Controls

The inclusion of independent and control variables differs according to the respective hypothesis to be tested. In the following, I therefore specify for each variable to which hypothesis it applies and whether it serves as the main independent or as control variable²⁸. In short, however, the first two models test for the posited gender effect in claims-making on behalf of women, whereas model 5 looks at how ideology might affect preferences with time as a moderator. In contrast, hypotheses 3, 4 and 6 are underpinned by a mechanism, which postulates that time is the key independent variable.

Gender. Gender serves as the main independent variable in the first two models (full data set), while it is included as a control in models 3 to 6 (subsample of 2,000 representative claims). Table 2 displays the percentage of parliamentary questions tabled by gender: the vast majority of PQs are submitted by male representatives; female legislators only account for approximately 22% of all requests to the German government. Of course, the table is time-invariant; yet it reflects men's sheer overrepresentation in the Bundestag. Looking at the hand-coded subsample reveals that the share of female claim-makers is double the percentage of parliamentary questions posed by female MPs. Among the 2,000 representative claims in the subsample, women are responsible for about 44% of those claims made on behalf of their female constituency (see Table 3).

Table 2: Parliamentary Questions by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	46,075	22.41
Male	159,571	77.59

Note: Based on full data set, $N = 205,646$.

²⁸ Descriptive statistics on all variables for both sets of analyses are shown in Table A 5 and A 6 in the Appendix.

Table 3: Representative Claims by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	872	43.60
Male	1128	56.40

Note: Based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

Decade. To gauge whether there are differences in the content of substantive representation according to the type of legislative arena (*tilted* or *skewed*, see literature review above), the second main independent variable included in the models is a decade variable, ranging from 1950 to 2010, as a dummy for the first, third, fourth and sixth hypothesis and as an interaction term for hypothesis two and five. While the years until the beginning of the 1980s can be considered skewed, the eighties themselves are more or less a transition phase until the legislative arena becomes tilted in the 1990s.

Controls. In addition to the main independent variables, the models control for other potential explanatory factors of the posited relationships. First, I assume that older MPs, due to their socialization, hold more conservative beliefs than younger representatives and should thus be less likely to substantively represent women (Models 1 and 2), while being more likely to make stereotypical claims on behalf of women and to have non-feminist preferences on those issues (Models 3 to 6). Given that chances of women's substantive representation (Models 1 and 2) increase with the number of PQs each individual parliamentarian poses to the government (see Höhmann 2020), I control for MPs' legislative activity by counting the number of parliamentary questions per MP and term. Moreover, I hold that claims-making along with addressing stereotypical women's issues and the direction of preferences should be influenced by the parliamentary party (Models 1 to 4 and 6) the legislator belongs to (see O'Brien 2018). In general, left parties should be more inclined to make representative claims, voice less stereotypical issues and more feminist preferences. Model 5 uses a recoded nominal party variable, indicating whether it is a (0) right-wing or (1) left-wing party. The distribution of PQs per party is displayed in the first panel in Figure 5: the two mainstream parties SPD and CDU/CSU made the most requests in the 17 legislative periods covered by the data, with around 39% and 37% respectively, outpacing the FDP (~9%), the Greens (~9%) and the Left (~6%) by

far. This pattern is of course reflected in the subsample of 2,000 hand-coded representative claims (Figure 5, panel 2). Yet, the picture is a bit different: the gap between the SPD and the CDU/CSU augments by eight percentage points, and the FDP accounts for double the representative claims as do the Greens.

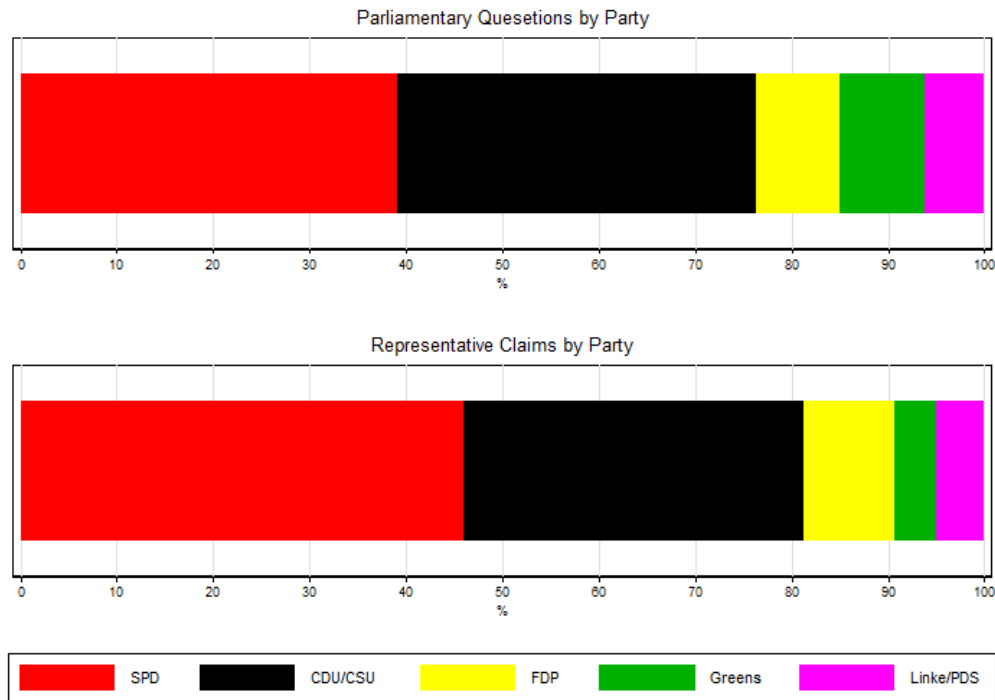


Figure 5: Percent of Parliamentary Questions and Representative Claims by Party

Note: Percentages in first panel based on $N = 205,646$, percentages in second panel based on subsample of $N = 2,000$.

Furthermore, I control for leadership positions such as committee (Model 1 and 2) or parliamentary party group (PPG) chair (Model 1, 2 and 6). Since re-election prospects and therefore incentives to act on behalf of a female constituency should differ according to the type of mandate (see above), I control whether MPs are elected via a list (0) or district (1) mandate in Models 1 and 2. In addition, I include an opposition variable (see Table A 7 in the Appendix on cabinets and governing parties) for Models 1, 2 and 6, indicating whether the party is in government (0) or not (1). With regard to the first two hypotheses, I expect that opposition parties should be more likely to descriptively represent women or have more incentives for substantive representation, while concerning the issue ownership hypothesis, legislators from a governing party should be more likely to highlight their party's achievements when 'questioning' their own ministers (compare Wiberg & Koura 1994: 30 on the rationale to table a request to own party ministers). Eventually, I assess whether women's descriptive

representation in the Bundestag (Model 1-4 and 6) or the PPG (Model 5) affects the amount and content of claims-making on behalf of women.

4 Analysis & Empirical Findings

4.1 Descriptive Results

So how does women's presence in parliament influence the issue agenda in plenary debates? Are female MPs more likely to substantively represent women? What difference does it make whether women in politics are *tokens* or whether their presence is taken for granted? And how do parties respond to women's entry and taking a foothold in the legislative realm? To answer these questions, I first present some bivariate findings before testing the hypotheses of this thesis in regression models.

4.1.1 Gender, Parties & Claims-Making

The first descriptive results already provide some interesting insights on the relationship between gender, parties and claims-making on behalf of women. While Table 2 has shown that male MPs tabled substantially more parliamentary questions and that women are responsible for only 20% of all requests during the period of observation, the gender gap in the substantive representation of women is striking (Figure 6). As *tokens* at a numerical presence of under 7%, female legislators indeed seem to take advantage of their perception as 'representatives of their category' in pursuing making expert claims on behalf of women as a group, thereby articulating and bringing uncrystallized and previously overlooked group interests onto the political agenda. Token women representatives devote around eight times more PQs to women's interests than male parliamentarians. Yet, after the first three years, a process of acclimation seems to take place as female MPs reduce their claims-making considerably. This percentage plateaus at a level of around 6% to 8%, mounts to above 10% in 1970 – as if female representatives would compensate their reduced presence in parliament –, and subsequently continues to fall as numbers of women in the Bundestag begin to take off. What is noteworthy is that the share of claims made by male legislators who dedicate their parliamentary activity to the substantive representation of women stays more or less constant over time. Contrasting some earlier

scholarly accounts which hold that men become aware and learn about the significance of women's gendered experiences through their female colleagues, this thus signifies that there are no spill-over effects on male MPs. Instead, it is likely that women's legislative behavior is permeated by those of their male colleagues and that female parliamentarians adapt to the masculine norms of their organization. Additionally, the figure contradicts some readings of the *critical mass* argument, since a modification of women's behavior within the assembly is discernible before their presence reaches the much acclaimed critical threshold of 30%.

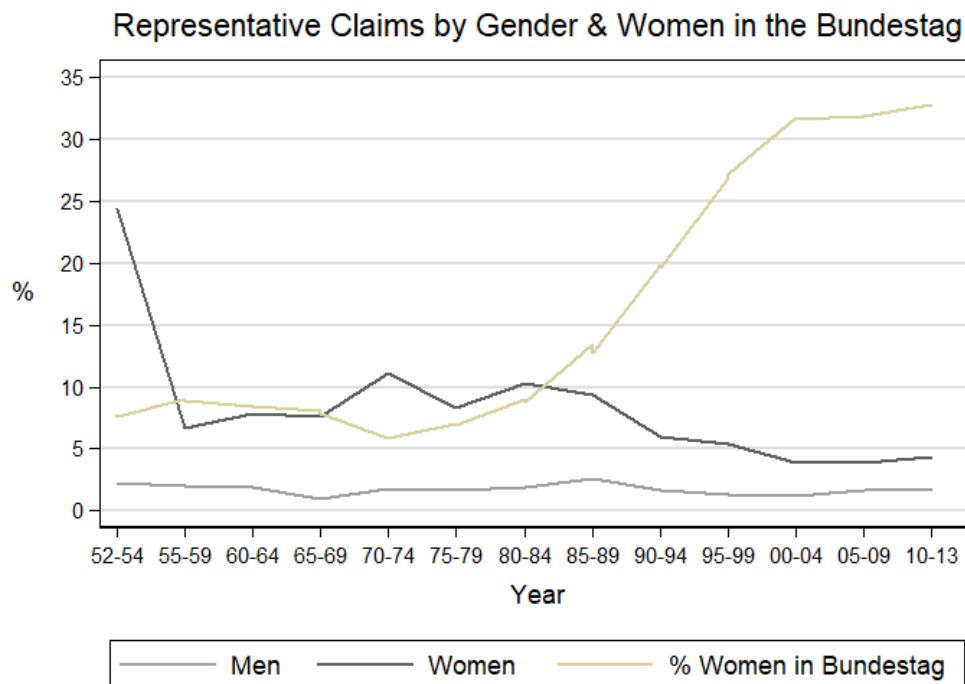


Figure 6: Percent of Representative Claims out of Total PQs by Gender and Percentage of Women in the Bundestag

Note: Percentages based on full data set, $N = 205,646$.

Next, it is worth taking a look at the claims-making of parties in relation to their general activity in the Bundestag (Figure 7). Panel 1 shows the share of parliamentary questions each party has tabled within a period of five years out of the total amount of requests in that same period, whereas panel 2 displays how many of those PQs per party addressed women's interests. Starting with the PQ panel, it, first of all, clearly reveals that requests are used as a measure to control and monitor the government: the share of parliamentary questions significantly de- and increases in relation to the government or opposition status of parties (compare to Table A 7 in the Appendix). The FDP's low percentage of PQs is likely attributable to its government

participation in most of the cabinets. However, one can clearly discern how the share of requests augments once the party is in opposition in the late nineties and early 2000s, while it is descending again with their involvement in the Merkel II cabinet. Moreover, it is apparent that MPs from the SPD (until 2000) and the CDU/CSU (until 2005) are constantly more active in their questioning the government than the other parties, irrespective of their government status. With regard to the activity in parliamentary questioning of the Greens and the Left, one can note that it only really starts to significantly increase at the beginning of the 2000s.

Yet, these figures become even more meaningful if we compare them to the distribution of the parties' claims-making: Although the SPD and the CDU/CSU table a lot more questions than the other parties, the percentage of those which are devoted to the substantive representation of women is approximately equal across parties. Conversely, this is to say that the Greens and the Left (at least until the turn of the millennium) dedicate a large(r) part of their work to the claims-making on behalf of women than any of the other parties, which is in line with previous findings.

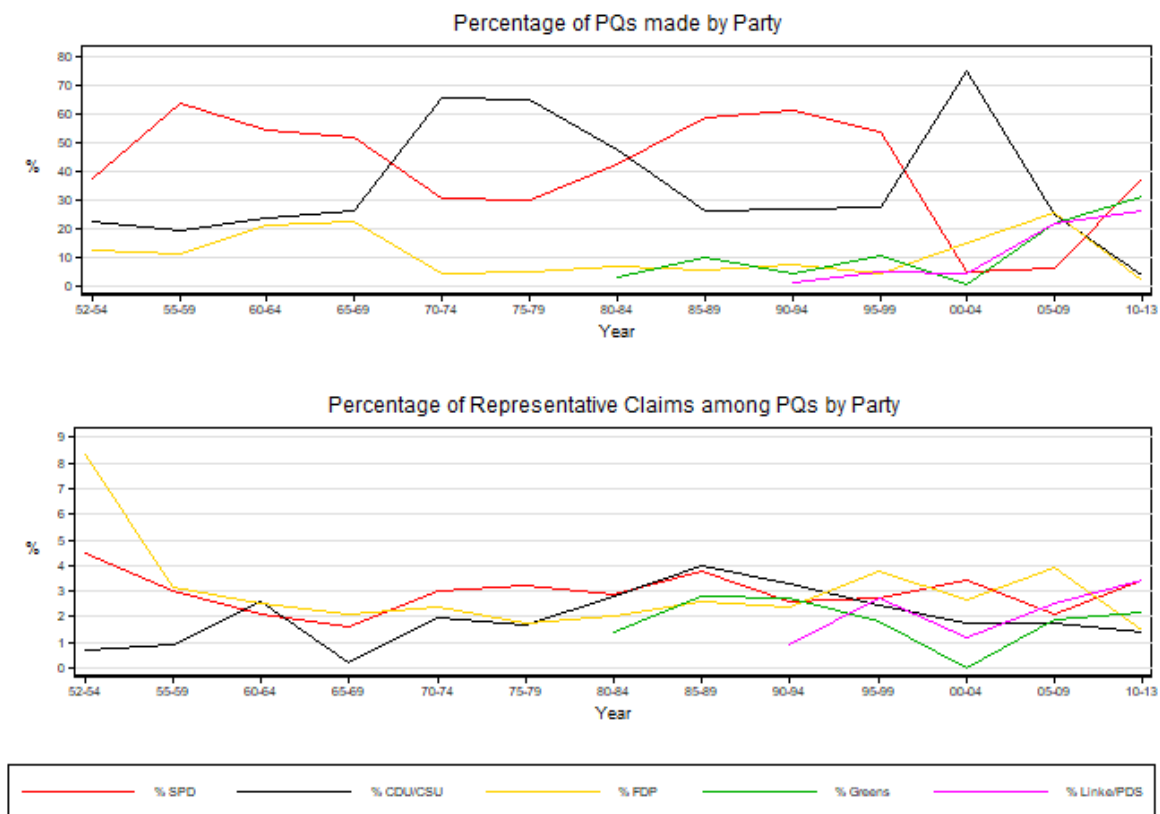


Figure 7: Percent of PQs vs. Percent of Representative Claims by Party

Note: Percentages based on full data set, $N = 205,646$.

4.1.2 Gender, Parties & the Content of Claims-Making: Issues and Preferences

Having laid out parliamentarians' devotion to claims-making on behalf of women in their legislative activity, what about the content of those claims? Figure 8 shows the same graph as in the section Research Design, only that this time the presence of women in the German assembly is plotted against it. Following the theoretical mechanism posited in this thesis, one would have expected that the amount of stereotypical issues shrinks with the normalization of women in parliament. The figure displays indeed a general reduction of stereotypical women's issues, yet their share in representative claims-making is still about half of all issues addressed. What is more, the first significant drop occurs already when women could still be considered *tokens* in the legislative realm. With the advance in women's presence thereafter, this score falls again and levels out at between 50% and 60%. As already said, it is likely that this higher percentage also reflects that stereotypical issues are brought up to change their status quo, i.e. with a feminist preference.

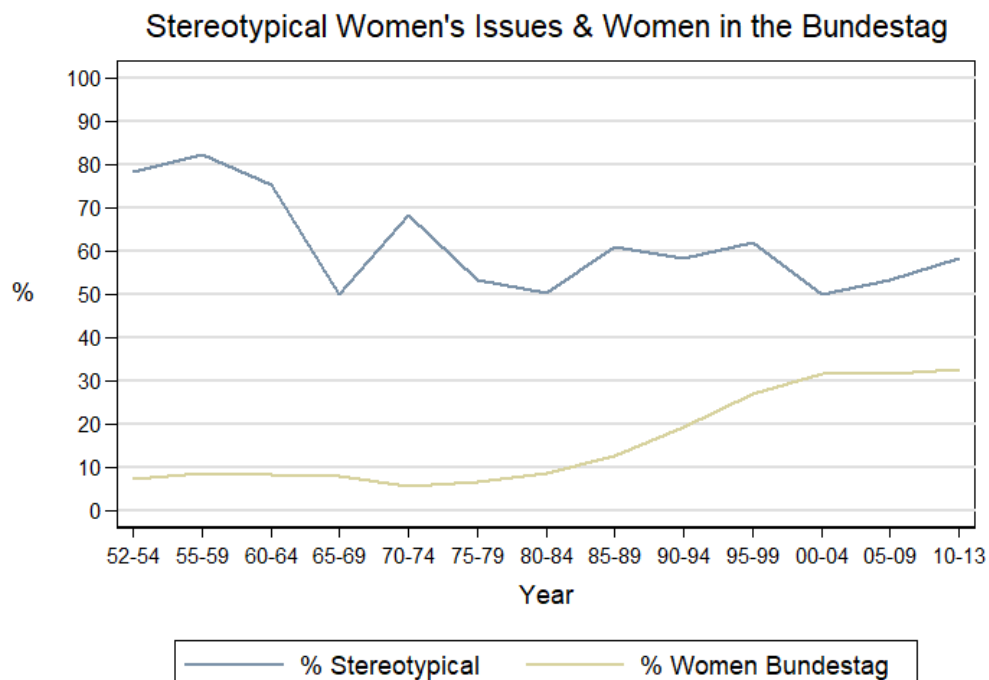


Figure 8: Percent of Stereotypical Women's Issues over Time and Percentage of Women in the Bundestag

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

The following graphs hence shed light on the preference distribution in women's issues. Although the hypotheses are posited irrespective of the gender of MPs, Figure 9 first outlines the preferences of female and male legislators. As one would expect, there is a profound gender effect to be noticed. Thus, male parliamentarians are approximately thrice as anti-feminist in their preferences as their female counterparts; conversely, women utter about 20% more feminist preferences than their male colleagues if they speak of women's interests. Furthermore, male delegates also voice more neutral preferences which might be due their not being aware of women's gendered experiences, and therefore not sure enough in their positioning.

The directionality of parties in their claims-making is displayed in Figure 10²⁹. One can clearly see that MPs of the CDU/CSU are the most anti-feminist and the least feminist in their preferences compared to the other parties in the Bundestag, which is not surprising given their promotion of the nuclear family. By contrast, the Greens are the only party which voices more feminist than neutral preferences. This is also in line with theoretical expectations, since the Greens are known to emphasize, amongst others, gender equality issues (e.g., Dolezal 2010) in their policymaking. Higher anti-feminist scores for the SPD and FDP might be owing to a time factor, inasmuch that the skewedness of the German legislative assembly with regard to the gender balance heavily contributed to a male organizational culture.

²⁹ Note that anti-feminist preferences for the Greens and the Left are most likely due to coding errors. As mentioned in the Research Design section, results on preferences need to be interpreted with caution, given the inter-coder reliability of $\alpha = 0.524$.

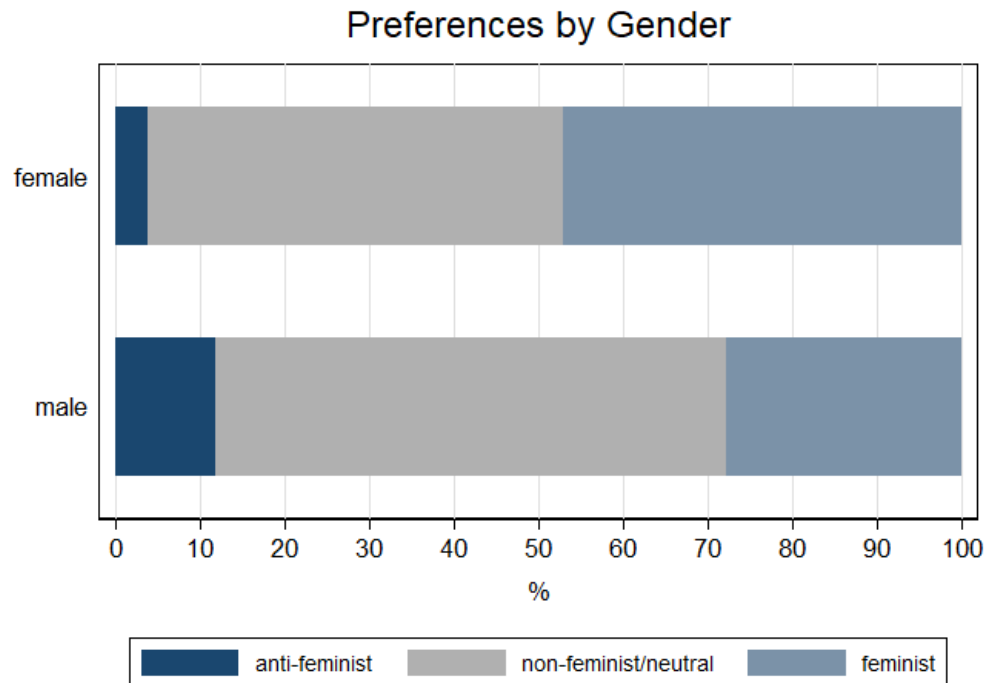


Figure 9: Percent of Preferences on Issues by Gender

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

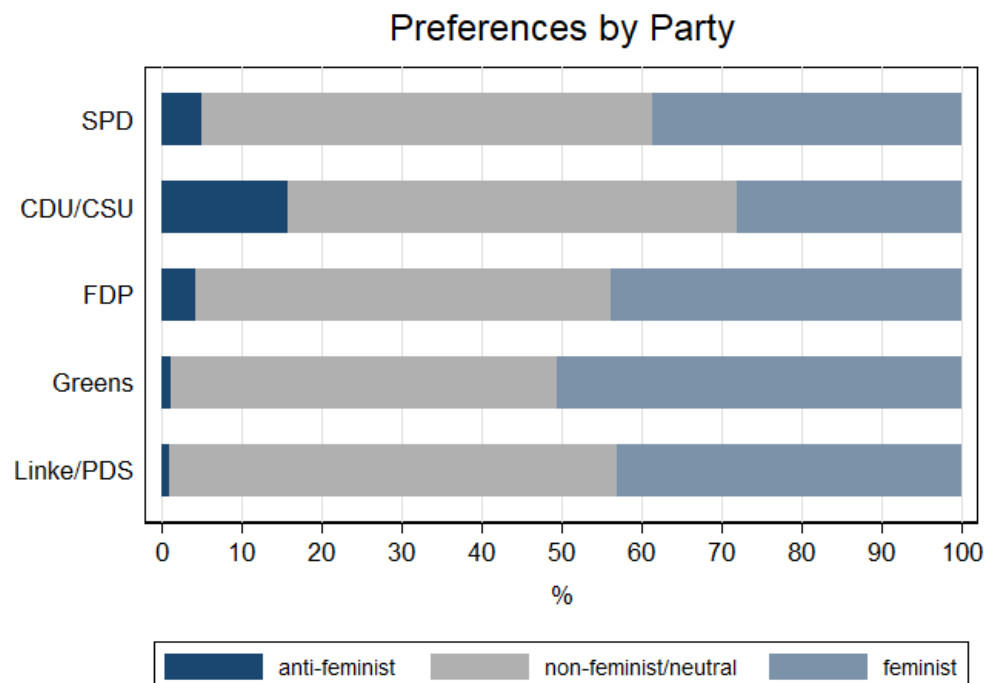


Figure 10: Percent of Preferences on Issues by Party

Note: Percentages based on subsample of 2,000 hand-coded Representative Claims.

4.2 Regression Analyses

4.2.1 *Gender Gap in Claims-Making*

The descriptive figures presented above already provide valuable insight into what difference women's presence in the German legislative assembly makes for the propensity and content of women's substantive representation and demonstrate that individual delegates as well as parliamentary party groups differ in how they act upon and speak about their female constituency. But, do these descriptive results still hold, if we control for other potential explanatory factors of the posited relationships? Table 4 shows two regression models with random effects at the MP level, which test for a gender effect in representative claims-making on behalf of women, holding other independent variables constant.

Model 1 reveals that there is indeed a gender gap in the substantive representation of women. Female parliamentarians are significantly ($p = 0.001$) more likely to devote their parliamentary questioning to women's interests. As indicated by Figure 11, which displays predicted probabilities of representative claims-making, women in the German Bundestag are even more than thrice as likely than their male counterparts to consider women's gendered experiences and thus to act in their interest. While other factors such as age, being in the function of committee chair, the type of mandate or the share of female delegates in the Bundestag do not yield any significant effects, acting in the name of women as a group is affected by other factors: Interestingly, compared to the SPD, the legislators of the Greens are significantly less likely ($p = 0.001$) to dedicate their PQs to the representation of women. Moreover, being in the leadership position of PPG chair also exerts a significant positive influence on the likelihood to make a representative claim, as does the general parliamentary activity of delegates (though only to a marginal extent). MPs of opposition parties are also less likely to substantively represent women. Eventually, in relation to the 1950s, claims-making significantly decreases in the decades following the 1990s, indicating a time trend. Model 1 thus confirms the common finding of the literature that women in the legislative realm are more inclined than men to speak for their female constituency (H1). But then, what difference does a shift in women's presence make? Do women change the game as the legislative arena transitions from a skewed to a tilted setting?

Model 2 sheds light on the size of the gender gap over time. Confirming H2, as female parliamentarians blend in with the male majority and cease to be the absolute exception from the norm of male dominance, the gender gap starts to shrink. This time effect is plotted in Figure 12 which shows the average marginal effects for female delegates on claims-making on behalf of women: comparing effects against the baseline (male) shows that there is a considerable difference in the likelihood of male and female legislators to substantively represent women until the 1980s. From the 1990s onwards, however, – as women’s presence in parliament starts to take off (achieving an increase of around 6% from 1983 to 1987, and continuously rising thereafter) – the gender gap is decreasing considerably. Figure 13, which shows predicted probabilities for both genders on the likelihood to substantively represent women, again confirms that it is indeed female MPs who begin to lessen their agency on behalf of women’s interests. Overall, the results point to the importance of an inclusion of time trends in any account of women’s descriptive and substantive representation. Similarly to Model 1, being a Green MP or member of an opposition party significantly decreases the likelihood to make a representative claim, while a position as PPG chair, as well as the overall parliamentary activity positively influence whether legislators address women’s interests.

Table 4: Random-Effects (MP) logit regression models of Claims-Making; Model 2 with decade as moderator

	Model 1	Model 2
	<i>DV: Representative Claim</i>	
Female	1.519*** (0.0868)	2.110*** (0.433)
Age	0.00472 (0.00330)	0.00520 (0.00330)
# of PQs per MP and Term	0.00171*** (0.000444)	0.00174*** (0.000443)
<i>Party (base: SPD)</i>		
CDU/CSU	-0.0822 (0.0882)	-0.0788 (0.0879)
FDP	-0.163 (0.131)	-0.185 (0.131)

(Continued)

Greens	-0.484*** (0.142)	-0.495*** (0.141)
Linke/PDS	-0.212 (0.169)	-0.183 (0.168)
other	-0.799 (0.566)	-0.737 (0.571)
Committee Chair	-0.00549 (0.0844)	0.00842 (0.0843)
PPG Chair	0.393*** (0.0909)	0.388*** (0.0916)
District Mandate	0.0197 (0.0588)	0.0318 (0.0589)
% Women in the Bundestag	0.00786 (0.00625)	0.00563 (0.00631)

Decade (base: 1950)

1960	-0.293 (0.214)	-0.200 (0.248)
1970	-0.113 (0.206)	-0.00358 (0.241)
1980	0.0871 (0.203)	0.175 (0.238)
1990	-0.446* (0.220)	-0.290 (0.254)
2000	-0.709** (0.245)	-0.427 (0.279)
2010	-0.676** (0.255)	-0.231 (0.296)
Opposition party	-0.376*** (0.0467)	-0.384*** (0.0471)

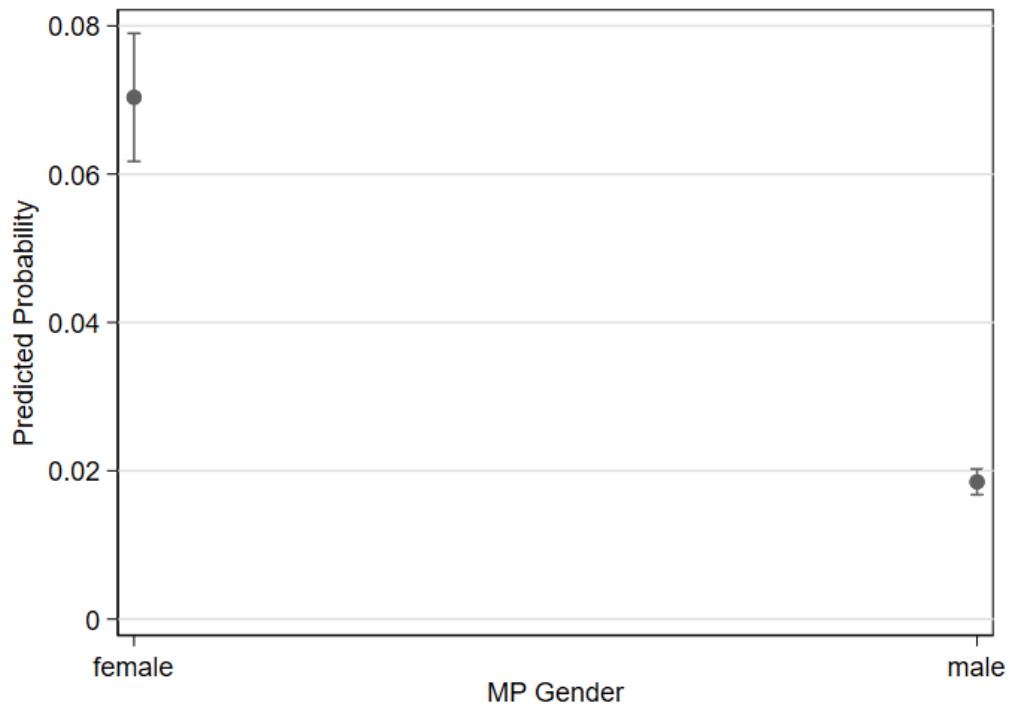
female x Decade (base: male)

female x 1960		-0.302 (0.501)
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(Continued)

female x 1970		-0.421 (0.455)
female x 1980		-0.346 (0.445)
female x 1990		-0.522 (0.445)
female x 2000		-0.800 (0.450)
female x 2010		-1.041* (0.459)
Constant	-4.596*** (0.264)	-4.740*** (0.288)
$\ln(\zeta_u^2)$	0.430*** (0.0599)	0.417*** (0.0601)
<i>N</i>	205646	205646
<i>Groups</i>	2596	2596
<i>Rho</i>	0.318	0.316

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ **Figure 11:** Predicted Probability of Gender on Claims-Making

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 1; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

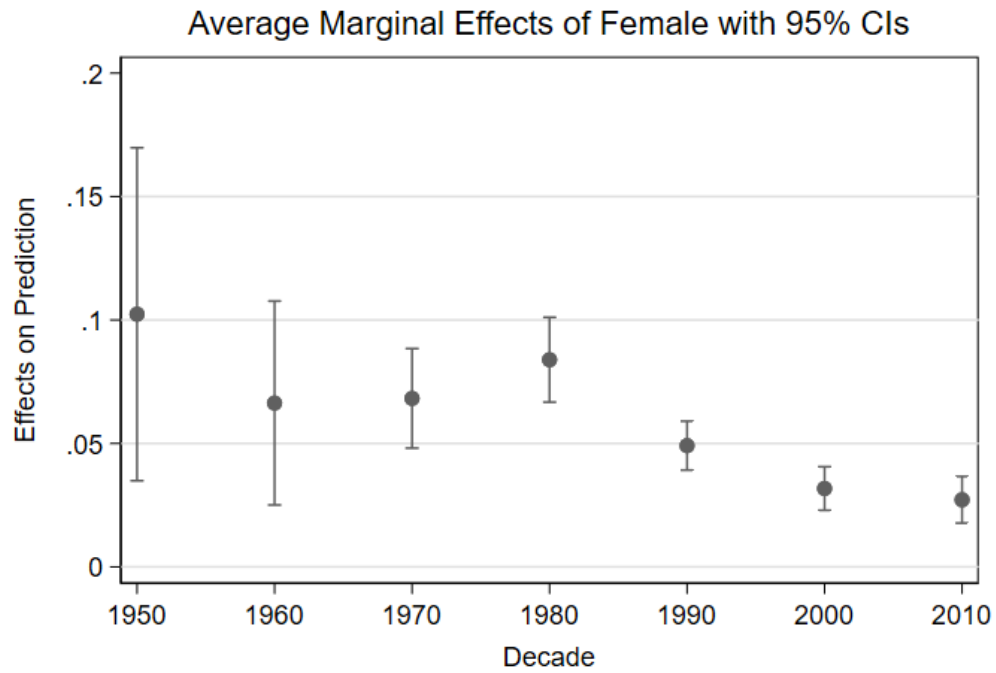


Figure 12: Average Marginal Effects of Gender (Female) on Claims-Making by Decade

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 2; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.



Figure 13: Predicted Probabilities of Gender on Claims-Making by Decade

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 2; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

4.2.2 *Representative Claims: Issues, Preferences & Party Behavior*

Does the content of representative claims change according to the type of legislative arena? Is there a pattern in the issues addressed, that is, are women's issues subject to a general cultural shift? And what about the preferences on those issues: are delegates more likely to utter feminist preferences in tilted legislative arenas? And lastly, do parties begin to organize around women's interests once they are crystallized? Tables 5 and 6 present four regression models with random effects at the MP level, which put these questions about the content of representative claims-making on behalf of women to an empirical test, holding other independent variables constant.

Model 3 reveals that claims on behalf of women as a group indeed less likely revolve around traditional and stereotypical gender roles (0 = non-stereotypical, 1 = stereotypical) in tilted than in skewed legislative arenas (H3). Compared to the 1950s, representatives address a broader array of women's life experiences from the 1970s onwards. While, as outlined in the description of Model 2 above, women's descriptive representation accelerates quite drastically only from 1987 onwards, this finding is nonetheless in line with theoretical expectations given the political and societal transformations beginning in the 1970s. This signifies that, with regard to stereotypical issues, the content of representative claims adapted to a cultural shift before women's presence had normalized within the German legislative realm. Figure 14, which shows predicted probabilities for stereotypical claims-making, illustrates this time trend more clearly: The likelihood to make a claim that revolves around women's role as mother, caregiver or housewife continuously decreases, at least until 2000. Moreover, Model 3 demonstrates that stereotypical claims-making is also highly gendered; female parliamentarians address a broader, more diverse range of issues. Yet, neither age nor legislators' party affiliation, nor the share of women in parliament³⁰ exert a significant influence on this relationship.

Model 4, which compares anti-feminist as well as feminist preferences against the baseline category (non-feminist), fails to confirm that preferences on women's issues are also subject to cultural change (H4). Preferences do not become more feminist once the legislature transitions from a skewed to a tilted legislative arena. There are, however, other interesting

³⁰ This result holds even if decade dummies are excluded from the model.

effects to be noticed: Compared to non-feminist or neutral preferences, preferences are significantly more feminist in the 1970s, whereas anti-feminist preferences significantly decline from the 2000s onwards. Additionally, a gender effect for feminist preferences is discernible with female MPs being more likely to make progressive claims. As one would have expected, the CDU/CSU is, compared to the SPD, significantly more anti-feminist in its substantive representation of women. Interestingly, the FDP is the only party yielding a significant positive effect for egalitarian preferences. Again, age as well as the percentage of women in the Bundestag do not yield any effects on the direction of preferences on women's issues. Figure 15 presents predicted probabilities for all three types of preferences over time. The figure shows that effects for all three preferences are not significantly different from zero in the 1970s, while for reactionary and progressive claims this is true for the 1950s and 1960s, and for feminist and non-feminist utterances, eventually, there is no significant difference from the 2000s onwards. Conversely, representatives were significantly more likely to voice non-feminist preferences in the fifties and sixties, whereas in the eighties and nineties neutral representative claims constitute the most likely utterances among the three types. Finally, anti-feminist substantive representation of women declines from 1980 onwards and becomes non-significant at the turn of the millennium.

But do preferences correspond to parties' ideological profile once women's interests have crystallized? Again comparing against the non-feminist baseline, Model 5 indicates that there is no effect of ideology on preferences; left-wing parties are – generally and over time – not more likely than right-wing parties to be feminist in their preferences, whereas gender continues to be a highly significant positive predictor of an egalitarian substantive representation of women. While the predictor for age is again insignificant, also a rise in women's presence within the political parties predicts stances on equality in representative claims-making, even though to a lesser extent. Contrasting these results, the model does not yield any effect whatsoever on anti-feminist utterances. Figure 16, which displays average marginal effects for preferences makes the non-finding more clear: It reveals that, essentially, even over time (except for neutral positions in 1960 and 1990), there is no substantive difference

in the directionality of representative claims of left-wing parties. Therefore, H5 fails to be justified.

Eventually, Model 6 indicates that time does not significantly affect whether women's issues are framed by parties' issue ownership (with an exception in the nineties); thus, H6 cannot be confirmed. Notwithstanding, instead of an increase of the issue ownership predictor, the predicted probabilities for decade on issue ownership (Figure 17) point to another mechanism, even though the decade effect is not significantly different from zero: Rather than highlighting their issue ownership in claiming to represent their female constituency once women's presence in the legislature has normalized, as the theoretical mechanism would have predicted, parties seem to decrease their framing of claims according to the issues they are known to handle well. While being a member of a government party does not have a significant influence on whether MPs frame their claims in accordance with their parties' issue ownership, the position of PPG chair has a positive effect on that relationship. Finally, compared to the SPD, legislators of every other party are significantly less prone to use an issue ownership frame. This possibly reflects the prominence of the welfare issue in the data set.

Table 5: Random-Effects (MP) logit regression models for Stereotypical and Issue Ownership

	Model 3 <i>DV: Stereotypical</i>	Model 6 <i>DV: Issue Ownership</i>
Female	-0.847*** (0.199)	-0.0467 (0.175)
Age	0.00482 (0.00956)	-0.00318 (0.00919)
<i>Party (base: SPD)</i>		
CDU/CSU	0.0415 (0.207)	-3.163*** (0.223)
FDP	-0.209 (0.316)	-3.597*** (0.386)
Greens	-0.241 (0.402)	-2.114*** (0.369)
Linke/PDS	-0.548 (0.438)	-1.667*** (0.378)

(Continued)

other	-2.577 (1.393)	0 (.)
% Women in the Bundestag	0.0349 (0.0273)	0.0134 (0.0290)
<i>Decade (base: 1950)</i>		
1960	-1.080 (0.621)	-0.584 (0.542)
1970	-1.824** (0.587)	-0.623 (0.504)
1980	-1.800** (0.592)	-0.923 (0.508)
1990	-1.899** (0.705)	-1.467* (0.656)
2000	-2.865** (0.888)	-1.567 (0.860)
2010	-1.981* (0.909)	-1.527 (0.874)
PPG chair		0.676* (0.331)
Government Party		-0.0709 (0.176)
Constant	1.885* (0.786)	1.875** (0.723)
$\ln(\zeta_u^2)$	0.774*** (0.198)	-0.0739 (0.302)
<i>N</i>	2000	1995
<i>Groups</i>	715	711
<i>Rho</i>	0.397	0.220

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 6: Random-Effects(MP) multinomial logit regression models for Preferences on Women's Issues

	Model 4		Model 5	
	<i>anti-feminist</i>	<i>feminist</i>	<i>anti-feminist</i>	<i>feminist</i>
Female	-0.256 (0.271)	0.764*** (0.152)	-0.305 (0.272)	0.769*** (0.154)
Age	0.00359 (0.0128)	0.00119 (0.00785)	0.00627 (0.0128)	-0.000531 (0.00791)
<i>Party (base: SPD)</i>				
CDU/CSU	0.967*** (0.251)	-0.182 (0.167)		
FDP	0.317 (0.477)	0.524* (0.251)		
Greens	-0.471 (1.098)	0.592 (0.315)		
Linke/PDS	-0.314 (1.152)	0.503 (0.337)		
other	-15.79 (5962.8)	0.702 (1.145)		
% Women in the Bundestag	0.0763 (0.0415)	-0.0155 (0.0251)		

*(Continued)**Decade (base: 1950)*

1960	0.657 (0.871)	0.243 (0.473)	0.918 (1.260)	1.227 (0.864)
1970	1.199 (0.819)	0.857* (0.433)	1.144 (1.168)	0.828 (0.803)
1980	0.258 (0.837)	0.481 (0.439)	0.753 (1.185)	0.742 (0.817)
1990	-0.766 (1.047)	0.447 (0.566)	0.668 (1.218)	0.495 (0.834)
2000	-2.740* (1.352)	0.518 (0.745)	-1.027 (1.329)	-0.0421 (0.844)
2010	-3.353* (1.669)	0.676 (0.765)	-18.67 (15271.8)	0.386 (1.296)
Left-wing Party			-0.978 (1.596)	0.303 (0.930)

Left-wing Party x Decade

Left-wing Party x 1960			-0.235 (1.764)	-1.675 (1.062)
Left-wing Party x 1970			0.568 (1.633)	0.170 (0.960)

(Continued)

Left-wing Party x 1980			-0.203 (1.649)	-0.595 (0.968)
Left-wing Party x 1990			-0.751 (1.695)	-0.966 (0.987)
Left-wing Party x 2000			-18.74 (13349.8)	-0.248 (1.028)
Left-wing Party x 2010			16.77 (15271.8)	-0.769 (1.403)
% Women in the PPG			0.0152 (0.0244)	0.0228* (0.0105)
Constant	-4.091*** (1.089)	-1.348* (0.618)	-2.993* (1.346)	-1.785* (0.893)
Variance of the random intercept	0.898* (0.353)	0.898* (0.353)	0.957** (0.370)	0.957** (0.370)
Variance of the random intercept	0.762*** (0.215)	0.762*** (0.215)	0.796*** (0.219)	0.796*** (0.219)
<i>N</i>	1989	1989	1983	1983
<i>Groups</i>	714	714	710	710

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

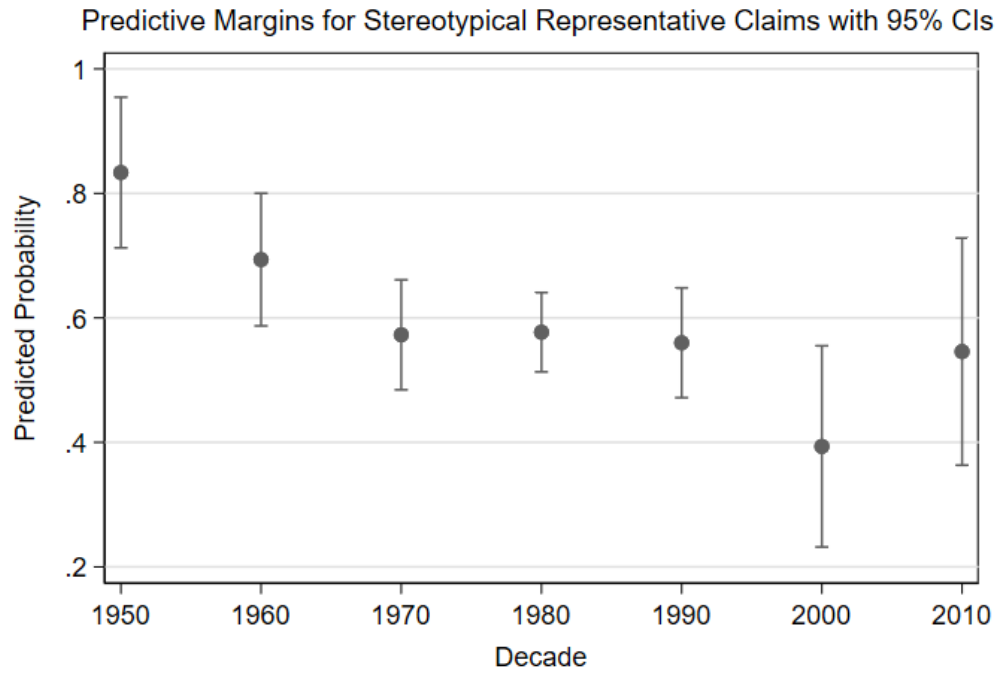


Figure 14: Predicted Probabilities of Stereotypical Women's Issues by Decade

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 3; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

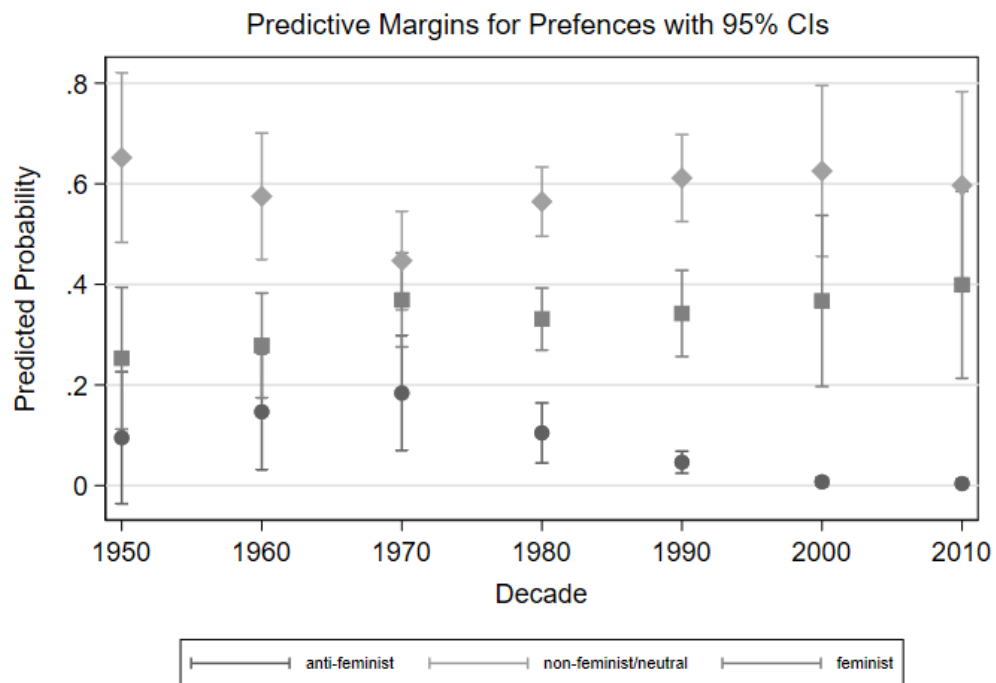


Figure 15: Predicted Probabilities of Anti-feminist, Non-feminist, and Feminist Preferences by Decade.

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 4; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

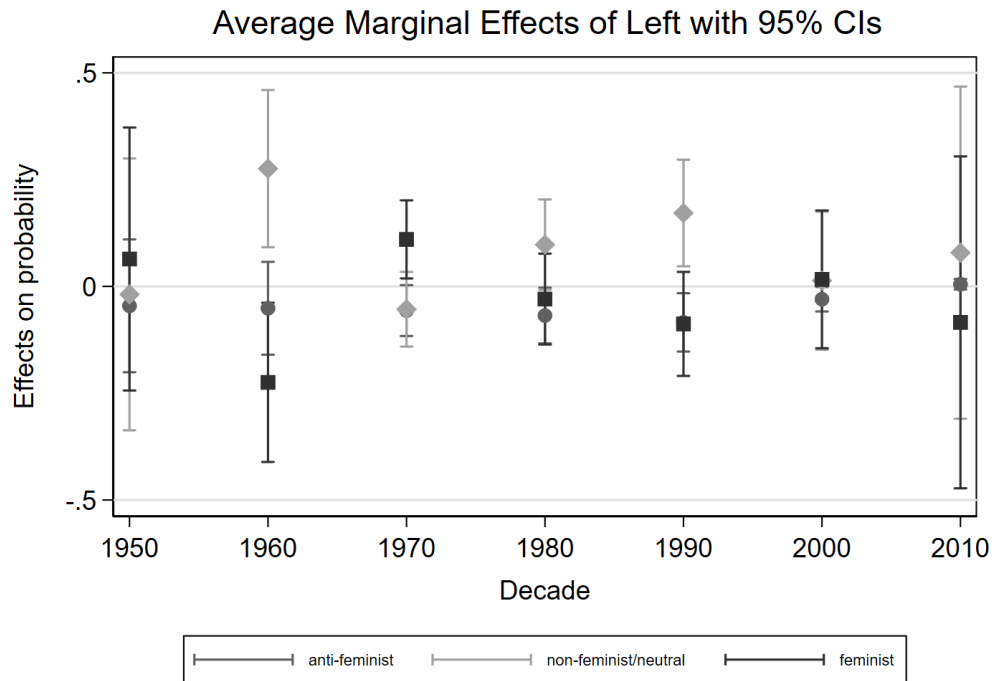


Figure 16: Average Marginal Effects of Ideology on Feminist Preferences on Women's Issues

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 5; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

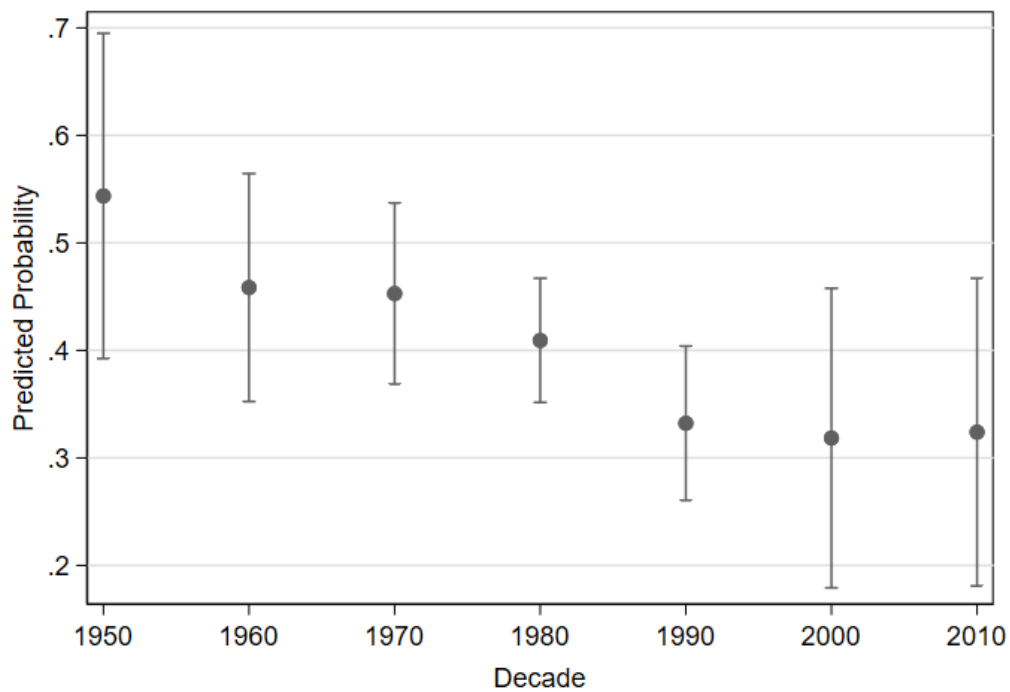


Figure 17: Predicted Probabilities of Issue Ownership by Decade

Note: Prediction based on regression in Model 6; all other variables as observed; 95 percent confidence intervals shown.

Summing up, the analyses performed in this thesis are meaningful in several ways: First, they show that female representatives are more likely than their male colleagues to substantively represent women, regardless of their numbers among legislators. This therefore confirms previous findings on that relationship. Yet, the analyses moreover show that it is important to shed light on women's evolution in parliament, given that the gender gap in representative claims-making shrinks drastically as time goes by. Figure 6 has shown descriptively that this decline is accompanied by an increase in women's presence. As claimed within the scope of this thesis, agency on issues of relevance to women by *descriptive* representatives seems to be most important when women are systematically under-represented and when their interests are still at risk of being overlooked. It is those token female MPs, as representatives of their category, who articulate and bring previously overlooked group interests onto the political agenda. Once the gender-balance becomes more equal, the relationship between representatives' gender and their policy representation becomes less strong, because female parliamentarians lessen their representation of women's interests within their parliamentary activity. This means that the effect of gender on the individual level changes according to the gender balance on the macro (parliamentary) level (see also Burns 2007).

Furthermore, the results of the analyses point to the influence of a cultural shift, at least to some extent. While issues seem to reflect the predominance of the male-breadwinner model after World War II, as representative claims mostly revolve around women's traditional role as mother, caregiver or housewife, delegates' interest representation broadens following the societal and political transformations from the 1970s onwards. It is also noteworthy that stereotypical claims-making is highly gendered, which indicates that it is again female legislators who are the drivers of that change. Yet, this challenge to social norms is not reflected in the preferences on women's issues, since the directionality on women's issues does not become more feminist. However, note that, as already said, findings on preferences need to be interpreted with caution, given the reliability of the measurement. At this point, it also becomes apparent why it is useful to distinguish between issues and preferences: a non-inclusion of the latter would have led to the false assumption that women's representation *per se* has become more egalitarian, whereas if we had only looked at the preferences on women's issues, we might

have concluded there is no change at all. Yet, within the scope of this thesis, it is unfortunately not possible to tell whether these diverging results reflect different rationales for the mutability of issues and preferences or are a by-product of the difficulties encountered with the operationalization of the measurement.

With regard to parties' response to women's presence in parliament, findings are ambiguous: Again preferences seem to be uninfluenced by ideology. Although only the nineties see a significant negative effect on issue ownership, the results nonetheless provide reason to speculate: With the crystallization of women's interests, issues seem to become a rather distinct policy area, as the legislature transitions to a tilted setting, and it seems to be in skewed assemblies in which MPs have a take on women's substantive representation by framing it according to the issue ownership of the party.

5 Conclusion

This thesis was set out to answer how the presence of women in parliament influences the parliamentary issue agenda. Informed by a vast body of literature that has produced a wide array of important theoretical and empirical contributions but remains incongruent on some of its main findings, I sought to shed light on the evolution of women in parliament. In doing so, I hoped to bridge these diverging assumptions and empirical results of the field by merging them into a coherent whole, thereby accounting for a historical perspective on women's entry and gaining a foothold in the legislative realm. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study on women's descriptive and substantive representation which spans a time frame of more than 60 years – on theoretical as well as methodological grounds.

So, what is the relationship between representatives' gender and their policy representation? Are female legislators more inclined to speak about women as a group than their male colleagues and under which circumstances? To answer these questions, I first take up the important distinction between representation as a process (agenda-setting) or an outcome (statutory change), and view substantive representation as deliberative action, in which group interests are depicted and contested. Moreover, in line with the representative claims paradigm,

I construe descriptive representation as rendering representative claims to theoretically allow for a diverse set of actors to undertake representation on behalf of women.

Accounting for these important theoretical contributions, I approach legislative debates as channels of group agency with a novel data set, which comprises, amongst others, all parliamentary questions to the German government by individual MPs between 1949 and 2013. Parliamentary questions are a viable data source to study how delegates portray their constituency in claiming to represent them, given that they are less affected by party discipline and a low-cost as well as concise means to demonstrate that interests are recognized.

In building my theoretical mechanism, I posit that it is decisive for the size and direction of the relationship between women's descriptive and substantive representation whether women's presence in parliament is in its infancy or has become more common and thus normal(ized). To be more precise, I argue that, because women share a certain set of experiences qua gender, they should generally be more likely to act in their name in parliament. However, I furthermore claim that women enter parliament as *tokens* – as representatives of their category – and thus bring previously uncrystallized group interests onto the political agenda. In a *skewed* setting like this, in which women are the absolute exception to the norm of male dominance, it is of particular importance that *descriptive* representatives act in the name of this under-represented group. Not less so, because male MPs might lack awareness for how women's lives are shaped differently to theirs. This should be less the case in *tilted* legislative arenas, in which – conditioned by societal change, and not by a particular threshold in women's numbers among legislators as claimed by critical mass *theory* – women's presence is taken for granted and female parliamentarians blend in with the male majority.

And indeed, the results of this thesis highlight that assumptions about the size and direction of a gender gap in claims-making need to consider the whole picture, i.e. women's evolution in parliament. Regardless of their share in the assembly, I find that female delegates are more likely to devote a much greater deal of their parliamentary activity to claims-making on behalf of women as a group, even though they are responsible for only around 20% of all parliamentary questions within the period of observation. Yet, contradicting some readings of

the argument of *critical mass*, this gender gap reduces considerably as time goes by, and long before women's presence reaches the much acclaimed threshold of 30%. Furthermore, the reduction in the gender gap is attributable to the reduced representation of women's interests by *female* legislators. There are no spill-over effects on male MPs; it thus seems that women's legislative behavior is permeated by those of their male colleagues.

But what can be considered in the interest of women? What are women's interests and which women do they represent? Can researchers *a priori* define what they are? And is (good) substantive representation only achieved via feminist representative claims-making? These questions reflect a vivid debate among Gender & Politics scholars. Within the scope of this thesis, I build on contributions, which make a good case for an inductive classification of interests of relevance to women. In line with the literature, this inductive approach uncovers a much broader array of topics, than what is conventionally understood as women's interests, e.g., housing, transportation, sports, employment, the military or migration – some of which might even be considered rather masculine topics. Furthermore, as stressed by the literature, I open up the analysis to consider progressive as well as conservative actors in distinguishing between feminist and non-feminist or anti-feminist preferences on women's issues. Applying the mechanism of women's evolution in politics not only to the *extent* but also on the *content* of women's representation, I hold that *skewed* legislative arenas mirror the male-breadwinner model of societal organization, while *tilted* legislative arenas adapted to the societal and political transformations of the 1970s. In the former scenario, parliamentarians should thus more likely make claims on behalf of women that revolve around women's traditional and stereotypical gender roles – that as mothers, caregivers, or housewives –, and utter non-feminist preferences, because social values were not yet challenged. By contrast, in the latter setting representatives should diversify their interest representation and become more egalitarian in their positions.

The results of the analysis point, at least to some extent, to a cultural shift in the content of claims-making, given that parliamentarians more likely articulate non-stereotypical issues from the 1970s onwards. While this challenge to social norms is hardly reflected in the preferences of legislators, it is noteworthy that both the content and the directionality of

women's issues is highly gendered, indicating that female delegates seem to be drivers of a change. The results have also shown that it is important to open up the analysis by measuring the spectrum of preferences on women's issues, since the findings prove that it is at least *empirically* possible to substantively represent women while explicitly contesting feminist positions. Moreover, it may now be clear why a distinction between issues and preferences was fruitful: a non-inclusion of the latter would have led to the false assumption that women's representation *per se* has become more egalitarian, whereas if we had only looked at the preferences on women's issues, we might have concluded there is no change at all.

Of course, in studying women's representation, we need to look at how parties shape the agenda-setting of their MPs and how they, in revenge, are influenced by women's presence in parliament. The literature generally assumes that positions on issues correspond to party ideology, with right-wing parties being more prone to promote traditional gender norms, whereas left-wing parties tend to embrace progressive policies. Incorporating this line of thought into the theoretical framework I put forth in this thesis implies another probable mechanism: since, with women's entry into politics, issues are (relatively) new on the agenda and not (yet) part of the public positioning of politicians and parties' policy profiles, parliamentarians will utter preferences independently of parties' general ideological stances. Once parties respond to these interests as the presence of women in parliament becomes normalized, and incorporate them in their policy-making, positions should align with parties' ideological profile. Similarly, parties should have organized around these previously uncrystallized interests in *tilted* legislative arenas and therefore try to take advantage of their issue ownership in claiming to represent women.

However, despite there being some variance between parties on the descriptive level, the analysis does not yield any significant effect of ideology on the preferences individual legislators voice. Instead, even accounting for time as a moderating factor, there seem to be barely any substantive differences in the preferences of delegates of left and right party families. Interestingly though, there seems to be descriptive evidence that the *extent* of claims-making on behalf of women is affected by party ideology. What is more, results (although only significant in the nineties) imply a negative relationship between issue ownership and time: It

seems to be in *skewed* assemblies in which MPs have a take on women's substantive representation by framing it according to the issue ownership of the party. A likely explanation for this could be that, in trying to bring uncrystallized group interests onto the agenda, token women needed to show the relevance of the issues by pertaining to the general ideological stance of their party to make their voices heard.

There are some limitations to the research presented in this thesis. First of all, the thesis does not offer any explanation as to why women's issues are affected by time, but the preferences on those issues are not. I leave it to others to investigate the roots of these relationships. Furthermore, the findings hint at a reverse mechanism for the issue ownership hypothesis. With a larger-N study, one could investigate, whether there is indeed an issue ownership effect when issues are not yet crystallized, which ceases as women's presence becomes normalized. Second, there are some methodological issues, which deserve closer attention: While representative claims on behalf of women have been identified in several iterations through automated text analysis, in a next study even more time could be devoted to increase the validity of the measurement. Also, hand-coding only a subsample of all representative claims identified by the dictionary is not optimal with regard to the sample size and the generalizability of the results presented. With larger resources, future research should aim to code and classify more issues and preferences and to increase the reliability of the measurement. Moreover, given the specifics of the Bundestag's standing orders, which require that requests be short and formal, parliamentary questions might be less likely to yield strong and systematic variation on issue preferences. Finding a more suitable data source provides another avenue for future studies on the topic.

These shortcomings aside, given that, as Fernandes et al. (2021) claim, the field lacks systematic theoretical and empirical (longitudinal) studies on MPs' characteristics and the use of legislative debates as channels of group agency, this thesis is an important contribution to the understanding of women's evolution in parliament. Many studies on women's representation only look at particular time periods and therefore miss that the theoretical mechanism behind that relationship might be fundamentally different depending on whether a new group has just entered the legislative realm, takes a foothold or blends in with the dominant

majority. On a more general societal level, the theory laid out in this thesis might also provide the rationale for the representation of other marginalized groups. It strongly advocates for the presence of *descriptive* representatives to bring overlooked group interests onto the agenda and to gradually accommodate those interests in parties' policy profiles. Yet, it also implies that a challenge to the status-quo is slow in the making and that it might also have an impact on the under-represented group as it blends in with the majority and takes over their rules of the game. The answer to the research question is thus twofold: women's presence in parliament bolsters the recognition of their interests in the parliamentary issue agenda. As women's presence accelerates, it gradually changes the content of those debates, while women's interests receive less overall attention on the parliamentary agenda. Women in the German Bundestag did therefore indeed *change the game*, though they were also changed by it.

6 References

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7 Appendix

Table A 1: Percentage of Women in the Bundestag per Legislative Period

% Women in the Bundestag		
Election Period	Year	Percent
1	1949	6.8
2	1953	8.8
3	1957	9.2
4	1961	8.3
5	1965	6.9
6	1969	6.6
7	1972	5.8
8	1976	7.3
9	1980	8.5
10	1983	9.8
11	1987	15.4
12	1990	20.5
13	1994	26.2
14	1998	30.9
15	2002	32.5
16	2005	31.6
17	2009	32.8

Table A 2: Percentage of Women in the Parliamentary Party Group per Legislative Period

% Women in the PPG						
Election Period	Year	CDU/CSU	SPD	FDP	Greens	Linke/PDS
1	1949	7.7	9.6	0.0		
2	1953	7.6	13.0	5.7		
3	1957	7.9	12.2	7.0		
4	1961	7.2	10.3	6.0		
5	1965	6.0	8.8	4.0		
6	1969	5.6	7.6	6.5		
7	1972	6.4	5.4	4.8		
8	1976	7.5	6.7	10.0		
9	1980	7.6	8.3	13.0		
10	1983	6.7	10.4	8.6	35.7	
11	1987	7.7	16.1	12.5	56.8	
12	1990	13.8	27.2	20.3	37.5	47.1
13	1994	14.3	33.7	17.0	59.1	43.3
14	1998	18.4	35.2	20.9	57.4	58.3
15	2002	23.0	37.8	27.7	58.2	
16	2005	19.9	36.0	24.6	56.9	46.3
17	2009	20.1	38.4	24.7	54.4	52.6

Table A 3: Dictionary Used to Automatically Identify Representative Claims

Women	Equality	Mother_ing	Reproductive	Care	Gender	Violence	Family	Marriage	Work
"frauen*"	"gleich* von * fraue*"	"*mütter*"	"abtreib*"	"haushaltshilfe*"	"geschlechter*"	"gewalt* frau*"	"pflegeeltern*"	"ehgattensplitting"	"beschäftig* von frauen"
"mädchen*"	"frau* gleichberecht*"	"*mutter*"	"brust*"	"hauswirtschafterin*"	"gender*"	"häusl* gewalt*"	"familienleistungs-"	"verheiratung"	"frauenerwerb*"
"weibl*"	"gleich* für * fraue*"	"schwanger*"	"foet*"	"hauswirt* arbeit*"		"frauenhaus*"	"ausgleich"	"eheschließ*"	"erwerbstätigkeit von frauen"
"femi*"	"benachteil* frau*"	"geburt *"	"*gyn*"	"altenpflege*"		"frauenhäus*"	"alleinerzieh*"	"ehenam*"	"teilzeitbeschäftigt*"
	"anteil* an frau*"	"säugling*"	"hebamme*"	"altenbetreu*"		"mißhand* frau*"	"elternzeit"	"*witw*"	"halbtage*"
	"diskrim* frau*"		"abort"	"berufspflegekr*"		"misshand* frau*"	"kinderbonus"	"ehepartn*"	"halbtagskr*"
	"frau*diskrim*"		"ungeboren*"	"pflege* kind*"		"vergewalt* frau*"	"kinderfreibetrag"	"arrangiert* ehe*"	"arbeit * frau"
	"zahl* frau*"		"ungeboren* leben*"	"erzieh* kind*"		"frau* vergewalt*"	"*kindergeld*"	"verehelichung"	"frau*arbeit"
	"frau* park*"		"neugeboren*"	"kindererzieh*"			"kindergarten*"		"lohn* frau*"
	"frauenpark*"			"kinderbetreu*"			"kindergärten*"		"frau* lohn*"
				"kinder *betreu*"			"familiensplitt*"		"prostitu*"
				"betreu* kind*"			"erziehungsgeld"		"beruf* frau*"
				"unbezahlte arbeit"			"unterhaltszahl*"		
				"hausfrau*"			"kita"		
							"kindertages-"		
							"einrichtungen"		
							"*splitti*"		
							"aufstockungs-"		
							"unterhalt*"		
							"unterhalt*vorsch*"		
							"adoption"		
							"*krippe*"		
							"familienpflege*"		

Note that the following strings are excluded from the keyword search:

„Bundesminister.* für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend“, „Bundesminister.* für Familie, Senio.*ren, Frauen und Jugend“, „Bundesminister.* für Frauen und Jugend“, „Bundesminister.* für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit“, „Bundesminister.* für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Gesundheit“, „Bun- desminister.* für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend“, muttersprach.*“, „stiefmütterlich“, „[Mm]uttersprach.*“, „[Mm]utterkuh“, „[Mm]utterkuhhalt.*“, „[Mm]utterkuhbestand.*“, „[Mm]utterkühe“, „[Mm]uttertier.*“, „[Mm]utter Erde“, „[Mm]utter- und Tochtergesellschaften“, „Unternehmensmutter“, „[Mm]utterkonzern.*“, „[Mm]utterfirm.*“, „[Mm]uttergesellschaft.*“, „[Mm]utterunternehmen.*“, „Konzernmutter.*“, „[Mm]utterschiff.*“, „Staatsminister.* für Arbeit und Sozialordnung, Familie und Frauen“, „Ausschu.* für Frauen und Jugend“

Table A 4: Overview of Issues Coded (Aggregated)

Women's Issues
(Alten-)Pflegeberuf, Gesundheitspersonal
Abschiebung, Ausweisung
Abtreibung (Familienplanungs-/Schwangerenberatung [konfessionell], Medikamente, Schutz des ungeborenen Lebens, Indikation)
Adoption
Alleinerziehende (Hilfe, Steuern)
Altersteilzeit
Anrechnung Kindererziehung
Arbeit (familiärer Betrieb, Branchen, Vermittlung und Schulungen, Benachteiligung, Berufsverbote, Berufsbezeichnungen und Kleidungs Vorschriften, Beförderungen, Berufstätigkeit allg., Beschäftigungsausmaß, Migrantinnen, Rollenbilder, Gesundheit am Arbeitsplatz, Lohnsteuer)
Arbeitslosigkeit
Armut von Frauen
Asyl
Ausbildung (Mädchen, Frauen, spezifische Berufsgruppen, Au-pair)
Behinderung
Bundesverdienstkreuz
Diskriminierung (allg., Hausfrauen, Wohnungsvergabe)
Ehe (Güterrecht, Namensrecht, -Schließung, Ehe recht, Scheidung, Schutz)
Entwicklungshilfe
Familienförderung, Familienhilfe
Familienrecht (Scheidung, Unterhalt, Rechtsbeistand, Sorgerecht, Versorgungsausgleich, Väterrechte)
Familienstand
Fertilität (in-vitro, Statistik, Sterilisation)
Frauen bei der Polizei
Frauen im Sport
Frauen in der Bundeswehr
Frauen in der Medizin
Frauen in der Politik
Frauen in der Wissenschaft
Frauen in Führungspositionen
Frauen in technischen Berufen

(Continued)

Frauenquote

Frauenrechte

Freiwilligendienst

Geburten (Ausland, Geburtshilfe und Hebammen)

Gesetzesauswirkungen auf Frauen

Gesundheit (Kostenbefreiung, Diskriminierung, Finanzierung Kliniken, Säuglinge, Verhütung, Kinder und Kinderkrankheiten, Kuren, gynäkologische Erkrankungen)

Gewalt (häuslich, Frauenhäuser, Vergewaltigung, Ehe, Schutz, Kindesmisshandlung, sexueller Missbrauch)

Gleichbehandlung/-berechtigung (Bezahlung, Chancen, Frauenbeauftragte, Frauenförderung, Budget, Pension, Mainstreaming, Medizin, Ehe, eingetragene Partnerschaft, Sprache)

Haft, Überwachung

Haus- und Sorgearbeit (Familienpflegezeit, Haushaltshilfe, Hauswirtschafterinnen, häusliche Krankenpflege)

Hilfe für Hinterbliebene (Witwen)

Internationale, humanitäre Hilfe

Kinderbetreuung (Ausbau, Finanzierung, Betreuungsschlüssel, Tagesmütter und Erzieher*innen, betrieblich, Rechtsanspruch)

Kindererziehung (Ausgaben, Beihilfen, Elterngeld, Elternzeit, Kindergeld, Erziehungsgeld und -beihilfe, Erziehungsurlaub, Großelternzeit, Pflegeeltern)

Kindergeld

Kunst

Menschenrechte

Meteorologie

Migration, Integration

Obdachlosigkeit

Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel (Ermäßigungen, Wickelräume, Kennzeichnung Mutter-Kind-Abteile, Sitzplatz Schwangere)

Prostitution

Rechtsextremismus

Schwangerschaft (Impfung, Vorsorge, Mutter-Kind-Gesundheit, Mutterschutz, Mutterschaftsgeld, Mutterschaftsurlaub, Arbeitsbedingungen, Arbeitslosigkeit, Test)

Sexualität

Soziale Sicherung

Steuern (Familienausgleich, Ehegattensplitting, Familiensplitting, Kinderfreibetrag, Realsplitting)

(Continued)

Vereinbarkeit Familie und Beruf

Versicherungen (Ehe)

Zuschläge für Beamte (Verheiratet)

Table A 5: Descriptive Statistics for Analyses based on full data set

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max
Representative Claim	205,646	0.027	0.161	0	1
Gender	205,646	0.776	0.417	0	1
Age	205,646	48.621	8.805	22	82
# of PQs per MP and Term	205,646	86.444	65.715	1	320
Party	205,646	2.079	1.247	1	11
Committee Chair	205,646	0.064	0.244	0	1
PPG Chair	205,646	0.036	0.187	0	1
Mandate	205,646	0.37	0.483	0	1
% Women in the Bundestag	205,646	19.537	10.396	5.8	32.8
Decade	205,646	1987.303	13.554	1950	2010
Opposition party	205,646	0.747	0.434	0	1

Table A 6: Descriptive Statistics for Analyses based on small sample of 2,000 Representative Claims

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max
Stereotypical Issue	2,000	0.582	0.493	0	1
Decade	2,000	1981.29	14.749	1950	2010
Gender	2,000	0.564	0.496	0	1
Age	2,000	48.312	8.663	26	81
Party	2,000	1.895	1.169	1	11
% Women in the Bundestag	2,000	15.587	10.14	5.8	32.8
Preference on Issue	1,989	1.278	0.606	0	2
Left Party	2,000	0.551	0.497	0	1
% Women in the PPG	1,994	17.297	14.59	0	59.1
Issue Ownership	2,000	0.391	0.488	0	1
PPG Chair	2,000	0.056	0.23	0	1
Opposition party	2,000	0.656	0.475	0	1

Table A 7: Government Parties and Cabinets per Legislative Period or Date

Parties in Government					
Election Period	Year	Date	Government	Name of Cabinet	
	1	1949	20.09.1949-20.10.1953	CDU/CSU, FDP, DP	Adenauer I
	2	1953	20.10.1953-20.03.1956	CDU/CSU, FDP, DP, GB/BHE	Adenauer II
	2	1955	20.03.1956-26.06.1956	CDU/CSU, FDP, DP	Adenauer II
	2	1956	26.06.1956-29.10.1957	CDU/CSU, FVP, DP	Adenauer II
	3	1957	29.10.1957-01.07.1960	CDU/CSU, DP	Adenauer III
	3	1660	01.07.1960-14.11.1961	CDU/CSU	Adenauer III
	4	1961	14.11.1961-17.10.1963	CDU/CSU, FDP	Adenauer IV, Adenauer V
	4	1963	17.10.1963-26.10.1965	CDU/CSU, FDP	Erhard I
	5	1965	26.10.1965-01.12.1966	CDU/CSU, FDP	Erhard II
	5	1966	01.12.1966-22.10.1969	CDU/CSU, SPD	Kiesinger I
	6	1969	22.10.1969-15.12.1972	SPD, FDP	Brandt I
	7	1972	15.12.1972-17.05.1974	SPD, FDP	Brandt II
	7	1974	17.05.1974-16.12.1976	SPD, FDP	Schmidt I
	8	1976	16.12.1976-05.11.1980	SPD, FDP	Schmidt II
	9	1980	05.11.1980-04.10.1982	SPD, FDP	Schmidt III
	9	1982	04.10.1982-30.3.1983	CDU/CSU, FDP	Kohl I
	10	1983	30.3.1983-12.3.1987	CDU/CSU, FDP	Kohl II
	11	1987	12.3.1987-18.1.1991	CDU/CSU, FDP	Kohl III
	12	1991	18.1.1991-17.11.1994	CDU/CSU, FDP	Kohl IV
	13	1994	17.11.1994-27.10.1998	CDU/CSU, FDP	Kohl V
	14	1998	27.10.1998-22.10.2002	SPD, Grüne	Schröder I
	15	2002	22.10.2002-22.11.2005	SPD, Grüne	Schröder II
	16	2005	22.11.2005-28.10.2009	CDU/CSU, SPD	Merkel I
	17	2009	28.10.2009-17.12.2013	CDU/CSU, FDP	Merkel II

8 Abstracts

Abstract

Much research on the representation of women deals with the link between their descriptive and substantive representation, i.e., with the question of how the presence of women in parliament influences whether their interests are represented. Yet, scholars are incongruent on the existence of such a relationship, its reasons, its nature or its strength, as well as on the role parties play, and on what can be considered in *the* interest of women. In an attempt to show that these diverging findings need not be mutually exclusive, the present thesis asks how the presence of women in parliament influences the parliamentary issue agenda. The central argument of the thesis is that it makes a difference whether the representation of women is still in its early stages or has largely become normal(ized). The analysis of parliamentary questions tabled by individual Members of Parliament (MPs) of the German Bundestag between 1949 and 2013 demonstrates the importance of a historical perspective on the issues agenda of legislative debates, as well as on individual legislators or parties: While female parliamentarians indeed devote more of their parliamentary activity to the substantive representation of women than their male colleagues, this effect decreases gradually as women take a foothold in the legislative realm. Moreover, the results of this thesis point to a diversity and diversification of so-called ‘women’s interests’: over time, issues of relevance to women cover much more than their traditionally assigned roles as mothers, caregivers or housewives, and delegates thus broaden their representation of women’s interests. However, the analyses show hardly any over-time changes in the proportion of feminist, non-feminist or anti-feminist claims of party families or individual legislators. Eventually, the findings do not confirm that women’s interests are more likely to be framed by parties’ issue ownership once women’s presence in parliament has normalized.

Zusammenfassung

Ein wesentlicher Teil der Forschung zur Repräsentation von Frauen* befasst sich mit der Beziehung zwischen deskriptiver und substantieller Repräsentation, d.h. damit, wie und inwiefern die Präsenz von Frauen* im Parlament ein etwaiges Fürsprechen für ihre Interessen beeinflusst. Jedoch sind Forscher*innen uneins, was das Vorhandensein, die Gründe, Art oder Stärke dieses Zusammenhangs betrifft, welche Rolle Parteien dabei spielen und was überhaupt im Interesse *der* Frauen* ist. In einem Versuch zu zeigen, dass diese unterschiedlichen Ergebnisse einander nicht notwendigerweise ausschließen, geht die vorliegende Masterarbeit der Frage nach, wie die Präsenz von Frauen* die Themenagenda im Parlament beeinflusst. Das zentrale Argument der Arbeit ist, dass es einen Unterschied macht, ob die Repräsentation von Frauen* noch in ihren Anfängen steht oder sich weitgehend normalisiert hat. Eine Analyse von parlamentarischen Anfragen einzelner Abgeordneter im deutschen Bundestag von 1949 bis 2013 zeigt die Wichtigkeit einer historischen Perspektive auf die parlamentarische Themenagenda, sowie auf das Verhalten von individuellen Abgeordneten und Parteien: während weibliche* Parlamentarierinnen tatsächlich mehr ihrer parlamentarischen Aktivität der substantiellen Repräsentation von Frauen* widmen als ihre männlichen* Kollegen, nimmt dieser Zusammenhang mit der Normalisierung von Frauen* im Parlament graduell ab. Des Weiteren weisen die Ergebnisse der Arbeit sowohl auf die Diversität als auch auf eine Diversifizierung von sogenannten „Frauenthemen“ hin: Relevante Themen umfassen mehr als nur die Frauen* traditionell zugeordnete Rolle als Mutter, Umsorgende oder Hausfrau und werden vor allem über die Zeit breiter. Allerdings konnten kaum signifikante Ergebnisse über eine Veränderung in dem Anteil an feministischen, nicht-feministischen oder anti-feministischen Präferenzen einzelner Abgeordneter als auch Parteifamilien über Zeit gefunden werden. Schließlich konnte nicht bestätigt werden, dass Abgeordnete Themen, welche relevant für Frauen* sind, eher gemäß der wahrgenommenen Kompetenz ihrer Partei rahmen, wenn sich die Präsenz von Frauen* im Parlament normalisiert hat.