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Does the class cleavage still matter? The social composition of participants in demonstrations addressing redistributive and cultural issues in three countries

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Abstract

This article examines the role of social class for individual participation in social movements, more specifically in street demonstrations. The authors use protest survey data in order to avoid the limitations of previous research by contextualizing the effect of social class on participation in protest. The analysis focuses on demonstrations addressing redistributive and cultural issues, reflecting a well-known distinction between old and new social movements. The authors show that participants in these two types of demonstrations, as well as in a third, mixed category, present a similar class structure, which casts some doubts on this distinction, although slight differences remain. Furthermore, a comparison of three countries that differ in terms of the strength of the class cleavage (Belgium, Sweden, and Switzerland) suggests that this cleavage acts as a moderator of the relationship between social class and participation in street demonstrations.

Keywords

Belgium, class cleavage, demonstrations, social movements, Sweden, Switzerland

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Introduction

Students of social movements have paid relatively little attention to the role of social class. This is surely true in the American scholarly tradition, which has most often focused on endogenous resources, political opportunities, and collective action frames. European scholars, on the other hand, have been somewhat more sensitive to this aspect. This has probably something to do with the long-standing sociological tradition, going back at least to Rokkan's (1970) seminal work, which places social and cultural cleavages at center stage in the study of political mobilization and participation. Yet, even there, the role of social class has largely been overlooked. The most notable exception is represented by new social movement theory. According to this research tradition, the structural changes that occurred in Europe after the Second World War have brought about a new kind of social movement – the new social movements – that differ fundamentally from older movements, most notably the labor movements. These two movement types are different in many respects, most notably in the issues they raise and the constituencies they mobilize (Kriesi, 1989). In particular, old and new movements mobilize different social classes defending distinct collective interests: respectively, blue-collar workers and labor unions asking for a more equal redistribution of resources, and 'middle class radicals' (Cotgrove and Duff, 1980; Parkin, 1968), 'social-cultural specialists' (Kriesi, 1989), and 'left-libertarians' (Kitschelt, 1988) mobilizing around cultural issues such as identities and alternative lifestyles.

Thus, social class is crucial in this context. Apart from a few notable exceptions (Diani, 1995; Kriesi, 1989, 1993), however, discussions about the characteristics of old versus new social movements have most often remained confined to general theoretical statements. To be sure, scholars working on political participation and in the 'political action' tradition did conduct empirical analyses (Barnes et al., 1979). The latter, however, share two important shortcomings. First, they often measure social class through the proxy of education rather than looking at a more direct indicator such as occupation. Second, they study the impact of class through general population surveys, asking about past or intended participation in protest activities, rather than by surveying actual participation in specific movements. Following up on similar recent attempts (Hylmö and Wennerhag, 2012), here we try to overcome these two shortcomings by measuring class through the occupational structure and studying participants in demonstrations, which is the most typical social movement activity today (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2001).

In our explorative analysis we examine the role of social class for individual participation in social movements. We do so in two ways. First, from a descriptive point of view, we look at the social composition of participants in street demonstrations. Which classes are most represented in this kind of protest event? Furthermore, how does the class structure of protesters vary across different types of demonstrations? In this regard, we distinguish between two fundamental types of demonstrations: those addressing redistributive issues and those focusing on cultural issues (plus a mixed category combining both aspects). This distinction largely reflects the well-known division between 'old' and 'new' social movements, which was so dominant in the social movement literature – most notably in Europe, but also in the US – especially in the 1980s and 1990s.

Second, from a more explanatory perspective, we examine the impact of class cleavage on the class structure of participants in street demonstrations. Just like the role of social class, that of social and cultural cleavages – in particular, the role of class cleavage – has not often been a main interest among students of social movements. Kriesi et al.'s (1995) comparative analysis of social movements in Europe is an exception in this respect, as the authors explain the relative presence of old and new social movements in certain countries by means of the strength and salience of traditional cleavages, including that of class. More recently, Kriesi et al. (2008) examined the impact on both electoral and contentious politics of the transformation of the cleavage structure in Europe brought about by globalization. These works, however, are more interested in the macro-level transformations and how they affect political mobilization than in the micro-level characteristics of social movements. Here we would like to inquire into the impact of the class cleavage by looking at the class structure of street demonstrations in three countries characterized by different degrees of class cleavage: Belgium, Sweden, and Switzerland. Does the social composition of demonstrations on redistributive and cultural issues vary across countries? And if yes, can we relate such differences to the strength of the class cleavage?

To answer our research questions, our study draws from a unique dataset generated through a survey of participants in street demonstrations in various countries. These data have the advantage of zooming in on the social characteristics – namely, social class – of actual participants, whereas previous studies have usually examined the class composition of social movements by surveying the general population (Kriesi, 1989, 1993; Kriesi et al., 2012). In addition, the data allow us to compare the social class of protesters across countries and issues and to explore the extent to which the issues of demonstrations and contextual factors, such as the strength of traditional cleavages, affect the constituency of contemporary street demonstrations.

Cleavages, class, movements

Students of political behavior have long debated the role of social class in predicting various forms of participation. On the one hand, classical accounts of political participation suggest that the better educated and those who have a higher socioeconomic status show higher levels of participation in general and in protest more specifically (Barnes et al., 1979; Verba et al., 1995). Breakdown and grievance theories of collective action, on the other hand, posit that participation in street demonstrations is the prerogative of the less educated and the poor (Gurr, 1970; Kornhauser, 1959). However, this view received little support, and research suggests that protest activities are related to higher education and socioeconomic status (Dalton et al., 2009; Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2001). More recent accounts of protest participation in the era of globalization argue that protest politics seems to have become mainly a mode of expression used by the 'winners' rather than the 'losers' of globalization. Indeed, sociocultural specialists have been shown to be more engaged in protest activities than unskilled workers, who favor institutional channels of expression (Kriesi et al., 2012).

Students of social movements, on the other hand, have long debated the constituencies of different types of social movements. In particular, new social movement theory

distinguishes between movements addressing redistributive issues and movements focusing on cultural issues. Scholars have maintained that cultural movements are distinguished from previous, 'old' movements – most notably the labor movement – in terms of their social base, organizational forms, action repertoires, and other characteristics (Dalton and Kuechler, 1990; Eder, 1993; Melucci, 1989, 1996; Offe, 1985; Touraine, 1978, 1984; see Buechler, 1995 and Pichardo, 1997 for overviews). More specifically, these movements would be different in their thematic focus and their social base. On the one hand, movements addressing redistributive issues typically mobilize the working class, whereas movements focusing on cultural issues such as identity and alternative lifestyles mobilize sectors of the new middle class, variously called 'middle class radicals' (Cotgrove and Duff, 1980; Parkin, 1968), 'social-cultural specialists' (Kriesi, 1989), or 'left-libertarians' (Kitschelt, 1988). While many have criticized this distinction (Brand, 1990; Kriesi et al., 1995; Olofsson, 1988; Plotke, 1990; Tarrow, 1991), it has become an often used analytical category, and researchers have opposed old and new social movements and found the latter to mobilize mainly sociocultural specialists (Diani, 1995; Kriesi, 1993).

Thus, the most distinctive characteristic distinguishing movements addressing cultural issues from those focusing on redistributive issues – that is, 'new' from 'old' movements – lies in their social base: 'the basic characteristic of a social movement is constituted by the position of its main constituency in the social structure' (Kriesi et al., 1995: xviii). This suggests that the social composition of demonstrations depends upon the movement sector, the issues addressed by the demonstration, and the actors mobilized. For example, Norris et al. (2005) have shown that demonstrations on cultural issues tend to mobilize middle-class activists while the demonstrations on redistributive issues tend to attract the working class. However, the social movement landscape has undergone a number of changes in the past few decades, in particular among movements of the left. The 1970s and 1980s were characterized by a strong separation between movements addressing cultural issues such as identity and alternative lifestyles (i.e. new social movement issues), on the one hand, and movements focusing on redistributive issues (i.e. the labor movement), on the other. Moreover, even within the new social movements, protest often dealt with 'specific' issues such as the environment, nuclear energy, peace, women's issues, and so forth in a relatively segmented manner. The 1990s and 2000s, in contrast, have witnessed the rise and mobilization of more comprehensive movements, that is, movements addressing various issues at the same time. Here we are referring in particular to the global justice movement, which has dominated the scene in particular in the 1990s and early 2000s (see della Porta, 2007 for an overview in various European countries). Both redistributive and cultural issues have found their way in the mobilization of this movement. In addition, the recent wave of anti-austerity protests in Europe and in the United States – most notably by the Spanish *Indignados* and the various Occupy movements – has further contributed to blurring the lines between movement sectors. Thus, the separation between the structural basis of movements addressing cultural issues and that of movements focusing on redistributive issues could well be less clear-cut than new social movement theorists have argued. As a result, one might expect these two types of demonstrations to bear more resemblances than previous research has maintained. As we shall see below, this is indeed the case.

Protest is a contextual phenomenon (Norris et al., 2005). Therefore, participation in social movements and more specifically in street demonstration must be contextualized with reference to the broader political context in which the protest takes place. As Kriesi et al. (1995) have shown, the mobilizing potential of social movements addressing cultural issues varies considerably across countries depending on the salience of the traditional cleavages upon which rests the mobilization of movements focusing on redistributive issues. They argue in particular that the potential for the political mobilization of the new social movements can be seen as resulting from a zero-sum game: the more salient the traditional cleavages upon which the mobilization of old movements rests, the narrower the space for mobilization on cultural issues. For example, in France, where the class cleavage and other traditional cleavages have remained strong, the new social movements have found less space for mobilizing than in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, the other three countries these authors studied.

Recent studies of the structure of the political space in Europe highlight the emergence of a new cleavage brought about by globalization. To say that the cleavage structures have changed and that this has led to a restructuring of the political space, however, does not mean that traditional cleavages are no longer important. Cleavages still matter, both for electoral and contentious politics, yet in a different way. The strength of the class cleavage is relevant for the impact on contentious politics of the new cleavage emerging from globalization. In this vein, Kriesi et al. (2012) have shown that countries with a strong class cleavage, which were less influenced by the previous change of the political space on the cultural dimension (materialist/post-materialist), are more affected by the economic dimension of the new cleavage, while countries where the class cleavage is weaker are more affected by the cultural dimension of the integration/demarcation cleavage. In addition to showing that cultural issues are more salient than economic issues in protest politics, they found that cultural issues were less salient in countries with a strong class cleavage in the 1980s, but also that since the 1990s they have become salient in these countries to a greater extent than in countries with a weak class cleavage. This suggests that, despite the emergence of a new cleavage, traditional cleavages such as the class cleavage still matter for contentious politics.

Based on previous work on the impact of social and cultural cleavages on the mobilization of social movements, we may expect the strength of traditional cleavages and in particular of the class cleavage – upon which rests the mobilization of the labor movement – to provide more or less space for the mobilization of social movements addressing cultural issues. In other words, we suggest that the class cleavage affects the structural basis of contemporary street demonstrations as well as the relative weight of different social classes in different types of demonstrations. More specifically, following a reasoning about the salience of economic as opposed to cultural issues similar to the one previously applied to protest politics (Kriesi et al., 2012), we expect countries with a strong class cleavage to be affected to a greater extent by the emergence of the new cleavage brought about by globalization, as compared to countries with a weak class cleavage. This should result in a different social composition of redistributive and cultural demonstrations in countries that have a different class cleavage strength.

Data and operationalization

We use data from the CCC project ('Caught in the act of protest: Contextualizing contestation'), a cross-national research program aimed at studying the impact of contextual variation on participation in street demonstrations. Our study includes three countries: Belgium, Sweden, and Switzerland. These countries can be ranked according to the strength of the class cleavage, from the weakest to the strongest respectively: Switzerland, Belgium, and Sweden. The ranking is made according to three different measures of class cleavage: the Alford Index, the Kappa Index, and union density. While the Alford Index and the Kappa Index consider class voting as a way to measure the strength of the class cleavage, hence taking into account the structural basis of party choice, union density is an indicator of the strength of unions. Table 1 shows the relative position of the three countries on each of these measures. Rather than relying on a single indicator, we opted for a more reliable cumulative one. Yet, as we can see, the relative position of the three countries is the same on each of these three measures.

Our study includes 25 demonstrations classified as redistributive, cultural, or mixed, based on the organizers and the issue of the demonstration. Redistributive demonstrations are organized by traditional organizations such as trade unions and address redistributive issues. Cultural demonstrations are organized by new social movement organizations (environmental, anti-nuclear, women, LGBT organizations) and address cultural issues. When a demonstration is organized both by traditional and new social movement organizations, addresses both redistributive and cultural issues, or combines both criteria, they are considered as mixed. Appendix 1 provides the full list of demonstrations and their classification as redistributive, cultural, or mixed. The data were collected through standardized questionnaires handed out at demonstrations following a sampling method aimed at generating random samples of demonstrators (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2011). The overall sample includes 3270 respondents: 1007 participants in redistributive demonstrations, 798 participants in cultural demonstrations, and 1465 participants in mixed demonstrations.

We operationalize social class through an eight-class scheme that discriminates hierarchically on the basis of Erikson and Goldthorpe's (1992) scheme and horizontally between different work logics in which employees evolve (Oesch, 2006). Respondents are allocated to different classes based on their employment status (employed or self-employed) and their past or present occupation according to the ISCO88 standards (see Hylmö and Wennerhag, 2012 for a detailed description of the class variable coding).[1] We exclude full-time students, as our data do not allow for retrieving their social location. Three classes form the salaried middle class: managers, technical (semi-)professionals, and sociocultural (semi-)professionals. The working class includes clerks, craft and production workers, and service workers. Finally, self-employed professionals are the traditional bourgeoisie, and a last class is formed by small business owners.

While our focus is on the class composition of participants in redistributive, cultural, and mixed demonstrations, in the multivariate analyses below we also include variables pertaining to their age, gender, and value orientations. Concerning value orientations, we operationalize them on the basis of two scales. The first measures the socialist/laissez-faire dimension, while the second captures the authoritarian/libertarian dimension (Heath

Table 1. Relative strength of the class cleavage according to three measures.

	Belgium	Sweden	Switzerland
Alford Index	Intermediate	Strong	Weak
Kappa Index	Intermediate	Strong	Weak
Union density	Intermediate	Strong	Weak
Overall	Intermediate	Strong	Weak

Sources: Alford and Kappa Index (Knutsen, 2010); union density (CPDSIII, Armingeon et al., 2011).

et al., 1993). Both are operationalized through a mean scale of two Likert items. For the socialist/laissez-faire dimension, respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the following statements (five-category scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree): 'Government should redistribute income from the better off to those who are less well off' and 'Even the most important public services and industries are best left to private enterprise.'[2] The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is .43. For the authoritarian/libertarian dimension, respondents were asked their degree of agreement (same response categories) with the following statements: 'Children should be taught to obey authority' (we recoded this item to have higher values for a more libertarian position) and 'People from other countries should be allowed to come to my country and live here permanently if they want to.' The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is .47. Appendix 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analyses.

Findings

Our analysis is based on two simple methods: cross-tabulations and regressions. We proceed in three steps: we first show the results of a regression analysis to assess whether social class matters for participation in different types of demonstrations, then we compare redistributive, cultural, and mixed demonstrations for the full sample (all three countries) to see whether social class varies across types of demonstrations, and finally we do the same analysis for each country separately to examine the impact of the strength of the class cleavage.

Table 2 shows the results of three logit regression models allowing us to see the impact of social class on participation in different types of demonstrations, controlling for a number of variables, namely age, gender, value orientation, and country. Each model is based on contrasting two types of events: the first model contrasts cultural demonstrations to redistributive demonstrations; the second model contrasts redistributive demonstrations to mixed demonstrations; and the third model contrasts cultural demonstrations to mixed demonstrations. The results attest to the impact of social class on participating in one type of demonstration rather than in another. In particular, the category of sociocultural specialists displays a statistically significant coefficient in all three models. This occupational group is more likely to participate in demonstrations addressing cultural issues than are production workers, which is the category of reference (first model). In contrast, respondents belonging to this group are less likely to participate than the latter in demonstrations around redistributive issues (second model). Interestingly,

Table 2. Logit regression models predicting participation in three types of demonstrations.

	Cultural (vs redistributive)		Redistributive (vs mixed)		Cultural (vs mixed)	
Age	−0.126***	(0.03)	0.014	(0.038)	−0.096***	(0.036)
Age squared	0.001**	(0.000)	0.0000464	(0.000)	0.0001**	(0.000)
Female	0.241	(0.274)	−0.282	(0.285)	−0.012	(0.267)
Self-employed prof.	2.285***	(0.461)	−2.071***	(0.560)	0.195	(0.404)
Small business	2.705***	(0.484)	−2.237***	(0.656)	0.542	(0.434)
Associate managers	1.006***	(0.368)	−0.400	(0.319)	0.560	(0.351)
Office clerks	0.843***	(0.314)	−0.123	(0.319)	0.799***	(0.263)
Technical prof.	1.646***	(0.217)	−0.955***	(0.234)	0.548*	(0.299)
Production workers	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Sociocultural prof.	1.354***	(0.386)	−0.874**	(0.408)	0.531*	(0.320)
Service workers	0.748**	(0.293)	0.210	(0.286)	0.881***	(0.251)
Left values	−0.475**	(0.230)	0.0643	(0.234)	−0.466***	(0.173)
Libertarian values	0.611**	(0.254)	−0.539**	(0.213)	0.110	(0.220)
Constant	2.098	(1.841)	1.084	(1.605)	2.820**	(1.215)
Pseudo R^2	0.150		0.109		0.040	
N	1752		2414		2200	

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. Robust standard errors, clustered by demonstration.
*$p < .10$, **$p < .05$, ***$p < .01$.

Table 3. Social class of participants in three types of demonstrations (percentages).

	Redistributive	Cultural	Mixed	Total
Self-employed professionals	2.28*	6.64	9.62*	6.64
Small business owners	0.79*	4.64*	4.23*	3.27
Associate managers and administrators	26.51*	22.31	20.82*	22.94
Office clerks	6.95*	5.14	3.62*	5.02
Technical professionals	6.06	7.64	7.71	7.19
Production workers	13.70*	3.51*	5.53*	7.55
Sociocultural professionals	31.78*	40.73	43.07*	39.02
Service workers	11.92*	9.40	5.39*	8.38
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	1007	798	1465	3270

Notes: *indicates adjusted residuals above +/– 1.96.
Pearson chi square = 228.0624; Cramer's V = .1867; p = .000.

sociocultural specialists are also more likely to attend cultural demonstrations than mixed ones (third model).

The regression analysis also allows us to examine the impact of value orientations on demonstrating. The core constituency of the new social movements – the sociocultural specialists – has been characterized in the literature as being formed by 'left-libertarians,' that is, as having leftist (as opposed to rightist) and libertarian (as opposed to authoritarian) political values (Kitschelt, 1988; Kriesi, 1989). Our data show a significant effect of libertarian values for participants in cultural demonstrations (first column). The effect is positive, indicating as expected that the latter are more libertarian than participants in redistributive demonstrations. We find no effect of leftist values, suggesting that participants in redistributive and cultural demonstrations are equally leftist. We also observe a negative effect of libertarian values for redistributive demonstrations (second column) and of leftist values for cultural demonstrations (third column), in both cases when contrasted to mixed demonstrations. Thus, participants in the latter are both more leftist and less libertarian than, respectively, participants in demonstrations around cultural issues and participants in demonstrations around redistributive issues.

After having established that social class matters, we show in more detail the social composition of demonstrations. Table 3 shows the distribution of social class across types of demonstrations. If we look first at the total distribution in the last column of the table – that is, without distinguishing between types of demonstrations – two classes are clearly overrepresented among protesters: associate managers and administrators (23%), but above all sociocultural specialists (39%). If we compare these figures with the distribution of these two occupational groups in the general population, we can see that the former range between 14% and 17%, while the latter represent between 13% and 14% of the population in our three countries (Hylmö and Wennerhag, 2012).[3] In contrast, there are not many production workers, as fewer than 8% of all demonstrators belong to this class, while they comprise between 18% and 21% of the general population (Hylmö and

Wennerhag, 2012). This occupational group is therefore much underrepresented among participants in demonstrations. A similar reasoning applies to service workers.

Thus, while other professional categories are also present, some in quite sizeable numbers, associate managers and administrators as well as the sociocultural specialists dominate the scene, regardless of the type of demonstration. The large share of sociocultural specialists is particularly striking. According to previous research, they form the core constituency of the new social movements (Kriesi, 1989); that is, they should be overrepresented in demonstrations on cultural issues (environment, peace, women's issues, gay and lesbian issues, etc.). As we can see in the other columns of the tables, while this holds for cultural demonstrations, sociocultural specialists are also much present in redistributive demonstrations. Here too they are the largest occupational group, although associate managers and administrators come close. Furthermore, they are even more present in mixed demonstrations, that is, in protest events that were either organized both by traditional and new social movement organizations and/or addressed both redistributive and cultural issues.

Such a strong presence of the sociocultural specialists casts doubts on previous accounts of the social composition of movements of the left. Specifically, new social movement theorists have long maintained that old and new social movements are clearly distinguished from each other in terms of their social base, organizational forms, action repertoires, and other characteristics (Dalton and Kuechler, 1990; Eder, 1993; Melucci, 1989, 1996; Offe, 1985; Touraine, 1978, 1984; see Buechler, 1995 and Pichardo, 1997 for overviews). More specifically, they maintained that old and new social movements have a different structural basis, in addition to addressing different issues (respectively, redistributive and cultural issues). While others have criticized this distinction (Brand, 1990; Kriesi et al., 1995; Olofsson, 1988; Plotke, 1990; Tarrow, 1991), 'new social movements' has become an often used analytical category and one opposed to the labor movement.

While this might have been true in the past, it no longer seems to apply today, or at least not to the same extent: participants in old (redistributive) and new (cultural) demonstrations today resemble each other in many respects, and the social base of these two types of movements is more similar than new social movement theorists have often claimed. Elsewhere we have interpreted this as a product of the changing cleavage structure in Europe, leading to a homogenization of the structural basis of the movements of the left, as can also be seen in the heterogeneous composition of some recent movements such as the global justice movement and the Occupy movement (Eggert and Giugni, 2012). This would result in bridging the gap between the structural and cultural location of new social movement participants (such as environmental, peace, women, and gay and lesbian movement participants), on the one hand, and that of old social movement participants (in particular, labor movement participants), on the other. Moreover, we have suggested that such a *rapprochement* is due to the fact that the new social movement constituency has expanded the range of issues around which it mobilizes, ranging from cultural to redistributive issues, hence entering a terrain traditionally 'reserved' to other social classes and occupational groups such as labor and production workers. Whether one buys into this interpretation or not, these findings support the idea that the most educated sectors of the middle class are the most likely to participate in protest

activities (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2001). The fact that the sociocultural specialists are strongly represented among mixed demonstrations, while this is not true for production workers, also points in this direction.

Although we do not predict in which direction, we expect the strength of the class cleavage to interact with social class to explain variations in the degree of similarity across types of demonstrations and, as a result, across movement types. Comparing our three countries allows us to test this hypothesis with our data, as they vary in the strength of class cleavage, in relative terms: stronger in Sweden, intermediate in Belgium, and weaker in Switzerland.

Table 4 shows the distribution of social class across types of demonstrations in each of the three countries. In general we obviously find the overwhelming presence of sociocultural specialists as well as associate managers and administrators observed in the full sample. But let us focus on the two occupational groups most often associated with the two types of demonstrations and movements at hand: production workers and sociocultural specialists. Our data show two patterns suggesting that the strength of the class cleavage does matter. On the one hand, sociocultural specialists are strongly present in all three countries, as we already saw earlier. However, they are particularly overrepresented among participants in redistributive demonstrations in Switzerland, to a lesser extent in Belgium, and still less in Sweden. In other words, the weaker the class cleavage, the more the typical constituency of the new social movements also takes the lion's share in demonstrations addressing redistributive issues. In the case of Switzerland, they are even more numerous in redistributive demonstrations than in cultural demonstrations. Here participation by sociocultural specialists in redistributive demonstrations reaches its peak. As a result, the difference in the share of participants belonging to this occupational group is larger in countries with a strong class cleavage than in countries with a weak class cleavage.

On the other hand, production workers are more present in countries with a strong class cleavage. Furthermore, they participate more in demonstrations around redistributive issues. Thus, as one would predict following previous research (Kriesi et al., 1995), the strength of the class cleavage may explain the stronger presence of production workers in demonstrations addressing redistributive issues in Sweden, followed by Belgium, and then Switzerland. However, the crucial point here is that this occupational group tends to remain confined to this type of event. In contrast, sociocultural professionals are not only much more mobilized, but they also have a broader range of events in which they participate, especially in countries in which the class cleavage is weaker. Their strong presence in mixed demonstrations, while production workers participate much less often in this type of demonstration, is a further indication of that.

Conclusion

In this article we looked at the structural basis of contemporary street demonstrations, asking whether it reflects differences across movement sectors hypothesized by new social movement theory. According to the latter, movements addressing cultural issues (i.e. the new social movements) and movements focusing on redistributive movements (i.e. the labor movement) would be substantially different in a variety of aspects such as

Table 4. Social class of participants in three types of demonstrations by country (percentages).

	Sweden			Belgium			Switzerland		
	Redistributive	Cultural	Mixed	Redistributive	Cultural	Mixed	Redistributive	Cultural	Mixed
Self-employed professionals	2.84*	7.67	9.74*	0.76*	5.65*	3.00	7.14	5.56*	12.53*
Small business owners	0.85*	4.46*	2.56	0.38*	3.23*	1.80	2.38	5.56	6.20
Associate managers and administrators	26.70*	15.10	13.08*	24.76	27.42	26.73	33.33*	30.74*	22.24*
Office clerks	5.97	5.20	4.10	8.70*	1.61*	5.71	2.38	6.67*	2.43*
Technical professionals	6.53	5.94	8.46	5.48*	10.48	9.01	7.14	8.89	6.74
Production workers	17.61*	3.96*	5.38*	13.04*	2.42*	8.71	5.56	3.33	4.18
Sociocultural professionals	25.85*	44.80*	48.72*	34.22*	45.16	41.44	38.10	32.59*	40.84*
Service workers	13.64	12.87	7.95*	12.67*	4.03	3.60*	3.97	6.67	4.85
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	352	404	390	529	124	333	126	270	742

Notes: *indicates adjusted residuals above +/– 1.96.
Sweden: Pearson chi square = 128.9576; Cramer's V = .2372; $p = .000$.
Belgium: Pearson chi square = 75.3548; Cramer's V = .1955; $p = .000$.
Switzerland: Pearson chi square = 40.8695; Cramer's V = .1340; $p = .000$.

their social base, the issues they raise, the values they convey, their organizational forms, and their action repertoires. We focused on the structural location of the movements' social base, showing that they are closer to each other than posited by this research tradition. Our results show that left-wing social movements are not as fragmented as new social movement theorists have maintained. In this respect, we find no support for the existence of two distinct movement sectors, one mobilizing on cultural issues and another on redistributive issues. Our findings point to a similarity of the structural basis of social movements of the left. Some have maintained that protest politics is the 'terrain of winners of globalization' (Kriesi et al., 2012), since sociocultural specialists are more engaged in protest than the 'losers' of globalization. We believe that our findings adds to this view by showing that on the left of the political spectrum demonstrations mobilize mainly sociocultural specialists with libertarian values, even across movement sectors that scholars have long considered as being distinct.

In addition, we considered the strength of the class cleavage in order to assess whether it still matters for contentious politics. We found that it still affects the social base of street demonstrations. The debate about the restructuring of the political space in Western European democracies is ongoing (Kriesi et al., 2008; Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009). However, it is largely centered on electoral politics, while little is known about how it affects contentious politics. Our analysis sheds light on the effect of social and cultural cleavages on contentious politics and suggests that traditional cleavages still matter. The structure of street demonstrations thus varies across countries according to the importance of traditional cleavages. While issues tend to become globalized and transnational like in the global justice movement and the more recent Occupy movement, national cleavage structures still affect contentious politics. Specifically, we found support for an effect of the class cleavage for movements of the left. Although we cannot generalize to the entire political spectrum, we found that leftist movements are very similar in their social base and mainly mobilize the so-called 'winners' of globalization.

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Notes

1. Oesch's class scheme is a modification of the Erikson–Goldthorpe–Portocarrero (EGP) classification which tries to adjust the EGP to post-industrial stratification. As such, it is well suited for the purpose of our study as it allows us to clearly distinguish different categories within the middle class.
2. We recoded this item so that the highest value measures a more socialist position.

3. It should be noted, however, that Hylmö and Wennerhag (2012) have included students in their analysis, while we excluded them. So the comparison should be take this into account (students make up between 8% and 11% of the population).

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Résumé

Cet article analyse le rôle de la classe sociale dans la participation individuelle à des mouvements sociaux, en particulier aux manifestations de rue. Afin d'éviter les limites des recherches précédentes, les auteurs utilisent les données d'enquête sur les mouvements de protestation, en examinant dans son contexte l'effet de la classe sociale sur la participation aux protestations. L'article est centré sur les manifestations concernant les questions de redistribution et les questions culturelles, conformément à une distinction bien connue entre les anciens et les nouveaux mouvements sociaux. Les auteurs montrent que les participants à ces deux catégories de manifestations, ainsi qu'à une troisième catégorie mixte, présentent une structure de classe similaire, ce qui jette un certain doute sur cette distinction - bien qu'on observe encore de légères différences. En outre, la comparaison qui est faite entre trois pays où le clivage de classe n'a pas la même importance (la Belgique, le Suède et la Suisse), indique que plus le clivage social est important, moins il y a de rapport entre l'appartenance à une classe sociale et la participation aux manifestations de rue.

Mots-clés

Belgique, clivage de classe, manifestations, mouvements sociaux, Suède, Suisse

Resumen

Este artículo examina el papel de la clase social en la participación individual en los movimientos sociales, más específicamente en las manifestaciones callejeras. Los autores utilizan datos de encuestas sobre protesta con el fin de evitar las limitaciones de las investigaciones previas, para contextualizar el efecto de la clase social en la participación en protestas. El análisis se centra en manifestaciones que abordan cuestiones redistributivas y culturales, reflejando así una distinción bien conocida entre antiguos y nuevos movimientos sociales. Los autores muestran que los participantes en estos dos tipos de manifestaciones, así como en una tercera categoría mixta, presentan una estructura de clases similar, lo que plantea algunas dudas sobre esta distinción, aunque existen ligeras diferencias. Además, una comparación de tres países que difieren en cuanto a la fuerza del clivaje de clase (Bélgica, Suecia y Suiza) sugiere que este clivaje actúa como moderador de la relación entre clase social y participación en manifestaciones callejeras.

Palabras clave

Bélgica, clivaje de clase, manifestaciones, movimientos sociales, Suecia, Suiza

Appendix 1

Demonstrations included in the analysis.

Demonstration name	Country	Organizer	Issue	Final
May 1st March (Antwerp)	Belgium	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
Climate Change (Brussels)	Belgium	Mixed	Cultural	Mixed
Fukushima Never Again (Brussels)	Belgium	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
March for Work (Brussels)	Belgium	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
No to Austerity (Brussels)	Belgium	Redistributive	Mixed	Mixed
Non-Profit Demonstration (Brussels)	Belgium	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
We Have Alternatives (Brussels)	Belgium	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
Against Racist Politics (Stockholm)	Sweden	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
Anti-Nuclear Demonstration (Stockholm)	Sweden	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
May 1st March, Left Party (Stockholm)	Sweden	Cultural	Redistributive	Mixed
May 1st March, Social Democratic Party (Stockholm)	Sweden	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
May Day (Left Party) (Gothenburg)	Sweden	Cultural	Redistributive	Mixed
May Day (Left Party) (Malmö)	Sweden	Cultural	Redistributive	Mixed
May Day (SAP/LO) (Malmö)	Sweden	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
May Day (Social Democratic) Party/LO) (Gothenburg)	Sweden	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
Rainbow Parade (LGBTQ festival) (Gothenburg)	Sweden	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
Anti-Nuclear Manifestation (Beznau)	Switzerland	Mixed	Cultural	Mixed
Anti-Nuclear (Mühleberg)	Switzerland	Mixed	Cultural	Mixed
Gay Pride (Geneva)	Switzerland	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
May 1st Demonstration (Zurich)	Switzerland	Mixed	Redistributive	Mixed
May 1st Demonstration 2011 (Geneva)	Switzerland	Redistributive	Redistributive	Redistributive
Pride Demonstration (Zurich)	Switzerland	Cultural	Cultural	Cultural
Women's Demonstration (Geneva) (Geneva)	Switzerland	Mixed	Cultural	Mixed
World March of Women (Berne)	Switzerland	Redistributive	Cultural	Mixed

Appendix 2

Descriptive statistics of the variables included in the analysis.

Variable	Obs.	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Redistributive (vs cultural)	1752	0.439	0.496	0	1
Mixed (vs redistributive)	2414	0.407	0.491	0	1
Mixed (vs cultural)	2200	0.350	0.477	0	1
Social class	3183	5.236	2.156	1	8
Left	3183	4.310	0.728	1	5
Libertarian	3183	3.333	0.870	1	5
Age	3183	47.549	14.41	13	88
Female	3183	0.528	0.499	0	1