

**When and Where Class Matters for Political Outcomes:
Class and Politics in a Cross-National Perspective**

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Introduction

Class conceptualization and measurement greatly influences the discovery of class effects in empirical models of political outcomes. As Wright (1997a) and Sorensen (2000) demonstrate by providing convincing examples, different research questions imply different, equally legitimate, definitions of class. We agree with the view that plurality and diversity of concepts of class is an essential part of discourse in social sciences, and there are no intellectual reasons to limit it. However, in each research instance it is important to clarify the meaning of the concept and explain its main properties and relations with other concepts pertaining to structured social inequality.

In this chapter, we discuss both universal class schemas (particularly useful for cross-national research) as well as time/space specific class schemas (particularly useful for country-focused research). Surveying contemporary literature, we set explicit criteria for assessing the relevance of class on political outcomes. The class literature is vast, ranging from studies of class as collective action to accounts of how class membership influences individual thoughts and actions. While we are mindful that group processes are relevant for class analysis, a full survey of the class and politics literature in its entirety is not feasible for a single book chapter. Thus, we deliberately focus on the influence of class membership on political attitudes and behaviors, with individuals as the units of analysis, leaving group processes, such as collective action, for the discussion section.

Although in practice, the conceptualization and measurement differ from study to study, we opt for such a theoretical approach that proved to be particularly useful in detecting the consequences of the location of individuals in the social structure. This approach also allows us to demonstrate links between social class and social movements.

In his fundamental study, Ossowski (1963) argues that social classes are frequently defined by complex criteria that blur their hierarchical location in the social structure. In our view, ownership of the means of production, the share in political power, control over production and distribution of goods, control of the labor power, and skills relevant on the labor market provide the basis for distinguishing social classes. According to these criteria, social classes constitute entities which are only *partially* ordered by their definitional criteria. For example, in the control over labor power, managers are obviously higher than office workers and technicians; however, it is less clear what managers' positions are in comparison to those of business owners or the self-employed or even members of professional groups. Business owners are at the top according to the "ownership of the means of production" criterion but how they compare with professionals on the "skill" dimension depends on many specific factors. The placement of farmers and factory workers on one dimension could be different than on other class-defining dimensions. Therefore, social class should be treated as a *nominal* rather than *ordinal* variable.

We find it useful to distinguish between social class and social stratification, although these concepts are frequently confused in the literature. Assuming that social class should be treated as nominal rather than ordinal variable, we note that social stratification position – usually indicated by a combination of formal education, occupational status, and earned income – implies social hierarchy. Of course, members of diverse social classes differ with respect to the level of their education, social standing of their jobs, or the amount of their income. In this sense education, occupational status, and income are the *secondary*

characteristics of social class. Under this understanding we can legitimately ask about the hierarchy of social classes according to the external criteria of the extent of participation of their members in the pool of unequally distributed goods. Thus, we pose the question of “how social classes are stratified” as an empirical one. We believe that this is a more useful approach than declaring *a priori* the hierarchy of classes by naming them “upper class,” “middle class,” or “lower class.”

We agree with classic and contemporary scholarship that class relations shape class outcomes. Class interactions, whether at the group or individual level, influence the political attitudes, behaviors and fortunes of individual class members. We do not take sides in the debate over the nature of the interactions – whether these interactions are characterized by exploitation, some other dominance/subordination process, or even contractual relations (e.g. Wright 2002, Goldthorpe 2000). Rather, we argue simply that the link between class and politics is rooted in conflicts over distribution of scarce and valued resources. Such conflicts are found in a variety of situations, ranging from conventional political debates to violent protests and social revolutions.

We rely on theoretical premises of sociological discussions concerning the class structure of contemporary societies since at least the mid-twentieth century. According to these premises, in the course of macro-social changes, some class indicators are of universal nature and apply equally well to a diverse set of countries while others increase or decrease in their importance for particular time and space; they are country-specific. We begin with providing examples of universal class schemas used for a variety of industrial and post-industrial countries of the Western world. Then we give some examples of analysis in which social class is contextualized within particular historical circumstances. These examples pertain to the communist and post-communist European societies.

Class Schemas in Cross-National Research

Economic classes, usually considered in cross-national research, are based on employment relations and characteristics of jobs. The well-known CASMIN schema, initially developed by Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (1979), which we will refer to as the “EGP” schema (for the authors’ surnames), relies on several criteria that are rooted in the differentiation of labor contracts. In contrast to this neo-Weberian approach, the neo-Marxian notion of class relies primarily on ownership of the means of production and authority relations that are of an antagonistic nature. Eric Olin Wright (1985), a proponent of the conflict approach, included a degree of expertise as well as of exploitation in his class schema. Wright’s schema (WRT hereafter) became popular in theoretical discussion and empirical analysis. The third schema used in cross-national research, developed by Esping Andersen (1993) – referred to as ESP in the literature, see Leiulsrud, Bison, and Jensberg 2005) – mostly represents the institutional school and an “Adam Smithian world of unfettered markets” (Esping Andersen 1993: 8).

All three schema, EGP, WRT and ESP, are based on similar criteria although conceptualizations of these criteria and weights attached to them differ significantly. Following Leiulfsrud, Bison and Jensberg (2005), we summarize how the five basic criteria function in each of the schemas:

1. *Property*, and profit from capital. In the EGP schema this criterion serves mainly to single out capitalists, part of the “top” class, but also – in combination with other criteria – it is used for distinguishing the self-employed. Ownership of the means of production is of crucial importance in the WRT schema since on this basis two categories of capitalists and the self-employed are separated from employees. This criterion does not enter in any meaningful way into the ESP schema.

2. *Control over labor power.* In the EGP and ESP schemas, this is a criterion used in parallel with other criteria since managers and supervisors are lumped together with other categories. In the WRT schema the managerial and supervisory positions belong to the decisive factors classifying people into social classes; in addition, work independence is assessed to classify semi-autonomous employees.

3. *Skills.* Skills are measured by the degree of expertise, proficiency, and know-how as a function of education, apprenticeship, and experience. This criterion is used in all three schemas, although it is crucial in EGP and ESP schemas and it plays a secondary role in the WRT schema. In all three schemas routine non-manual employees are divided according to a “higher” and “lower” grade and skilled manual workers are distinguished from unskilled manual workers.

4. *Type of work and/or sector of economy.* This criterion enters the EGP and ESP schemas in different ways. In the former, farmers are included among the self employed, and the manual/non-manual distinctions is made. In the latter, the three sector division into primary, industrial (Fordist), and postindustrial is crucial, and only within the last two sectors are specific classes – mainly based on skills – distinguished. This criterion is not used in the WRT schema at all.

5. *Life chances.* In the EGP schema it is a supplementary criterion to differentiate jobs with typical middle-class trajectories. It is also implicitly included in the ESP schema but not in the WRT schema.

In Tables 1-3 we list social classes for all three schemas with labels usually applied in cross-national research. The data come from the 2006 European Social Survey (ESS), and include twenty five countries, itemized below each table, with the division into West and East Europe, symbolizing the developed capitalist part of the continent and its post-communist

counterpart.¹ In distinguishing social classes, we use codes provided by Leiulfstrud, Bison, and Jensberg (2005). Each table is constructed in the same way and provides information on distribution of the working population, aged 18 to 65, according to the class schema, social stratification position, and soft protest behavior. Here is the summary of the results:

In both West and East Europe, the distributions of the working population according to the EGP and WRT schemas are closer than each of them and the distribution of the same population according to WRT schema. Symmetric measures of the proportional reduction in error are as follows: for the EGP and ESP schemas 0.597 in West Europe and 0.684 in East Europe; for the EGP and WRT schemas 0.357 in Western Europe and 0.362 in East Europe; and for ESP and WRT schemas 0.319 in both parts of Europe.

Social stratification position, as measured in Tables 1-3, is a linear combination of education, occupation, and income. In the case of education we rely on years of schooling, corrected for some cross-national inconsistencies. In particular, we noted that in some countries tertiary education exceeded its equivalent in other countries, so we put a limit of 18 years of schooling, reserving 24 years for the PhD degree as an exception. For the best synthetic indicator of occupation we experimented with SES and prestige scores, finding that having a job in skilled non-manual occupations is most indicative for the social standing, thus taking SES (Ganzeboom and Treiman 2003). Finally, we included household income transformed into mid-point cumulative distribution of all descriptive categories of the ESS. Generally, all three indicators are highly correlated with the factor loadings: education (0.818), occupation (0.776), and income (0.635). Eigenvalue of the factor equals 1.676, and the proportion of common variance 55.8 percent.

¹ The *European Social Survey* (ESS) is a multi-country biennial survey. The first round of the ESS was carried out in 2002 in 22 countries, the second round (2004) embraced 26 countries, and in the third round (2006) 25 countries participated. The questionnaire includes a “core” module that remains relatively constant from round to round. It focuses on political orientations (public trust, political interest, governance and efficacy) and social values and economic attitudes (primarily those toward well-being). Additional modules focus on particular issues such as immigration or gender roles. See: www.europeansocialsurvey.org

Results presented in Tables 1-3 clearly demonstrate that the EGP, WRT, and ESP schemas are differently related to the social stratification index. Generally, the schema that has the greatest explanatory power is EGP, followed by ESP. However, the WRT schema makes a distinction between certain classes – managers and supervisors, in particular – that is blurred by other schemas. We also note that for each class schema, social classes are differently stratified in West Europe and East Europe. For example according to the EGP schema self-employed are below routine non-manual workers in West Europe but not in East Europe. Moreover, in the EGP and ESP schemas, position of farmers and farm workers is much lower in East Europe than in West Europe; the similar pattern of inter-regional differences applies to the position of skilled and unskilled workers in the WRT schema.

In the last two columns of Tables 1-3, we provide the percentage of people who participated in at least one of the following forms of soft political protest: legal demonstration, signing a petition, and contacting government officials.² In each of the three class schemas—EGP, WRT and ESP—the differences between the class-maximum and class-minimum exceed 20 percent in the case of West Europe and 30 percent in the case of East Europe, although on the average the level of participation is higher in the former than in the latter. In East Europe the class-minimum is particularly low: 4.7 percent among farm workers (EGP and ESP) and 12.9 in the case of unskilled workers (WRT). However, neither for West Europe nor for East Europe, it would be easy to decide which schema is better since each has some advantages. For example, in the case of West Europe the highest percentage of soft political protesters is found among professionals, administrators, and managers – higher grade (EGP), low skilled managers (WRT), and semi-professionals (ESP). The EGP schema well

² Soft political-protest is similar to “conventional” protest, said to include legal demonstration and signing petitions (Jenkins and Form 2005). We add here contacting a politician, government or local government official, since we must take into account that soft political-protest might be exercised in alternative forms in various countries. In particular, in one country signing a petition can be treated as a functional equivalent of contacting a politician or official in another country. This seems to be especially relevant for countries with weak petition-signing culture, as is the case in new democracies (see Inglehart and Catterberg 2002).

distinguishes the privileged classes while both the WRT and ESP schemas provide more subtle, albeit different, solutions for delineating classes in the middle of the scale on control over the labor power or skills.

Class differences in the political behavior stem to considerable extent from their location on the stratification ladder (cf. Leiulfsrud, Bison, and Jensberg 2005, Table 7.1-3). Using the same 2006 ESS data, we demonstrated elsewhere (Dubrow, Slomczynski, and Tomescu–Dubrow 2007) that the advantaged stratification position leads to a higher likelihood of soft political-protest behavior. The increase in stratification position by one standard deviation boosts the chances of undertaking soft political protest by at least 15 to 20 percent, in some cases even 50 percent. Thus, the hypothesis stating that stratification position positively influences the probability of people’s soft political protest is strongly confirmed.

The results presented in Tables 1-3 have profound implications for interpretation of the class effects on political attitudes and behaviors because of the empirical relationship of class to stratification. For some countries, the EGP schema would have a strong explanatory power since it captures basic social inequalities. For others, the WRT or ESP schemas would be a better choice for the same reason.

Time-Specific and Country-Specific Class Schemas

Contemporary empirical literature on class analysis often assumes the time-invariant class schema, like in mobility studies, in which for the period between two generations, that is for time span of more than 30 years, the same class schema is used (e.g., Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992, Breen 2005). However, Western democracies changed in the last fifty years in terms of their economic structures and institutional arrangements affecting social classes. In particular, due to increasing deindustrialization and the pace of globalization we

cannot assume that the economic conditions of the 1960s in the United States and Europe are comparable to those of the 1990s or early 2000s. Also, one could point out large inter-country differences in economic structures and institutional arrangements even among the most developed countries in the world; such differences are undeniable (Tilly 1984).

If no one could seriously argue that countries have shared exactly the same economic, political and cultural conditions and that these conditions remained constant over the course of their histories, why should we use the same class schema for all industrialized countries, not even mentioning the case of underdeveloped countries? Using the same class schema across European countries, we demonstrated that there is great variation in class composition. Part of these inter-country differences – in concert with relations among classes – stem from the neglect of country-specific class divisions in the overarching grand class schemas.

For example, before 1989 the class structure in Central and Eastern Europe was rooted in political segmentation of the labor market and the consequences of “forced industrialization.” Reviewing the literature, we found strong arguments that the basic criterion of class structure of capitalist society, the ownership of the means of production, had very limited consequences in Central and Eastern Europe. Only in Poland and Yugoslavia, *farmers* succeeded in maintaining the ownership of the means of production (on the interests of this class, see Gorlach and Mooney 1998). The *petty bourgeoisie* was a residual class, constituting less than three percent of the labor force. However, its link to traditional economic activities and an increasing role of the “second economy” during the late socialism (Galasi and Sziraczki 1985) justified its inclusion in the class schema. Party leaders formed a distinct class, *Nomenklatura*, that controlled access to economic and political resources.³

³ *Nomenklatura* in itself is simply “a list of positions, arranged in order of seniority, including a description of duties of each office (Harasymiv 1969: 122). However, in reality, it carried significant status and power in all communist countries because appointments to these positions required ratification by an appropriate party committee. It served as “nervous system of the party” extending to all levels of society, and enabling the part-state to penetrate all layers of the social system (Lewis 1985).

Under communist rule, two groups exercised control over labor: managers and supervisors. *Managers* formed a group that was directly involved in the process of economic planning. At the same time, managers had to ensure that economic decisions remained subordinate to ideological goals, which affected the group's interests in relation to other classes. *Supervisors* possessed immediate control over others but lacked any decision-making power over the production process.

In a state-owned economy, the mental component of performed work differentiated non-manual workers from all manual workers. Production work set *factory workers* at the core of the working class, differentiating them from all other types of manual workers. Economically, manual factory workers were central to socialist industrialization. Politically, their concentration, and the means of resistance through potential demonstrations and strikes that such concentration allowed for, made this group the main bargaining force with the government, especially in countries like Poland.

It has been demonstrated that in Poland this kind of country-specific schema explains social inequality better than the most popular universal schemas of EGP, and WRT (Słomczynski et al. 2007). The similar class-schema proposed by Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley, and Townsley (2001) takes also into account subtle changes through time in all of Eastern Europe. Actually, these authors show in detail how the class structure evolves from the pre-Second-World-War period, through the typical communist era and reform phase, to the post-communist transformation. The work of these authors is an excellent example of an attempt to focus on temporal and systemic specificity rather than universalizing tools for studying structured inequality. In explaining political attitudes and behaviors this approach should not be neglected.

Class Analysis and Its Critics

Over the last half century social scientists have debated the relevance of class for political attitudes and behaviors. The modern debate began with Nisbet's (1959) assertion that class does not matter much in modern society.⁴ The debate was continued in Clark and Lipset's (1991) macabre speculation, "Are Social Classes Dying?," and culminated in Pakulski and Waters' (1996) outright pronouncement of the *Death of Class* and in Kingston's (2000) *Classless Society*. All of these views – what we term the dying/dead class thesis -- argue similarly that as the 20th century progressed, class declined in relevance.

We will briefly discuss two of the major works in the field that are emblematic of the dying/dead class thesis. Pakulski and Waters' (1996) extremist formulation of the problem is centered on the degree of "classlessness" of modern societies. They argue that when social class is defined as rooted in property and market relations containing members who have at least a minimal awareness of their class position, empirical studies show that class has ceased to matter for modern political life. In their view, the phenomena of class -- ideologies, cultures and political organizations -- are just history. They try to develop a theoretically-based argument that social classes are replaced by modern social cleavages – ethnicity, gender, status and consumption, to name a few -- which derive their importance from divergent ideologies and cultural interests.

The main problem with this argument is Pakulski and Water's neglect to consider the obvious option that new cleavages – especially those of consumer behavior and life styles – are rooted in the current class structure defined by the well-established class-criteria "who controls whom?": employers vs. employees, managers and supervisors vs. production workers, and so on. On empirical grounds their analyses were severely criticized. Thus, this and Kingston's (2000) work opens discussion rather than gives the definite test of the dying/dead class thesis.

⁴ One of the earliest oppositionists to the thesis on diminishing role of social classes in the United States was Richard F. Hamilton (1972) who documented that supposed malaise of the "lower-middle class" and the presumed intolerance and political incapacity of blue-collar workers had no empirical foundation.

The Breakdown of Class Politics, a much cited edited volume by Clark and Lipset (2001), followed *The End of Class Politics?* (Evans 1999), essentially focuses on class voting. The main argument Clark and Lipset start from is the following: from the view of objective interests, the working-class should vote for left-wing parties; when they do not, class becomes irrelevant for political behavior. However, the left-wing parties are so thoroughly institutionalized as “catch-all parties” that they no longer pursue the working-class interest in promoting radical economic redistribution.

Much of the controversy pertaining to the effects of class on voting lies on whether the Alford Index is a worthy measure of class and political parties. In a succinct definition, this index “is easily calculated from social survey data, that is, by taking the percentage of the working class who vote for left-wing parties and then subtracting from this percentage of those not in working class who vote for such parties. The larger the index, the stronger, it is supposed, is the class-vote link” (Goldthorpe: 110). Goldthorpe goes on to argue that the Alford’s index is essentially a Marxist schema: “the index directly reflects, and is indeed entirely dependent upon, the idea of a simple class dichotomy – working class versus a residual nonworking class – taken together with a corresponding party dichotomy – left versus residual nonleft... [if] more than two classes or more than two kinds of party are recognized, then the Alford Index simply cannot be used” (110). Much of Hout, Manza and Brooks’s work on the subject is a rejection of the Alford Index and an embrace of the CASMIN schema.

On the side of the Alford Index debate, Nieubeerta (2001) begins with a modification of the Alford Index – what he calls the Thomsen Index – that measures relative class voting through a log-odds-ratio as a measure of the class-vote link: “the log-odds-ratio can also be regarded as the log-odds for manual workers voting for left-wing political party rather than a right-wing party minus the log-odds for non-manual workers voting in this way” (124). Using

the CASMIN schema for a subset of countries, he finds similar results to the modified Alford Index. In his estimation, class is losing its relevance. In sum, for those who argue for the Alford Index, class is dying; for the others, class is thriving.

The foundations of the dying/dead class thesis rest on problematic assertions. First of all, this thesis is usually argued referring to class divisions and class schemas that are deficient for class analysis. As Scott (2002: 23) points out, we observe “not so much the death of class as a restructuring of class relations.” The conceptual deficiency of the large part of the research stems from relying on the outdated class criteria or confusing classes with stratification position. The more inadequate the class schema, the easier is to demonstrate empirically that class does not matter for political outcomes.⁵

In addition, the proponents of the dying/dead class thesis do not provide criteria for the refutation of their thesis. We cite two conditions that should be clearly specified in all analysis of this type (Slomczynski and Shabad 2000):

Condition 1. About the mean values or proportions: Social classes differ considerably in the average values or proportions of essential characteristics under study. If the difference between the average values or proportions for some pairs of classes is statistically significant, then there is a basis for rejecting the null hypothesis of no-effect for social class.

Condition 2. About the variance or variability: The between class differentiation of essential characteristics under study is substantially larger than within-class differentiation. Again, statistical significance of an F statistic or its analogs for ordinal and discrete variables is an appropriate base for rejecting a null hypothesis about no-effect of social class.

For both conditions, the size of the inter-class differences matter – not only the statistical significance. Critical reading of the results of studies on the death of class thesis

⁵ Using bad class schemas, researchers arguing “against class” have a tendency of committing an error of not rejecting the null hypothesis H_0 while H_0 does not reflect the reality. In statistics this situation corresponds to the Type II error.

should take into account the consequences of the reported inter-class differences, or lack of thereof, for the functioning of a given society. We also note that this thesis was not tested in the international labor market, especially in the increasingly integrated labor market of the European Union, where mobility between countries calls for considering at least some classes – like managers or unskilled workers – as crossing traditional national borders.

Social Class and Political Participation

As Sidney Verba and collaborators point out, political participation is stratified (Verba *et al.* 1978; APSA 2004). The most consistent finding in this literature is that the advantaged, more privileged members of society tend to participate in political life more than its disadvantaged, less privileged members. Most explanations of class effects are resource based: class inequality in human, social, and cultural capital influences the costs of political participation, enabling some to engage in politics and stopping others from doing so. Indeed, class has such strong effects that it can attenuate the effects of rival variables (Verba *et al.* 1993). Strong class identity, measured in terms of self-identification in both quantitative and qualitative studies, influences the propensity to participate (Walsh *et al.* 2004; Surridge 2007).

Electoral Participation

In the debate over the effects of class on political behavior, voting behavior receives a particularly robust attention (cf. Redding *et al.* and Brady *et al.* in this volume). Since we mentioned some aspects of the debate in the context of discussion of the dying/dead class thesis, we point out here that class effects on voter turnout are strong: Undoubtedly unskilled manuals and other members of the working class tend to vote less frequently than owners, managers, and professionals (ASPA 2004; Gallego 2008). In the United States, making it easier to register to vote, such as election-day registration, does not necessarily reduce this

inequality (Knack and White 2000; see also Gronke *et al.* 2008). Class effects on the act of voting remain large and stable over time, regardless of electoral context (Leighley and Nagler 1992; Shields and Goidel 1997).

Class voting implies that classes have definite and distinct political interests that, when realized, improve the life chances of class members (e.g. Hout *et al.* 1995). However, extant research neglects the problem of whether voting according to class interest actually benefits the voter. To what extent do the life chances of those who voted for the “right” party improve? At the macro-level, we can consider the gains of voting according to class interests for the entire class, especially visible through changes in legislation and policy concerning economic redistribution. At the micro-level, class interest could be defined on the individual level. For each individual worker, it is in his or her interest to vote for a working class party because of expected personal benefits. Thus, the question is about the individual return for voting according to class interests.

Non-electoral Political Participation

Gallego (2008), using the European Social Survey and the EGP class schema, finds that disadvantaged groups are less likely than their advantaged counterparts to participate in any of diverse political acts. Owners, the service class and non-manual workers are more likely to vote, work with parties and action groups, and boycott than manual workers. Unlike the service class and non-manual workers, owners are less likely to attend public demonstrations since they tend to defend *status quo*. Gallego’s (2008) findings align with studies from the United States (e.g. Wallace and Jenkins 1995; Jenkins and Wallace 1996). Contemporary European countries are similar to the United States in that economic hardship depresses propensity for voting, providing evidence of social and political convergence of industrial societies.

Social movement and political protest participation are also impacted by class. Studies of student protestors found that they come mainly from middle class backgrounds (Sherkat and Blocker 1994; Westby and Braungart 1966). Educated salaried professionals from socio-cultural and public sectors are more likely to express civil disobedience (Jenkins and Wallace 1996). Transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, middle class protestors from the 1960s tended to continue their sense of rebelliousness (Franz and McClelland 1994).

Social Psychology of Social Class

Class consciousness is assumed to be a foundation of class action (Mann 1973; Brooks 1994). Classes vary in the degree to which they possess class consciousness and thus vary in the degree to which they act – i.e. transform their views of political interests into specific political battles. However, as Rose (1997: 462) notes: “Class does shape consciousness, but no particular political content can be read from one’s position in the class hierarchy.” Class consciousness is formed as a reaction to events determined by class position. Korpi’s (1983) power resource theory well explains that class relations, including class consciousness, are an outcome of the “democratic class struggle” in the political sphere. In this sense, the class consciousness is an equivalent of class ideology. Simultaneously the mobilization of class struggle affects the degree to which lower class positions are related to lower class identifications. In consequence, class consciousness is historically contingent on class struggle. We return to this point at the end of this chapter.

Social psychology of social class is concerned with how individuals’ class membership and their class interests influence their orientations toward society. The simplest mechanism is of learning generalization: people from different classes experience the world in particular way and generalize it on other aspects of their life (Kohn and Schooler 1983). Generally, people from advantaged social classes are more intellectually flexible, value self-

direction more highly for their children, and have more self-directed orientations to self and society than people from disadvantaged social classes (Kohn and Slomczynski 1990; Kohn 2006). The mechanism for this relationship lies with class-based activities, characteristics of people's jobs in particular. People from advantaged social classes are more intellectually flexible, value self-direction more highly for their children, and have more self-directed orientations to self and society because they are engaged in self-directed types of work and generalize this experience to non-occupational domains. How do conditions of life affect attitudes toward democracy and welfare state? We try to answer this question balancing the learning generalization hypothesis with the hypothesis about class interests.

Class Attitudes toward Democracy

Class matters for support for democracy because this type of regime provides people with differentiating choices, dividing the citizenry into winners and losers on various measures, from economic resources to political gains and cultural values. Managers, entrepreneurs, professionals, and other upper-level white collars are in advantageous position to reap the rewards and minimize the deleterious effects of risks build into the "democratic game." It is these classes, as opposed to the working class, unskilled manuals, and peasants that are more likely to support democracy. Measuring class as a function of occupation, education and income, Moreno (2001) finds that in Latin America, class contributes significantly to support for democracy. Semi-skilled and unskilled blue collar workers are less likely to support democracy than skilled non-manuals. In Poland, support for elections among women, the younger generation, and members of the working class and peasantry is weaker than it is among men, the middle-aged, and members of privileged classes (Janicka and Slomczynski 2004).

There is considerable debate over the proper measures of support for democracy (Canache et al 2001; Mishler and Rose 2001; Slomczynski and Shabad 2002; Linde and Ekman 2003). Mishler and Rose (2001), for example, argue that so-called idealist measures of democratic support -- in terms satisfaction with the general framework of this kind of regime - - are not appropriate for citizens of new democracies and transitional regimes with little direct experience with democratic norms and ideals. Applying a three-category class schema based on self-identification to the World Values Survey data from thirty eight countries, Mishler and Rose find class effects for realist measure rather than idealist. Overall, there are theoretically and empirically sound reasons to maintain the distinction between endorsement of the fundamental principles of democracy and evaluation of the performance of a particular regime (Slomczynski and Shabad 2002).

Class Attitudes toward the Welfare State

There are two main explanations for class attitudes toward the welfare state invoking class interests: (1) class politics, emphasized by Korpi (1983), shaping attitudes at key junctures in the history of class struggle, and (2) rational choice, emphasized by Lipset (1963), according to which the working class members support a strong welfare state and economic redistribution because such policies benefit them directly (cf. Papadakis 1993). Variation in class differences across time and space has many causes. Policies that are more clearly aligned with class interests, such as employment and wages are more likely to have large class differences than policies relatively distant to class interests (Svallfors 2004; Van de Werfhorst and de Graaf 2004). Welfare state policies such as health care and living standards for the elderly do not have clear-cut class interests and hence the class differences in attitudes toward these policies are not very large. Cross-national variation in class determinants of attitudes toward welfare policies depends on (a) the results of previous political power

struggles and (b) type of welfare state regime, conceptualized according to Esping-Andersen's (1990) well-known typology: social democratic, liberal, and conservative-corporatist (Svallfors 1993; 2004).

Country-specific research suggests additional explanations for the class-welfare state policy attitude connection. In the United States, Brooks and Manza (1997) suggest that rising economic satisfaction leads to changes in attitudes toward the welfare state. They note that professionals remain liberal but there is a declining support for the welfare-state among unskilled workers. Anders (2004), writing about Flanders, argues that the members of underprivileged classes are not leftist in their welfare policy orientation, but rather economic populist. In Poland, the populist tendencies among the working class and farmers are documented (Kunovich 2000). Poles belonging to non-manual classes have a propensity to be the least supportive of welfare state policies. It is interesting that the self-employed are like laborers, revealing populist tendencies, probably because of uncertainties built into their current status.

Representation of Social Classes in Political Entities

The extent of class hegemony of the legislative body translates into a situation in which a specific class controls, directly and indirectly, the parliament and the state apparatus. When one class dominates the legislature, voices of other classes are muted (APSA 2004); when one class dominates the state apparatus, it biases policy in favor of itself (Domhoff 2000). The issue of class hegemony is often discussed in the context of political representation.

Are various segments of social structure appropriately represented in the parliament? Literature on the subject distinguishes two types of representation: compositional representation -- also known as descriptive, proportional, or statistical -- and delegate, or

group-interest representation. If the public and politicians express some concern when the percentage of women elected to the parliament drops below a certain threshold—for example 15 or 20 percent—they have in mind compositional representation. There are some persuasive normative arguments that under certain conditions disadvantaged demographic categories—as in the case of gender—should have a parliamentary representation in some reasonable proportion to the share in the population (Young 1990; Mansbridge 1999). The same notion of representation applies to social classes, disadvantaged classes in particular.

Descriptive representation in the parliament can be a critical factor in whose voice is heard, when, and how loud in the legislature (Mansbridge: 1999; Swers 2002).

Representatives from various segments of social structure translate shared group experiences into substantive representation – i.e. representation of interests. It is in the political interest of all groups, including social classes, to enhance their own descriptive representation in the state apparatus.

It is well established that in modern democracies the classes with greatest access to and acquisition of economic resources have proportionally more of their own representatives than their relative share in the class structure. This is evidenced by these classes' most favorable ratio of the percentage of its parliamentarians to the percentage of its members in the entire society. In this sense, the privileged classes control the legislature and indirectly the state apparatus. In practice, legislation and policy tend to reflect their interests more than the interests of other, lesser-resourced classes (Bartels 2002; Hill and Leighly 1992).

Five major factors through which political inequality in descriptive representation arises have been identified. At the individual level there are the following factors: (1) voters' recognition of descriptive representatives (Dubrow 2007; Domanski 2007), (2) being politically active through campaign contributions and other forms of political participation (Gallego 2008; APSA 2004), and (3) associating with politicians and other members of the

state within elite networks in order to influence members of the state's political elite (Domhoff 2000). At the organizational level additional factors are distinguished: (4) controlling the party apparatus through gate keeping and control of the supply of descriptive representatives of certain classes (see Paxton and Kunovich 2003) and (5) forming class-based political organizations, such as unions, social movement organizations, and political parties (van den Berg and Janoski 2005). All of these factors could be included into a general model of descriptive representation – a model in which the role of the interest of disadvantaged classes is crucial. However, as it has been noted, workers are not always unified in their interests, nor are their interests always at odds with those of their employers (Hall 1997).

Future research

Accepting a diversity of approaches in class analysis, we consider four fundamental issues as necessary for further progress in this area. The first conceptual issue deals with multidimensionality of class and an extension of this concept to political and cultural spheres. As it has been noted, historically class “in its social sense of the term denotes large groups among which unequal distribution of economic goods and/or preferential division of political prerogatives and/or discriminatory differentiation of cultural values result from economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural domination, respectively” (Wesolowski and Slomczynski 1993: 81). In recent years most research pertained to economic classes. Political classes are based on their share of the control over laws, bureaucracy, and other political means. Because of institutional arrangements of the state bureaucracy between rulers and the ruled, there exist groups with different, sometimes antagonistic, interests (for cross-national review, see Borchert and Zeiss 2003). In addition, cultural classes, distinguished by production, distribution, and consumption of information, play a more important role (e.g.

Eder 1993). The fitting of classes to societal context is necessary because economic, political, and cultural conditions change rapidly in the world subject to globalization.

The second issue deals with a problem well explicated by Sorensen (2000): the relationship between social classes understood as formations of interests and social classes understood as conditions of life. Analytically this distinction is sound but there is a need for empirical studies on the mechanism by which classes as formations of interests shape conditions of life. In a sense this is the counter part of much more researched impact of life conditions on class-interests and their articulation.

The third problem pertains to the relationship between individual political outcomes and group processes. Collective action implies micro-macro linkages between individual class members and their class collective. Class members are “nested” in the class collectives, so that macro-level class characteristics provide a context influencing individual attitudes and behaviors (Parkin 1979). Technically, detecting this impact calls for application of multilevel analysis with hierarchically structured data.

Empirical research on this type is scant, but promising. In multilevel models examining the micro-macro class link, both individual and contextual social class effects on voting are present and stable over time (Andersen and Heath 2002; Andersen et al. 2006). More empirical research using multilevel models with both individual and contextual social class variables should (a) estimate the impact of person-level class characteristics and class structure-level characteristics on a greater variety of political outcomes and (b) specify the mechanisms that link them. The underlying mechanism is rooted in the social, economic and political struggles between social classes that influence their ability to collectively and effectively express their class interests. For example, if class voting is in decline somewhere, the mechanism may not only be left-wing party disengagement from the working class. The mechanism can also be related to collective action relatively independent of the actions of

political parties. In particular, class-based protest and other forms of political participation can influence whether and how individual class members think and act politically.

On the final note we stress the relevance of class-based parties and movements not only for day-by-day policy-making but also for formulating long term goals and scenarios. A recent work of Korpi and Palme (2003) shows that the initial increase in social rights after World War Two has been turned into a decline and that in several countries significant retrenchment of the welfare state provisions has taken place in the period 1975-1995. In addition, Korpi and Palme demonstrate that partisan politics remains a significant factor for shaping welfare state policies, providing relevant material for the Przeworski's (1985) thesis about the flexibility of class compromise in democratic regimes. Indeed, according to this thesis (a) social classes are not given as empty places in social structure but result from an interplay of collective actors, political parties in particular, (b) once leftist parties begin to take part in elections, the industrial workers lose their revolutionary leadership and pursue consumption aspirations, (c) since they gain in material sphere, they do not protest, contributing to the growth of economy from which they benefit. Thus, the thesis on positive class compromise could even explain party politics pertaining to retrenchment of welfare state provisions in the situation of some austerity measures.

The theoretical questions arise about the prospects of reaching class compromise by political parties and movements under conditions of such profound economic crises in which the production-consumption foundations of the compromise could be broken. It seems that after the fall of communism, the option of revolutionary or evolutionary solutions in the direction predicted by Marx—considered by proponents of the class compromise thesis—is slender. Could legitimization of a capitalist democracy, on the part of the working class, be withdrawn without this option? Are new options theoretically available as means of class struggle? Are class-based parties interested in formulating such options? To what extent

national traditions of class struggle could influence the articulation of re-defined interests of classes not only in the Western countries but also in the countries with less or no experience in democracy? A confrontation of the extant line of research on class peace in the recent past with the rapidly changing economic reality of the capitalist system justifies these new questions.

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Table 1. Distribution of Working People According to the Class Schema of Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero (EGP), the Mean Values of Stratification Position, and the Percentage of Persons Involved in Soft Political Protest for West and East Europe, 2006

Social classes (EGP) ^a	Percentage distribution of working people among classes ^b		Mean value of stratification position in each class ^c		Percentage of people involved in soft political protest in each class ^d	
	West (range)	East (range)	West	East	West	East
Professionals, administrators, and managers – higher grade (I)	5.7-23.8	6.4-17.7	1.40	1.39	50.3	38.4
Professionals, administrators, and managers – lower grade (II)	10.5-33.1	14.3-19.7	0.89	0.89	49.8	31.3
Routine non-manual employees – higher grade (IIIa)	5.5-16.4	5.8-13.2	0.31	0.23	42.5	25.7
Routine non-manual employees – lower grade (IIIb)	8.0-20.1	7.3-17.4	-0.20	-0.02	43.4	15.8
Small proprietors and employers (IVa)	2.0-9.9	2.4-5.8	0.14	0.45	39.4	30.4
Self-employed (IVb)	1.1-7.2	0.7-4.2	-0.02	-0.16	40.0	13.2
Lower level technicians and supervisors of manual workers (V)	1.9-6.7	1.8-5.9	-0.20	-0.51	37.8	19.2
Skilled manual workers (VI)	7.6-20.6	15.1-22.4	-0.46	-0.56	28.9	14.6
Non skilled manual workers (VIIa)	5.8-20.5	11.2-25.1	-0.72	-0.81	28.6	10.5
Agricultural workers (VIIb)	0.6-2.0	0.6-4.6	-0.62	-1.26	35.6	4.7
Farmers (VIc)	0.7-4.2	0.1-7.4	-0.60	-1.06	50.0	16.7

^a Original symbols of EGP schema are provided in parenthesis

^b West European countries include: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom. East European countries include: Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

^c Due to comparability of data, we restricted our sample of West Europe to Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom, and Netherlands; data on East Europe pertain to Poland and Slovenia. Social stratification position is expressed in a standardized metric, with mean value 0 and standard deviation 1.

^d Soft political protest refers to participation in at least one of the following forms of activity: legal demonstration, signing a petition, and contacting government officials.

Table 2. Distribution of Working People According to the Class Schema of Wright (WRT), the Mean Values of Stratification Position, and the Percentage of Persons Involved in Soft Political Protest for West and East Europe, 2006

Social classes (WRT) ^a	Percentage distribution of working people among classes ^b		Mean value of stratification position in each class ^c		Percentage of people involved in soft political protest in each class ^d	
	West (range)	East (range)	West	East	West	East
Capitalist – employers with ten or more employees (1)	0.1-1.3	0.2-1.5	1.02	0.88	38.9	13.6
Proprietors - employers with three to nine employees (2)	2.4-8.6	2.1-4.9	0.38	0.32	46.3	31.3
Self-employed (3)	4.9-11.4	2.3-11.0	0.45	-0.36	44.9	15.1
Managers – experts (4)	1.2-9.3	1.6-7.5	1.36	1.33	53.8	42.9
Managers – highly skilled (5)	3.3-14.1	2.8-9.8	0.57	0.63	55.4	37.6
Managers – lowly skilled (6)	2.9-7.3	1.6-6.2	0.14	-0.12	57.6	36.5
Supervisors – experts (7)	0.5-6.7	0.6-3.8	1.42	1.62	48.8	34.8
Supervisors – highly skilled (8)	4.8—14.7	4.1-8.4	0.66	0.41	48.6	32.8
Supervisors –lowly skilled (9)	6.5-17.5	5.3-9.0	-0.08	-0.20	43.1	23.6
Experts (professionals) (10)	2.0-7.4	1.9-7.3	1.49	1.35	35.3	16.4
Skilled workers (11)	10.2-24.0	21.3-31.0	0.29	-0.08	35.1	18.1
Unskilled workers (12)	13.4-35.6	21.8-43.7	-0.24	-0.41	33.5	12.9

^a Original symbols of WRT schema are provided in parenthesis

^b West European countries include: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom. East European countries include: Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

^c Due to comparability of data, we restricted our sample of West Europe to Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom, and Netherlands; data on East Europe pertain to Poland and Slovenia. Social stratification position is expressed in a standardized metric, with mean value 0 and standard deviation 1.

^d Soft political protest refers to participation in at least one of the following forms of activity: legal demonstration, signing a petition, and contacting government officials.

Table 3. Distribution of Working People According to the Class Schema of Esping Andersen (ESP), the Mean Values of Stratification Position, and the Percentage of Persons Involved in Soft Political Protest for West and East Europe, 2006

Social classes (ESP) ^a	Percentage distribution of working people among classes ^b		Mean value of stratification position in each class ^c		Percentage of people involved in soft political protest in each class ^d	
	West (range)	East (range)	West	East	West	East
Managers and employers with four or more employees (2a)	1.7-13.0	1.9-8.5	1.12	1.22	50.4	40.9
Managers and proprietors - employers with three to nine employees (2a)	1.5-8.3	0.7-5.4	0.42	0.73	42.2	24.2
Self-employed (3)	0.7-4.1	0.7-2.6	-0.08	-0.32	45.1	12.1
Professionals (3a)	4.6-15.1	5.3-12.3	1.58	1.58	47.8	30.3
Technicians (3b)	2.1-10.0	2.6-5.8	0.66	0.40	44.5	28.6
Semi-professionals (3b)	5.9-14.5	7.2-13.7	0.85	1.04	56.1	37.0
Skilled service workers (3c)	3.6-6.1	3.2-5.6	0.05	-0.27	42.1	22.5
Unskilled service workers (4)	8.0-17.9	4.5-16.5	-0.70	-0.82	38.8	11.6
Clerical workers (2b)	8.0-21.3	6.0-14.9	0.32	0.29	42.3	25.1
Sales workers (2b)	4.6-21.3	7.0-11.7	0.35	0.21	41.2	18.9
Skilled manual and craft workers (2c)	7.5-19.1	14.3-22.7	-0.43	-0.56	29.4	15.3
Unskilled and semi-skilled manual production workers (2d)	3.5-11.4	8.6-15.7	-0.60	-0.75	25.7	10.3
Primary sector workers (1)	0.7-2.0	0.6-4.6	-0.62	-1.26	35.6	4.7
Farmers	0.7-4.2	0.1-7.4	-0.60	-1.06	50.0	16.7

^a Original symbols of ESP schema are provided in parenthesis.

^b West European countries include: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom. East European countries include: Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

^c Due to comparability of data, we restricted our sample of West Europe to Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom, and Netherlands; data on East Europe pertain to Poland and Slovenia. Social stratification position is expressed in a standardized metric, with mean value 0 and standard deviation 1.

^d Soft political protest refers to participation in at least one of the following forms of activity: legal demonstration, signing a petition, and contacting government officials.