

Berliner Studien zur Soziologie Europas

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Cosmopolitanism as a Distinction Practice: Evidence from a Web-Based Factorial Survey Experiment

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Working Paper No. 42

October 2020

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Citation: Rasmus Ollroge (2020): Cosmopolitanism as a Distinction Practice: Evidence from a Web-Based Factorial Survey Experiment. BSSE Arbeitspapier Nr. 42. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin.

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Abstract:

Research on the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians has, so far, not focused on distinction practices between the two groups, which are, however, an important aspect of inter-group conflicts. Based on data from a web-based factorial survey experiment with students living in Berlin, this study examined the signaling value that different lifestyle characteristics have for the cosmopolitans, as well as the impact these characteristics have on their willingness to socially engage with other people. The results show that cosmopolitans interpret lifestyle characteristics as signals to categorize others as either cosmopolitan or communitarian and that they rather interact with other people who have a cosmopolitan lifestyle than with people who do not. Additionally, cosmopolitans interpret the lifestyle characteristics more as signals of political attitudes than as signals of social class positions. In conclusion, their lifestyle enables cosmopolitans to identify group affiliations, to distinguish themselves from the communitarians, and to draw a social boundary between the two groups.

Zusammenfassung:

Die Forschung zur Konfliktlinie zwischen Kosmopoliten und Kommunitariern hat bislang kaum die Distinktionspraktiken zwischen den beiden Gruppen betrachtet, die jedoch einen wichtigen Aspekt von Konflikten zwischen sozialen Gruppen ausmachen. Basierend auf Daten eines faktoriellen Surveyexperiments aus einem Web-Survey von Berliner Studierenden untersuchte diese Studie die Signalwerte, die unterschiedliche Lebensstilmerkmale für die Kosmopoliten haben, sowie den Einfluss, den diese Merkmale auf die Bereitschaft der Kosmopoliten haben, mit anderen Personen sozial zu interagieren. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Kosmopoliten anhand unterschiedlicher Lebensstilmerkmale andere Personen als Kosmopoliten oder Kommunitarier kategorisieren und eher bereit sind, mit denjenigen zu interagieren, die einen ähnlichen kosmopolitischen Lebensstil haben. Zudem interpretieren sie die Lebensstilmerkmale weniger als Signale sozialer Klassenzugehörigkeiten, sondern eher als Signale politischer Einstellungen. Insgesamt fungiert der Lebensstil der Kosmopoliten für sie als Mittel zur Identifikation von Gruppenzugehörigkeiten, zur Distinktion von den Kommunitariern, sowie zur Ziehung einer sozialen Grenze zwischen sich und den Kommunitariern.

1. Introduction¹

For the past two decades, the emergence of a new social cleavage in Western European countries between cosmopolitans and communitarians has been debated within the fields of sociology and political science (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008; Bornschieer 2010a; Azmanova 2011; Teney et al. 2014; Zürn/De Wilde 2016; Merkel 2017; Hooghe/Marks 2018; De Wilde et al. 2019; Hutter 2019).² Because of its relevancy for the explanation of various phenomena in recent years, from the rise of right-wing populism, the debates about immigration and the European Union, to the social, cultural and political polarization of Western societies, this research has become popular beyond the social sciences and has gained traction in public discourses.

While much is known from the scientific literature about the socio-structural differences of the cosmopolitans and communitarians, as well as about their political attitudes and the parties that represent them, the cultural differences between the two groups are less well researched (Bornschieer et al. 2019). This study follows the assumption that some of these cultural differences function for the groups as a way of drawing distinctions between each other, thereby reinforcing the social and cultural divide between them. Specifically, the research focuses on the cosmopolitans and the signalling value of their lifestyle as well as on the impact the lifestyle has on establishing a social boundary between them and the communitarians.

The research question can be subdivided into four parts. *First*, I aim at finding the specific lifestyle characteristics that cosmopolitans use to distinguish themselves from the communitarians. *Second*, I analyze, how the cosmopolitans use their lifestyle characteristics in the context of the cleavage. *Third*, I focus on the consequences of the lifestyle being used as signals of affiliations with the cleavage groups. *Fourth*, while it is possible that the cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics are direct signals of cosmopolitan political attitudes, they might also be interpreted as signs of social class positions. Disentangling these two types of signals from each other might provide insight into the way the cosmopolitans see themselves, as well as provide evidence regarding the salience of the cleavage.

This study will answer the research question, along the following structure: The second chapter develops the theoretical framework of the study. After giving an overview of the literature on the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians and

¹ This working paper is based on a master thesis written in the MA program “Sociology – European Societies” at Freie Universität Berlin. The title of the master thesis: “A Cosmopolitan Lifestyle as a Political Signal”, supervised by: Prof. Dr. Swen Hutter and Dr. Tim Sawert.

² Parts of the literature uses different terms for describing the cleavage, for example “integration” vs. “demarcation” (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008; Hutter 2019), “Green-alternative-libertarian” vs. “Traditional-authoritarian-nationalistic” (Hooghe et al. 2002), “cosmopolitanism” vs. “sovereignism” and “opportunity” vs. “risk” (Azmanova 2011), or “transnational cleavage” (Hooghe/Marks 2018). Throughout this paper, I will mostly use the terms “cosmopolitanism” and “communitarianism”. See the final chapter for a reflection on the usage of the terms.

identifying the research gap on the cultural dimension of the cleavage (Bornschieer 2010a; Bornschieer et al. 2019), lifestyle research in the tradition of Bourdieus theory of cultural distinction is introduced as a way of addressing the gap (Bourdieu 1984, 1986; Rössel/Otte 2011). Drawing on concepts from social psychology, it is detailed how lifestyles function within the cleavage.

The third chapter describes the methodology of the study. The data used for the analysis came from a web survey of 472 students living in Berlin that served as a proxy group of likely cosmopolitans. The main feature of the survey was a conjoined factorial survey experiment (Mutz 2011; Hainmueller et al. 2014; Auspurg/Hinz 2015). The respondents were presented with two profiles of people that were described in terms of their lifestyle characteristics. The respondents were asked to choose, which of the persons they thought to be more likely in favor of the admission of refugees, to be more likely in favor of the transfer of competencies to the EU, and with whom they would be more willing to interact. This design allowed for the estimation of the causal effects of fifteen lifestyle characteristics on the choices, which in turn provided answers to the formulated research questions on the lifestyle-based distinction practices of the cosmopolitans.

The fourth chapter presents the results. The first part on the main causal effects of the lifestyle variables shows that the more cosmopolitan the lifestyle characteristics of a person were, the more likely the respondents inferred that this person had cosmopolitan political attitudes and the more likely they were willing to interact with that person. The second part of the results showed, by analyzing mediation processes of the main effects, that the lifestyle characteristics were interpreted by the respondents more as signals of political attitudes than as signals of social class positions. The last chapter discusses the findings of the study. It concludes that the lifestyle characteristics are used by the cosmopolitans to categorize other people as cosmopolitans or communitarians and to distinguish themselves from the communitarians.

The contribution of this study is threefold. First, it contributes to the scientific debate on the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians by addressing the research gap regarding the cultural dimension of the cleavage. Second, by combining the previously unconnected concepts of lifestyles and cleavages, it opens up new possibilities of research that might be fruitful for both research areas. Third, it demonstrates for a wider audience that deep social and cultural divisions underlie political disputes over issues such as immigration or the European Union. It explains a mechanism for the ongoing polarization of Western European societies and shows especially how the cosmopolitans, an increasingly influential social group, use their legitimate lifestyle habits as means for their social and political conflicts.

2. Theory

2.1 *The Cleavage Between Cosmopolitans and Communitarians*

A long strand of literature describes the formation of a new societal cleavage in Western Europe that pits people with cosmopolitan and green-alternative-libertarian values and people with communitarian and traditional-authoritarian-nationalistic values against each other. Both groups are opposing each other in a structural antagonism that lies orthogonal to the traditional left-right dimension of voter and party alignments. The emergence of the new cleavage is the result of two macrosocial transformations of Western European societies since the second half of the 20th century that reshaped class structures and formed new social groups (Bornschieer 2010a; Hutter 2019).

The first transformation was a combination of processes of post-industrialization (Bell 1973; Powell/Snellman 2004), of educational expansion (Müller 1998; Hadjar/Becker 2006) and of value change (Inglehart 1977, 1990, 1997, 2008) that started in the 1960s and 1970s. They led to the emergence of a younger, highly educated professional class with liberal values (Florida 2002; Reckwitz 2017). Politically interested in issues like environmentalism, minority rights or sexual liberalization, they found political representation in the new social movements of the 1970s and 1980s and in the parties of the new left (Kitschelt 1994; Bornschieer 2010a). Opposite to this new academic middle class was the more traditional, older and less educated middle class and a new emerging under- and service-class (Reckwitz 2017, 2019).

The second of the two transformations were processes of globalization, which became increasingly relevant for Western European societies in the late 1980s and early 1990s.³ These processes further deepened the class polarization of the first transformation, as the academic middle class, contrary to the traditional middle class and the underclass, benefited more from globalization in terms of enhanced life chances (Kriesi et al. 2006; 2008). They benefited, for example, by working in more globalized sectors of the economy or by possessing more transnational human capital, which enables acting beyond the nation state and engaging with the emergent world culture (Mau et al. 2008; Azmanova 2011; Saito 2011; Carlson et al 2017; Gerhards et al. 2017). The academic middle class tended to develop cosmopolitan identities, values, attitudes, and habits, while parts of the traditional middle class and the underclass became more communitarian (Teney et al. 2014; Zürn/DeWilde 2016). The topic of globalization became politicized by the communitarians, represented first by parties of the radical right and, since the 2000s, by the populist right, by putting the issues of immigration

³ As shown by the KOF index of globalization, which uses various indicators to measure economic, social and political globalization (Dreher 2006; Gygli et al. 2019).

and European integration on the political agenda (Ignazi 1992, Bornschieer 2010b, Norris/Inglehart 2019).

2.2 The Cultural Dimension of the Cleavage

The two transformations converged into a single cleavage, by forming a structural antagonism between people with a value combination of green-alternative-libertarian (GAL) and cosmopolitan values on the one side, and people with traditional-authoritarian-nationalistic (TAN) and communitarian values on the other (Bornschieer 2010a, Hutter 2019). Using the cleavage concept of Bartolini and Mair (Bertolini/Mair 1990; Mair 2006), a cleavage consists of a socio-structural, a political-organizational, and a cultural, identity-related dimension. Much is known in the literature about the socio-structural and the political dimension. In addition to the class divide between the groups, which is best expressed as a divide between people with and without a tertiary education (Enyedi 2008; Stubager 2008, 2009), there are several other socio-structural characteristics differentiating the groups such as sectoral employment (Oesch 2008; Oesch/Rennwald 2010; Azmanova 2011), urbanity (Ford/Jennings 2020) or age (Olsson/Öhmann 2007; Mau et al. 2008). The political, organizational dimension of the cleavage is characterized by an opposition of new left parties and parties of the populist right that clash on cultural issues such as immigration, European integration, multiculturalism, gender equality, or environmentalism (Bornschieer 2010a; Hutter 2019; Norris/Inglehart 2019).

However, much less is known about the cultural dimension of the new cleavage (Bornschieer et al. 2019). The cultural dimension of a cleavage is the collective identities of the groups, their perceptions of themselves and of each other, as well as their modes of distinguishing themselves from each other and of drawing social and cultural boundaries between them. There are some studies that analyze some of the issues of the cultural dimension. Stubager (2009) showed for Denmark that corresponding to the socio-structural importance of education for the cleavage, salient group identities have formed around high and low levels of education. The groups are quite conscious of their identities and the cleavage constellation as such and the educational identities are related to the value positions people have on the GAL-TAN value dimension. Stubager showed, how the new cleavage education-based group identities form a connection between socio-structural and political antagonisms.

Teney and colleagues (2014) argued that the winners and losers of globalization are determined by whether one perceives globalization as an opportunity or a threat and by whether one has a supranational or (sub-)national identity. These identities then can lead to having cosmopolitan and communitarian political attitudes, for example on immigration and European integration.

Bornschieer and his colleagues (2019) examined for the Swiss population how the two cleavage groups subjectively self-identify and distinguish themselves from each other. First, both groups more strongly differentiate themselves in terms of cultural identity categories such as having a university degree, living in urban or rural areas,

being cosmopolitan or swiss, or having an interest in culture, than in terms of more economically connotated identities. Second, these cultural identities predict the vote choices for new left and populist right parties.

Lastly, some authors argued that the opposition of the communitarians is not only directed at the specific political issues of European integration and open borders but at the perceived cultural hegemony of the cosmopolitans (Reckwitz 2017, Koppetsch 2019, Norris/Inglehart 2019). The emergence of the academic middle class was accompanied by its gain in cultural relevance and by the cultural descent of the old middle class and the underclass, whose lifestyles and practices were devalued compared to the legitimate lifestyle of the cosmopolitans. From traditional views on gender roles to cultural consumption habits, the communitarians experience an asymmetry in their ability to influence the legitimate culture of their societies compared to the cosmopolitans.

Taken together, this literature exploring the cultural dimension of the cleavage suggests that collective social identities around cultural characteristics, especially around education and (supra)nationalism are a powerful and often neglected component of the new cleavage. It also shows how practices of cultural distinction appear to be an important dimension of how the groups relate to one another. The following chapter will detail how a focus on lifestyle differences between the conflict groups can add further insight into the cultural dimension of the cleavage.

2.3 Lifestyles as Markers for Social Categorization

The research of lifestyles has been, to a large extent, influenced by the seminal works of Pierre Bourdieu on social class and cultural distinction (Bourdieu 1984; 1986, Rössel/Otte 2011). His theory developed a twofold argument about the interdependence of lifestyle habits and social structure. First, individual preferences for the consumption of cultural products and leisure time activities are an expression of a person's social class position and thus form a coherent class-specific lifestyle. Second, lifestyle characteristics function as markers of social boundaries and are used for social and cultural exclusion (Lamont/Lareau 1988; Lamont/Molnár 2002). The ability to partake in the dominant lifestyle of a society and to signal high social status becomes a form of cultural capital, a resource used for gaining social privilege, for example in institutional settings such as the education system or the labor market (Bourdieu 1986; Lareau/Weininger 2003; Rivera 2012; Jaeger/Breen 2016)

For applying lifestyle research to cleavage theory, the social psychological underpinnings of lifestyle differences between groups are important. Lifestyle characteristics are visible markers that people use to socially categorize other people (Michailow 1994; Macrae/Bodenhausen 2000; Otte/Rössel 2011). To categorize the opposite person in an interaction as belonging to a certain class, religion or occupation, allows for transmitting the positive and negative stereotypes one connects with that category of people onto the other person. This structures and simplifies the otherwise unlimited possibil-

ities for interacting with that person (Wittenbrink et al. 1998; Klauer 2008). Social categorization based on lifestyles has so far only sparsely been researched in the empirical social psychology literature, which usually focuses on the categorizations of people into groups of personality types (Gosling et al. 2002; Rentfrow/Gosling 2006).

In sociology, however, a few scholars have researched lifestyle-based social categorization, while usually concentrating on the categorization into social classes. Pape and coauthors (2008; 2012) replicated a study by Mazur (1993), in which they showed wedding pictures of couples to respondents, who should then guess the couple's social class position. Solely based on the couple's physiognomy and on their clothing style, a majority of the respondents was able to categorize the couples successfully. Jungbauer-Gans and coauthors (2005) demonstrated in a field experiment how shop assistants allocated more time to better dressed customers during sales pitches in the shop. Based on the customers' dressing, the clerks categorized these customers as people from a higher social class with potentially more purchasing power that they regarded as being worth more attention. And Rössel and Pape (2010) showed that, next to socio-demographic characteristics, lifestyle items are deeply associated with the perception of class differences. Especially highbrow practices are strong markers of class membership, in this case of belonging to the upper classes.

2.4 Lifestyle Differences and Outgroup Behavior

The categorizations and the accompanying stereotyping are not neutral practices. Lifestyle differences between people and groups can lead to antagonistic results. On the one hand, there are status differences between the various social groups that the lifestyle characteristics are signals of. The lifestyles represent these status differences, as a lifestyle's legitimacy corresponds to the social status of the group that engages in it (Bourdieu 1984, Michailow 1994; Otte/Rössel 2011). Encountering a person with a certain lifestyle triggers a reflection on that person's social status in comparison to one's own. On the other hand, the own lifestyle preferences of a person originate, to a large extent, from the distaste for the taste of others. People have strong antipathies against the preferences of others, especially for those of other groups that are opposite of ones own. The distastes are an important way of drawing cultural boundaries between the groups (Bourdieu 1984: 56; Warde 2011).

Both aspects were exemplified in Bryson's (1996) work on musical distastes in the American population. She showed that, although the music consumption of the middle and the upper classes was getting broader or more omnivorous and thus supposedly more tolerant, this tolerance was not including genres like Heavy-Metal or Country music. The distaste of these genres was even stronger than the liking of the self-preferred genres. Moreover, the excluded genres were those that were preferred by the least educated groups of the population. Bryson interpreted this exclusion of the preferred genres of the lower classes as distinction practices of the middle and the upper classes and concluded that cultural distastes follow the logic of social boundaries

between groups of different social status and, in turn, can strengthen and even reproduce these boundaries.

The status differences and the distaste for the lifestyle of opposing groups explain partly why people tend to fall into in-group and out-group behavior when being confronted with the lifestyle of another person. A person with a different lifestyle can be regarded by people as someone belonging to an outgroup, which can be followed by negative stereotyping and discrimination against that person. The same processes also work in the opposite direction, where people with similar lifestyle preferences can be seen as belonging to the in-group, which entails positive stereotyping and positive discrimination (Tarrant et al. 2001). Additionally, lifestyle similarities and differences play an important role in establishing and stabilizing social relationships and networks (McPhearson et al. 2001; Lizardo 2006). People with similar lifestyle are prone to having positive views of one another and tend to be inclined to engage and interact with each other, while the opposite is true for people with different lifestyles.

2.5 Lifestyles and Cleavage Theory

In summary, there are two ways how lifestyles play a role in cleavages. First, lifestyles signal belonging to a cleavage group and are used by members of the groups for socially categorizing other people as members of their own or the opposite group. The groups thus identify themselves through lifestyle characteristics. Second, the social categorization based on lifestyles triggers in-group and out-group behavior. Lifestyles are thus used to draw social boundaries between the groups. People with a similar lifestyle recognize each other as belonging to the same group and are more willing to engage with each other as people with opposite lifestyles.

Both aspects were exemplified by Deichert's (2019) analysis of the cultural stereotypes American voters have about the voters of the opposite party. First, she showed that certain lifestyle characteristics such as listening to rap music, doing yoga, or hunting were strongly associated with either democratic or republican voters and that they formed the basis for partisan social categorization. Second, these characteristics elicited strong affectual responses in people, which resulted in negative discrimination against people with opposite lifestyle characteristics, both in everyday and in institutional settings.

The existence of lifestyle-based social categorization and social boundaries hints at another possible connection between lifestyle research and cleavage theory. Research on cleavages often asks, whether a potential conflict structure between two groups is salient for the groups. An important aspect of a cleavage being salient is whether the potential conflict groups recognize themselves as groups and form collective identities. If two groups have distinct lifestyles that they use to identify themselves and each other and that they also use to distinguish themselves from the other, it could be seen as evidence that the groups have in fact formed collective identities and that they are conscious of their position as conflict groups of a cleavage. It would thus be a sign of the salience of the cleavage.

2.6 *The Lifestyle of the Cosmopolitans*

The lifestyle of the cosmopolitans is centred around the guiding principle of openness to cultural diversity, which expresses itself in a disregard for traditional taste boundaries (Ollivier 2008; Roose et al. 2012). On the one hand, this regards traditional taste hierarchies between highbrow and lowbrow forms of culture. The cosmopolitans, while still consuming highbrow culture, embrace products and practices of middle- and lowbrow culture, like for example pop music (Lizardo 2005; Prieur/Savage 2013; Savage et al. 2015). On the other hand, the disregard for taste boundaries translates into interest in foreign cultures and their products and practices. While cultural tastes were traditionally structured by national or regional borders, the cosmopolitans specifically consume foreign cultural products and signal familiarity with other cultures (Rössel/Schrödter 2015; Cicchelli/Octobre 2017; Katz-Gerro 2017).

From the perspective of the cosmopolitans, the communitarians do not engage in the relevant practices or consume the relevant products to signal openness to cultural diversity. They appear to be more oriented towards traditional taste boundaries (e.g. highbrow / lowbrow culture) within national borders, in that they do not engage with a lot of cultural products from foreign countries. The cosmopolitans tend to view those who do not engage in the cosmopolitan lifestyle as being stuck, narrow-minded, traditional, and non-reflexive, while they themselves appear to be mobile, open-minded, creative, and reflexive (Prieur et al. 2008).⁴ In the following, the cosmopolitan lifestyle will be detailed across five lifestyle dimensions and operationalized for each dimension, following a typology of very cosmopolitan, somewhat cosmopolitan and non-cosmopolitan characteristics. The description of the cosmopolitan lifestyle is in large parts drawn from Reckwitz (2017).

The guiding principle of openness to cultural diversity fusions with principles stemming from other values the cosmopolitans hold, like an endorsement of ethical and sustainable consumption, which stems from having post-materialistic values (Grinstein/Riefler 2015). This is especially important for the *consumption of food*. Sustainability and an ethical consumer behavior are two of the most important characteristics by which food practices tend to be judged by the cosmopolitans. Additionally, food and ingredients are supposed to be healthy, “organic”, and locally produced, as well as to have an authentic and “alternative” component (Johnston/Baumann 2007; Paddock 2016). These principles are best exemplified by the trends of vegetarianism and veganism, and to some extent buy buying groceries at the farmers’ market. These practices are distinguished from industrially produced and standardized food that lacks the ethical, the sustainability and the health dimension important for the cosmopolitans. One

⁴ Unsurprisingly, the communitarians turn the normative judgment of these lifestyle differences around and describe themselves with the attributes of loyalty, stability, authenticity, having roots, and choosing family over career (Prieur et al. 2008).

example for the rejected food consumption practices is eating fast food (Cappeliez/Johnston 2013).

The *music preferences* of the cosmopolitans are structured by the disregard for traditional classifications of musical genres into distinctions between highbrow and lowbrow art. For them, lowbrow genres like pop music have lost their traditional stigma. Another consumption principle is the abandonment of preferring a single genre with which one has a deep connection in favor of a more reflexive mode of listening to a broad number of genres in which the listener acts like a collector of many different styles of music. Both phenomena have been summarized under the concept of omnivorousness (Peterson 1992, 1997; Peterson/Kern 1996; Warde et al. 2007, 2008; Savage/Gayo 2011; Savage et al. 2015; Wright 2016). However, this form of music consumption is not equal to a tolerance of all genres and styles but comes along with the need to make critical choices, which are often structured by distastes for the preferences of the opposite social group (Bryson 1996; Prieur/Savage 2013; Savage et al. 2015). One of these rejected genres is German folk music, as it can be seen by cosmopolitans as too traditional and too much of an expression of German national culture.

Regarding *sport practices*, the cosmopolitans tend to strive for fitness and health, ideals which have become a form of status symbol for upper-middle classes (Koppetsch 2000; Shilling 2005; Lefèvre/Ohl 2012). However, not all sports carry the same appeal, as the cosmopolitans are more interested in individualistic sports compared to team sports. One of the most popular activities are the Asian cultures of movement, like yoga or martial arts. These activities do not only have a fitness aspect to them, but also a historical cultural background as well as a spiritual aspect, which adds further dimensions to the activities (Newcombe 2009). Another set of activities are the individualistic and playful sports of the Californian lifestyle, like surfing, roller skating or skateboarding, with the latter also being an expression of youth culture and urbanity. Lastly, although fitness and athleticism are desirable from the perspective of the cosmopolitans, bodybuilding is usually not practiced by them, as it is, for them, representative of an unaesthetically and overtly masculine body ideal (Wesley 2001; Honer 2011).

The *place of residence* has become an important characteristic of the cosmopolitan lifestyle. Urbanity is the central characteristic, by which the cosmopolitans tend to choose their place of residence (Bornschiefer et al. 2019; Ford/Jennings 2020). Large cities combine career opportunities and many different possibilities for leisure time activities. More than that, large cities have become an ideal place for realizing the cosmopolitan lifestyle (Florida 2002). Especially living in one of the large metropolitan cities with an increasingly international population and a cosmopolitan atmosphere has become an essential part of the cosmopolitan lifestyle, as this allows for the direct practice of openness towards cultural diversity (Favell 2008). Therefore, "living in a city with the population of over one million people" and "living in one with a population of less than one million people" are the very and the somewhat cosmopolitan characteristics, while living in a small village is the non-cosmopolitan characteristic.

Foreign experiences, in the form of extended stays in other countries, have become an element of the lifestyle of the cosmopolitans. As members of the academic middle class, staying abroad for longer periods of time can become familiar to them from a very early age, as it tends to be more a part of the child rearing practices of their parents than for children from lower classes. There are often chances for them to go abroad in all their life phases, like for example, for exchange programs during school time, for work and travel, for a semester abroad during university time, or for working abroad for some time (Carlson et al. 2017; Gerhards et al. 2017). While never having lived outside of Germany is not a desirable characteristic for the cosmopolitans, having lived in another European country or even a non-European country are characteristics of the cosmopolitan lifestyle.

Table 1 shows the operationalization of the lifestyle dimensions, which was used in the empirical part of the study.

Table 1

| | Non-cosmopolitan | Somewhat cosmopolitan | Very cosmopolitan |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Food consumption | Fast food | Farmers' market | Vegetarianism |
| Music preferences | German folk music | Electronic music | Omnivorousness |
| Sport practices | Bodybuilding | Skateboarding | Yoga |
| Place of residence | Small village | Duesseldorf | Cologne |
| Foreign experience | None | England | Argentina |

2.7 Model and Hypotheses

The analysis was directed at the cosmopolitan pole of the cleavage. On the one hand, this study did not have the necessary resources to cover both sides of the cleavage and the cosmopolitans were easier to sample. On the other hand, as cosmopolitans on average possess more economic, social and cultural capital, they are the more relevant pole of the cleavage from a socio-structural perspective, since being classified by the cosmopolitans as the member of an outgroup can potentially result in limited access to resources and life chances. In line with the literature, the following model was developed to be empirically tested, which is visually represented in graph 1.

(1) The central argument is that lifestyles are interpreted as signals of group membership. Specifically, cosmopolitans socially categorize a person having cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics as belonging to the same socio-political cleavage group as themselves, while having non-cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics is interpreted as a signal of belonging to the opposite cleavage group. Although the cleavage groups have a socio-structural foundation, they are first and foremost perceived as political conflict

groups. Thus, the group memberships are expressed by approval of or by opposition to the two political issues of the conflict, European integration and immigration. *The more cosmopolitan the lifestyle characteristics of a person are, the more likely it is that this person is perceived as being in favor of European integration and open borders (H1).*

(2) Lifestyle signals do not only signal group affiliations, but also structure social interactions. As people rather interact with those who are similar to them and who belong to the same group, the lifestyle characteristics of a person impact on the willingness of others to interact with that person. This is especially true for people within the structure of a cleavage conflict, in which affection for the ingroup and rejection of the outgroup are particularly strong. The more a lifestyle signals the same group affiliation, the more willing a person is to interact with the other one. The opposite holds when the lifestyle signals affiliation with the opposing conflict group. *The more cosmopolitan the lifestyle characteristics of a person are, the more likely it is, that cosmopolitans are willing to interact with that person (H2).*

Both hypotheses are expectations about causal effects. The signalling power of the lifestyle characteristics of a person causes the observers to make specific inferences about the political attitudes and group affiliations of that person, which they would not have made without those characteristics being present. In the same vein, they evaluate their own willingness to interact with this person based on those inferences made from the lifestyle characteristics. The effects of the lifestyle variables on the inferences about the political attitudes and on the willingness to interact are thus the main causal effects of the theoretical model. The following part of the model analyzes the main causal effects in more detail and specifies the causal mechanism at work.

(3) There is a question about how the lifestyle characteristics are interpreted. Specifically, what are the group affiliations the cosmopolitans infer from the lifestyle signals? On the one hand, they might directly infer the political attitudes of the person. On the other hand, as lifestyles are strong signals of class membership, the cosmopolitans could also interpret the lifestyle characteristics as signs of the class position of that person, or, respectively, as signals of their level of education. An analysis of the mediations of the main causal effects allows for the estimation of the relative weights of those two possible group associations.

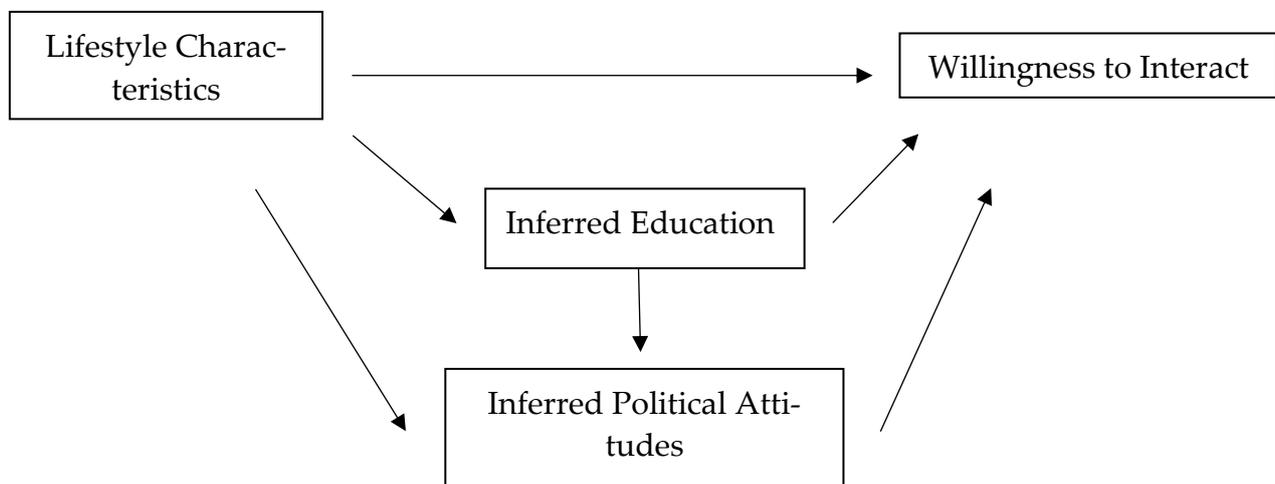
(3a) The inference about the political attitudes of an encountered person is to some extent mediated by the inferred level of education of that person. In this way, the observer would directly infer the level of education of the person from their lifestyle characteristics, and then, in a second step, infer their political attitudes from the presumed level of education. The cosmopolitans, for example, would encounter a person with non-cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics, infer from those characteristics that the person has a low level of education, and infer from that level of education that this person has negative attitudes towards immigration and the EU. *The effects of the lifestyle*

characteristics on the inferred political attitudes are mediated by the inferred level of education (H3a).

(3b) The willingness to interact with a person is based on whether one thinks that this person belongs to the same group. The cosmopolitans can make this inference through the perceived level of education of that person or through the perceived political attitudes of that person. *The effect of the lifestyles of a person on the willingness to interact with that person are mediated by both, the inferred level of education and the inferred political attitudes of the person* (H3b).

(3c) The two mediation analyses can also be a way of estimating what is the stronger kind of inference about the group affiliations of a person that the cosmopolitans draw from the persons' lifestyle. In other words, do they take cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics as a signal of social class affiliation or as a signal of political attitudes? This would allow to make an interpretation about the salience of the cleavage and whether the cosmopolitans see themselves first and foremost as a political group or as a social class. Since the conflict has become more salient in the past decade and since for both, the cleavage groups and the cosmopolitan lifestyle, the social class position, or, respectively, the level of education, is only one of various socio-structural correlates, *the mediation of the lifestyle effects will be larger through the inferred political attitudes than through the inferred level of education* (H3c).

Figure 1 – Theoretical Model



3. Data and Methods

3.1 Data and Sampling

The research questions and the theoretical model focus on the political signalling effects of cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics, which lends itself well to the usage of an experimental design where lifestyle characteristics can be administered as treatments

and the reaction of the respondents to the treatments can be observed. For this reason, a web survey containing a survey experiment with a factorial design was conducted. Using a web survey allowed the targeting of the cosmopolitan group as a special population using an online distribution of the questionnaire via email. Most importantly, using a digital questionnaire allowed for the random allocations of treatments necessary for the survey experiment (Mutz 2011).

The survey was based on a non-probability sample, which usually has problems of biased results regarding descriptive inference (Mercer et al 2017; Cornesse 2020). However, these potential biases do not necessarily affect causal inference (Kohler 2019; Kohler et al. 2019). If the homogeneity of the treatment effects across the target population can be assumed, meaning that the effects do not differ across subgroups of the target population, causal inference is unbiased for non-probability samples. One case for which it is reasonable to assume effect homogeneity is, if the target population is small and homogenous (Kohler 2019). Another case where homogeneity can be assumed are survey experiments, especially ones with a multidimensional factorial survey design (Auspurg/Hinz 2015). Inferences from survey experiments that are based on non-probability samples have been proven to be relatively similar to inferences, which are based on random probability population samples (Mullinix et al. 2015; Coppock 2019).

A useful approach is to first assume effect homogeneity across the population and later check the assumption by interacting the treatment effects with the characteristics of the respondents, thus comparing the effects across subgroups of the sample (Kohler 2019). In this paper, the target population, the cosmopolitans, is a specific subset of the wider German population and can therefore be regarded as relatively homogenous. A robustness check testing for interactions between the treatment effects and characteristics of the respondents yielded only a small number of substantial and statistically significant interactions. The effects are therefore relatively homogenous across the sample, which leads to the conclusion that the causal effects are not biased and generalizable to the target population.

The research design focused on the analysis of the cosmopolitan pole of the cleavage. The sampling strategy was to sample cosmopolitans as a proxy population, based on four socio-structural characteristics, which are described in the literature as correlates of being a cosmopolitan. These four characteristics are tertiary education, age, urbanity, and being a member of the socio-cultural professional class (Oesch 2008; Oesch/Rennwald 2010).

In order to target this population, university students from certain subjects living in Berlin were sampled as the proxy population. Students living in Berlin fulfil three of the four characteristics, by living in an urban center, usually being between 20 and 30 years old and by having already acquired (master students) or by being on their way to (bachelor students) acquiring a tertiary educational degree. They are, of course, not yet working in a profession and are not part of the socio-cultural professional class. However, by sampling students from programs out of the fields of education, history,

art, social, and communication sciences as well as linguistics, psychology, humanities and cultural studies, it is likely that future socio-cultural professionals were targeted. As these fields of study affect the formation of liberal values, students are likely to already hold some of the assumed values of the socio-cultural professional class (Van der Werfhorst/Kraaykamp 2001; Stubager 2008).

In order to recruit students for the sample, officials from relevant study programs from universities in Berlin were contacted and asked to forward the questionnaire to the students of their program.⁵ The questionnaire was in German, which added another sampling criterion by restricting the sample to students speaking German, so that international students studying in Berlin, but who do not speak German, were excluded.

Of the 712 people who started the questionnaire, 550 completed it, with most of those who did not complete it dropping out when the survey experiment began. In addition to the survey experiment, the questionnaire included several standard survey items on the lifestyle, the values, and the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. In total, the questionnaire consisted of 38 items, which took the respondents an average of eleven minutes to complete. After deleting all respondents who did not fit the sampling criteria, the number of valid cases in the sample amounted to 472.

3.2 The Survey Experiment

The central feature of the questionnaire was a factorial survey experiment (Wallander 2009; Auspurg/Hinz 2015). In contrast to traditional vignette experiments, in a factorial experiment, not only one but many characteristics of the presented hypothetical situation, object or person are varied across the respondents. This enables to identify causal effects of many different treatments in one single experiment. A subset of factorial survey experiments are conjoint experiments, where respondents are presented with a choice between two vignettes (Hainmueller et al. 2014). In the conjoint experiment used in this survey, respondents were presented with the profiles of two persons that were described through five lifestyle variables. Each of the five variables had three levels, one very cosmopolitan characteristic, one somewhat cosmopolitan characteristic and one non-cosmopolitan characteristic (see table 1).

The levels of the lifestyle variables were allocated to the profiles randomly. For each profile, the sequence of the lifestyle variables was the same. In addition to the profiles, the name and age of the persons was presented. All persons were set to be 35 years old. They were given names that signalled both their male gender and their German ethnicity. The six possible names (Christian, Daniel, Stefan, Jan, Martin and Alexander) were taken from the male names most frequently used for newborns in the year 1985, the year of birth for a 35-year old person in 2020.⁶ Presenting both, the name and age,

⁵ The universities were: Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Universität Potsdam, and Universität der Künste Berlin.

⁶ <https://www.beliebte-vornamen.de/jahrgang/j1985>

automatically controlled the effects of the lifestyle treatments for all inferences made by the respondents regarding the age, gender, and ethnicity of the persons.

The respondents were presented a pair of two persons and then asked three choice questions. Two of these measured the inferred attitudes regarding the political issues of the cleavage. The first was about immigration and asked: *“If you had to take a guess: Which of these two people is more in favor of Germany accepting more refugees in the future?”*. The second question was about European integration: *“If you had to take a guess: Which of the two people is more in favor of Germany handing over more competences to the EU in future?”*. The third question was about the behavioral consequences of the lifestyle signals and asked: *“Which of these two people would you be more willing to meet in person?”*.

Lastly, the respondents were asked to evaluate each profile for itself in terms of the presumed educational background of the presented person. Concerning education, the question was: *“What do you suspect, which educational background does [name] have?”*. The categories of the answers were *“lower secondary education”*, *“upper secondary education”* and *“tertiary education”*. The respondents were presented three of these choice tasks in a row, so that each respondent evaluated six profiles in total.

The conjoint experiment and the unbiased estimation of the causal effects of each level of the lifestyle variables relied on several methodological assumptions (Hainmueller et al. 2014). In general, there were only minor violations of the assumptions. There were almost no within-profile and between-profile interactions of the treatment effects. The same goes for profile-order effects. While there were some carryover effects, which means that the respondents evaluated the same treatment differently in later choice tasks than in earlier ones, there was no easy solution for countering this bias. For example, only including data from the earlier choice tasks would have resulted in a substantial loss of cases, which would have limited the analysis in other ways. In general, as most of the found interactions were small in numbers and as they only in some cases repeated themselves as patterns across the different dependent variables, there are no huge distortions in the estimations of the causal effects.

3.3 Operationalization and Analytical Strategy

Table 2 shows the operationalization of the variables. The explanatory variables (X1 - X5) were the lifestyle variables presented in table 1. The dependent variables (Y1 - Y3) were the three dichotomous choices on the inferred attitudes regarding the transmission of competencies to the European Union and the admission of refugees as well as on the willingness to interact with the person. These variables were dichotomous variables indicating positive inferred attitudes towards refugees and the EU and a willingness to interact. The first mediator (Z1) was the inferred level of education. While the item in the questionnaire had three categories of answers, for the analysis *“lower secondary”* and *“upper secondary education”* were combined into one category, thus resulting in a dichotomous variable indicating an inferred tertiary degree. The second mediator (Z2), only used for the dependent variable Y3, the willingness to interact, is

the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees, which previously was the dependent variable Y1.

Table 2 Operationalization of the Variables

| Variable | Description | Operationalization |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Y1 | Inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees | 0 Against 1 In favor |
| Y2 | Inferred attitude towards the transfer of competencies to the EU | 0 Against 1 In favor |
| Y3 | Willingness to interact | 0 Against 1 In favor |
| X1 | Food consumption | 0 Fast food 1 Farmers' market 2 Vegetarian |
| X2 | Music preference | 0 German folk music 1 Electronic music 2 Omnivor (listening to a broad number of genres) |
| X3 | Sport practice | 0 Bodybuilding 1 Skateboarding 2 Yoga |
| X4 | Place of residence | 0 Small Village 1 Duesseldorf 2 Cologne |
| X5 | Foreign experience | 0 Having never lived outside of Germany 1 Having lived in England 2 Having lived in Argentina |
| Z1 | Inferred level of education | 0 Secondary education or lower 1 Tertiary education |
| Z2 | Inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees (Y1) | 0 Against 1 In favor |

The conjoint experiment produced a hierarchical data structure with evaluated profiles within respondents. The total number of respondents was 472, each of them evaluated six profiles, resulting in 2832 profiles as the units of the analysis. The causal

effects of the levels of the lifestyle variables was the change in the probability of a profile being chosen in a respective choice task from when that attribute is not present to when the attribute is present in a profile.

The causal effects were estimated using logistic regression analysis with bivariate regressions of the dependent variable(s) on each lifestyle variable. Cluster-robust standard errors were used for all analyses to correct for the correlation of standard errors within respondents. The second part of the analysis was a mediation analysis of the main causal effects that disentangled the total effects into direct effects and indirect effects via the mediators. The KHB method was used to conduct the mediation analysis with logistic regression models (Karlson/Holm 2011; Kohler et al. 2011; Breen et al. 2013).

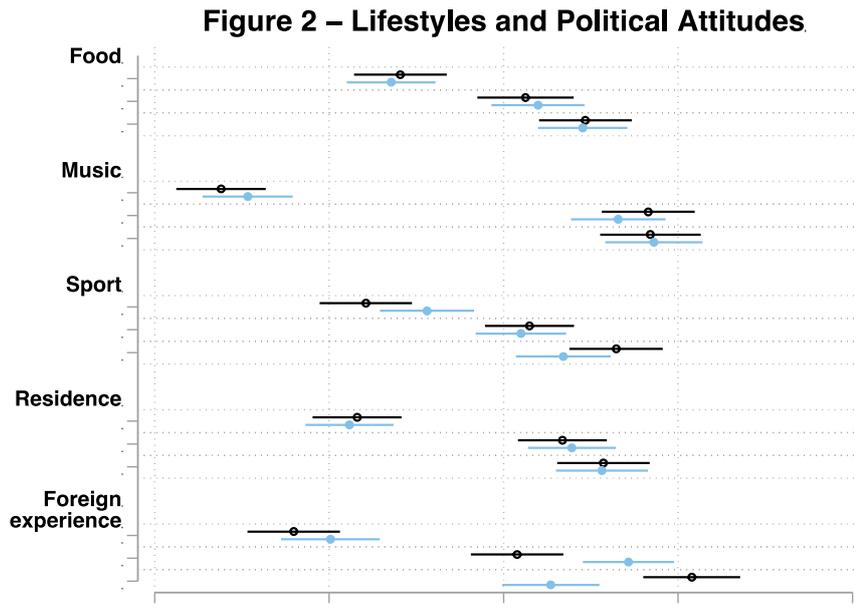
4. Results

The results have two parts. The first part analyzed the main causal effects of the lifestyle variables on the three dependent variables, which were the inferred political attitudes of the presented person and the willingness to interact with that person. The second part analyzed mediation processes of the main causal effects through the inferred level of education and through the inferred political attitudes.

4.1 *The Causal Effects of The Lifestyle Characteristics*

The first hypothesis (H1) expected that the more cosmopolitan a lifestyle characteristic was, the more likely the respondents would infer a cosmopolitan political attitude from that characteristic. The causal effects were estimated with bivariate logistic regression models of the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees (Y1), and, respectively, of the inferred attitude towards the transfer of competencies to the EU (Y2), on the five lifestyle variables. Figure 2 shows the results from these models in form of the predicted probabilities of a person with that specific lifestyle characteristic being perceived of as being in favor of the admission of refugees, respectively the transfer of competencies to the EU.

In general, the results support the expected relationship, by which more cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics had a stronger effect on the inferred cosmopolitan political attitude of a person than less cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics. The following analysis mostly focuses on the effects on the first dependent variable, the admission of refugees, and only talks about the second one, the European Union, when the effects deviate from the first one.



Regarding food consumption, being a vegetarian held a 55% chance of being presumed to be in favor of the admission of refugees. Another way of putting this is that 55% of all the evaluated persons in the questionnaire who were vegetarians were thought to be in favor of the admission of refugees. For people buying groceries at the farmers' market, the probability was with 51% smaller than that for vegetarians. The least likely to be presumed of being in favor of the admission of refugees were people regularly eating fast food (.44).

Concerning music preference, there was the first deviation from the established pattern in that the somewhat cosmopolitan (listening to electronic music) and the very cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristic (being omnivorous) had the same effect of both characteristics holding a 55% probability of being perceived of as being in favor of the admission of refugees. The other dependent variable, the inferred attitude towards the EU, however, followed the expected pattern. Listening to traditional German folk music, being the non-cosmopolitan musical characteristic, had the least strong effect of a predicted probability of 34%. Regarding sport practices, doing yoga had the strongest effect (.56), followed by skateboarding (.51) and by bodybuilding (.42).

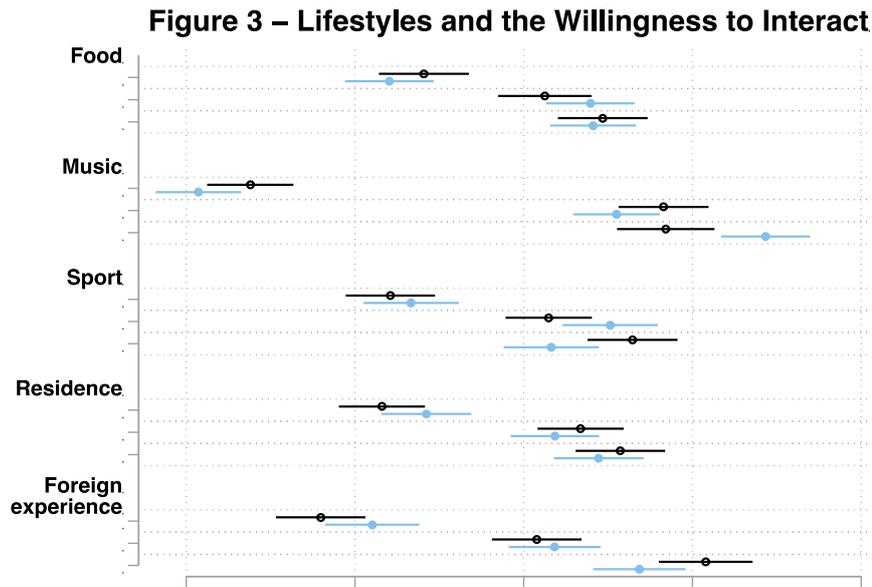
Regarding the place of residence, living in Cologne (a city with a population of over one million people) held the strongest effect (.56), followed by living in Düsseldorf (a large city with a population of under one million) (.53) and by living in a small village (.42). Lastly, regarding having foreign experiences, a person who has lived for a longer period in Argentina had a predicted probability of 61% of being perceived as being in favor of the admission of refugees. Having lived in England had a less strong probability (.51), followed by having never lived outside of Germany (.38).

Comparing the predicted probabilities across the lifestyle variables, having lived in Argentina was the strongest signal of being in favor of the admission of refugees, while listening to traditional German folk music was the weakest signal. In sum, a person most likely to be perceived as being in favor of the admission of refugees was vegetarian, an omnivore or someone listening to electronic music, practicing yoga, living in Cologne, and someone who has lived in Argentina. The person least likely to be perceived as being in favor of the admission of refugees was someone who ate fast food, listened to German folk music, did bodybuilding, lived in a small village, and has never lived outside of Germany.

For most of the lifestyle characteristics, there was not a huge substantial difference in the effect between the inferred attitude regarding the admission of refugees and regarding the transfer of competencies to the EU. The same pattern of more cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics having stronger effects could be observed for both dependent variables. The only exception were the effects of the “foreign experience” variable. Here, the effect of the somewhat cosmopolitan characteristic of having lived in England (.57) was stronger than the one of having lived in Argentina (.53). Taken together, these results support hypothesis H1 and showed that the lifestyle of a person had an effect on the inferred political attitudes of this person. For the respondents, the more cosmopolitan the lifestyle of a person was, the more likely they were to infer a positive attitude of that person towards the admission of refugees and towards the transfer of competencies to the EU.

The second hypothesis (H2) expected that the more cosmopolitan a lifestyle characteristic was, the more likely the respondents would be willing to interact with a person having that characteristic. Figure 3 shows a comparison of the bivariate effects of the lifestyle characteristics on the willingness to interact with their effects on the inferred attitudes towards the admission of refugees. Again, the results are presented as predicted probabilities.

The results broadly show the same expected pattern for the dependent variable “willingness to interact” as for the effect on the inferred political attitudes, whereby the more open the lifestyle characteristics of a person were, the more likely respondents were willing to interact with that person. However, there were two exceptions to the pattern. First, regarding the variable “food consumption”, there were no substantial differences in the effects between the somewhat cosmopolitan characteristics of buying groceries at the farmers’ market (.54) and the very cosmopolitan characteristic of being a vegetarian (.54). Second, regarding sports, the somewhat cosmopolitan characteristic of skateboarding had a stronger effect (.55) than the fully cosmopolitan characteristic of doing yoga (.52).



The person the respondents were most likely willing to engage with was a vegetarian, an omnivore, someone who did skateboarding, who lived in Cologne, and has lived in Argentina. The least likely person was someone who ate fast food, listened to traditional German folk music, did bodybuilding, lived in a small village and has never lived outside of Germany. In summary, the results allow for a cautious support of the hypothesis H2.

Comparing the effects between the two dependent variables, the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees and the willingness to interact, there were some noteworthy differences across the models. Vegetarianism was not as distinctive a food practice regarding the willingness to interact with a person as it was regarding the inferred political attitudes. Buying groceries at the farmer's market had the same effect compared to being a vegetarian. A similar, but even stronger difference could be observed for the variable "sport practice". Yoga, being the stronger signal for the admission of refugees among the categories of the sport variable, was only the second strongest effect regarding the willingness to interact.

However, the change in the effects of the variable "music preference" was in the opposite direction. While listening to electronic music and being an omnivore, both had the same effect on the inferred cosmopolitan political attitudes, being an omnivore had the much stronger effect regarding the willingness to interact. It had, in fact, the strongest effect of all lifestyle characteristics. The range of coefficients of the categories of the variable "place of residence" was much smaller for the interaction model compared to the political attitudes model. Lastly, Argentina was a less strong signal for the willingness to interact than for the inferred cosmopolitan political attitude. These differences in the effects across the two dependent variables are discussed in chapter five.

4.2 Mediation Processes

The hypothesis H3a expected that the main effects of the lifestyle variables on the inferred political attitudes were mediated by the inferred level of education. In the analysis, the total causal effects of the lifestyle variables were disentangled into the direct effects of the lifestyle variables and the indirect effects via the inferred level of education. Table 3 shows the results from various logistic regression models. The effects were estimated using the KHB method and are presented as average marginal effects.

The first column (total effects) shows the effects of bivariate logistic regressions of the dependent variable on the five lifestyle variables. The second column (direct effect) shows the effects of the lifestyle variables from a model controlling for the mediator “inferred level of education” (Z1). The third column (indirect effect) shows the difference in the effects between the total and the direct effect. The fourth column (confounding percentage) is the ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect. In other words, this is the amount of the total causal effect of the lifestyle variable that is mediated (confounded) through the inferred level of education.

Regarding the variable “food consumption”, persons who were vegetarians had a .09 percent higher chance of being thought to be in favor of the admission of refugees than persons who ate fast food. After controlling for the inferred level of education, this effect was reduced to .06. The indirect effect of the inferred level of education was thus .02, which is equal to 26% of the total effect. For all lifestyle variables, there was a substantial indirect effect of the inferred attitude regarding the admission of refugees through the inferred level of education. The results thus confirm hypothesis H3a that the effects of the lifestyle variables were mediated by the inferred level of education.

There was a lot of variation across the lifestyle variables in the amount that the total effect was confounded by the inferred level of education. The strongest confounding effect existed for the categories of the variable “food consumption”, with 42% of the total effect being mediated through the inferred level of education for the characteristic “buying groceries at the farmers’ market”, and 26% for the characteristic “vegetarianism”. The least strong confounding effects existed for the variable “music preference”, with only 8% of the total effect of the characteristic “listening to electronic music”, and 9% of the total effect of the characteristic “being an omnivore” being mediated.

The results were only discussed regarding the dependent variable “inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees” (Y1). In general, the results for the dependent variable “inferred attitude towards the transfer of competencies to the EU” (Y2) were similar to those regarding Y1. While there were some differences in the size of the mediation for some of the variables, the variable “food consumption” was, again, the variable with the largest mediation, and the variable “music preference” was the one with the smallest mediation.

Table 3 shows results from separate logistic regression models of the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees (Y1) on the lifestyle variables (X1 – X5). For each lifestyle variable, using the KHB method, the coefficients from an uncontrolled model (total effect) and one controlling for the inferred level of education (Z1) (direct effect) are compared. The difference between both is presented in terms of the indirect effect and the confounding percentage. The strengths of the effects are expressed as average marginal effects. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

| | | Total effect | Direct effect | Indirect effect | Confounding pct. z1 |
|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| | | AME | AME | AME | |
| Food consumption | (Ref: Fast food) | | | | |
| | Farmers' market | 0.06** (0.03) | 0.04 (0.03) | 0.03 | 42.33 |
| | Vegetarianism | 0.09*** (0.03) | 0.06** (0.03) | 0.02 | 25.80 |
| Music preference | (Ref: German folk music) | | | | |
| | Electronic music | 0.25*** (0.02) | 0.23*** (0.02) | 0.02 | 7.76 |
| | Omnivorousness | 0.23*** (0.02) | 0.21*** (0.03) | 0.02 | 9.47 |
| Sport practice | (Ref: Bodybuilding) | | | | |
| | Skateboard | 0.09*** (0.02) | 0.08*** (0.02) | 0.01 | 9.55 |
| | Yoga | 0.15*** (0.03) | 0.13*** (0.03) | 0.03 | 16.58 |
| Place of residence | (Ref: Village) | | | | |
| | Duesseldorf | 0.13*** (0.02) | 0.11*** (0.02) | 0.02 | 16.24 |
| | Cologne | 0.15*** (0.02) | 0.13*** (0.02) | 0.02 | 12.16 |
| Foreign experience | (Ref: None) | | | | |
| | England | 0.11*** (0.03) | 0.09*** (0.03) | 0.03 | 22.77 |
| | Argentina | 0.21*** (0.03) | 0.19*** (0.03) | 0.02 | 8.34 |

Significance: ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1

The hypothesis H3b expected that the effects of the lifestyle variables on the willingness to interact were mediated by both, the inferred level of education (Z1) and the inferred political attitudes, for which the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees was used (Z2). The total causal effects of the lifestyle variables were disentangled into a direct effect and an indirect effect of the two mediators. Table 4 shows the results from logistic regression models, which is similar to table 3. Column one shows, again, the total causal effects of the lifestyle variables from the bivariate models. Column two shows the direct effects after including both mediators, the inferred level of education and the inferred attitude towards refugees, into the models. Column three shows the indirect effect of both mediators combined. Column four shows the confounding percentage for both mediators combined, while columns five and six, respectively, show the individual confounding percentage of each mediator.

Regarding the variable “food consumption”, persons, who were vegetarian, had a .09 percent greater chance of other people being willing to interact with them, compared to persons who ate fast food. After controlling for the two mediators, this effect decreased to .04. Thus, the indirect effect of both mediators combined was .05, which amounts to 51% of the total effect. 13% of the total effect was confounded by mediator Z1, the inferred level of education, and 38% was confounded by mediator Z2, the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees. The effects of all lifestyle variables were mediated by both mediators, the inferred level of education and the inferred political attitude regarding refugees. The results thus confirm the hypothesis H3b.

As with the previously analyzed mediation process, there was a considerable range in the size of the mediation effects for both mediators across the lifestyle variables. Via the inferred level of education, the largest mediations were with the lifestyle characteristics “doing yoga” and “having lived in England”, with 23% and 22% of the total causal effects of both characteristics being confounded. As with the previously analyzed mediation of the effects on the inferred attitude towards refugees, the smallest mediation effects could be found for the categories of the variable “music consumption”. Regarding the indirect effect of the inferred attitude towards refugees, the largest mediation was with the characteristic of doing yoga, with 93% of the total causal effect being confounded. The smallest mediation effect was for the characteristic buying groceries at the farmers’ market, with 28% of the total effect confounded.⁷

⁷ The size of the confounding percentage of Z2 for some of the effects, as well as the size of the total confounding percentage, which was over 100% for some of the effects, could suggest some collinearity between the mediators and the dependent variable.

Table 4 shows the results of separate logistic regression models of the willingness to interact (Y3) on the lifestyle variables (X1 - X5). For each lifestyle variable, using the KHB method, the coefficients from an uncontrolled model (total effect) and one model controlling for the inferred level of education (Z1) and the inferred attitude towards the admission of refugees (Z2) (direct effect) are compared. The difference between both models is presented as the indirect effects and the total confounding percentage. The latter is disentangled into the confounding percentage of each mediator. The strengths of the effects are expressed as average marginal effects. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

| | | Total effect AME | Direct effect AME | Indirect Effect AME | Total Con- founding pct. | Confounding pct. z1 | Confounding pct. z2 |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Food consumption | (Ref: Fast food) | | | | | | |
| | Farmers' market | 0.10*** (0.02) | 0.06*** (0.02) | 0.04 | 42.09 | 13.92 | 28.16 |
| | Vegetarianism | 0.09*** (0.02) | 0.04** (0.02) | 0.05 | 50.89 | 12.49 | 38.41 |
| Music preference | (Ref: german folk music) | | | | | | |
| | Electronic music | 0.23*** (0.02) | 0.12*** (0.02) | 0.11 | 48.43 | 4.33 | 44.10 |
| | Omnivorousness | 0.30*** (0.02) | 0.20*** (0.02) | 0.10 | 34.79 | 3.70 | 31.09 |
| Sport practice | (Ref: Bodybuilding) | | | | | | |
| | Skateboard | 0.09*** (0.02) | 0.05 (0.02) | 0.04 | 48.21 | 5.63 | 42.58 |
| | Yoga | 0.07*** (0.02) | -0.01 (0.02) | 0.08 | 115.60 | 22.83 | 92.77 |
| Place of residence | (Ref: Village) | | | | | | |
| | Duesseldorf | 0.06*** (0.02) | 0.00 (0.02) | 0.07 | 103.74 | 19.34 | 84.39 |
| | Cologne | 0.10*** (0.02) | 0.03 (0.02) | 0.07 | 72.30 | 10.45 | 61.85 |
| Foreign experience | (Ref: none) | | | | | | |
| | England | 0.07*** (0.02) | 0.01 (0.02) | 0.06 | 88.09 | 21.59 | 66.49 |
| | Argentina | 0.11*** (0.02) | 0.01 (0.02) | 0.10 | 88.07 | 9.26 | 78.81 |

Significance: ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1

Hypothesis H3c expects, that the mediation through the inferred level of education is smaller than the mediation through the inferred attitude towards refugees. Comparing the size of the confounding percentage by the mediators across all lifestyle characteristics shows that the confounding percentage is larger for the mediator Z2, the inferred attitude on refugees, than for the mediator Z1, the inferred level of education. These results thus support hypothesis H3c.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of the Results

The main results of this study are that the cosmopolitans interpret the lifestyle characteristics of other people as signals of political attitudes. They use these signals to categorize others socially as cosmopolitans or communitarians. The more cosmopolitan the lifestyle characteristics of a person are, the more likely cosmopolitans are to see this person as a part of their own group. Especially music preferences, in the form of listening to electronic music or listening to a broad number of genres, seem to be strong signals of cosmopolitan political attitudes.

The results also showed that lifestyles structure social interactions. Cosmopolitans rather interact with people, who have cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics than with people, who do not. This is, presumably, because the cosmopolitans categorize others based on their lifestyle characteristics as either cosmopolitans or communitarians. The tendency to rather interact with people with the right lifestyle characteristics is how lifestyles reaffirm the cleavage structure and the division between the two cleavage groups.

As for the differences for some of the lifestyle characteristics between their signaling effect on the inferred political attitudes and the effect on the willingness to interact with them, it seems that, regarding the willingness to interact, those lifestyle characteristics are important that truly signal openness. Doing yoga and being a vegetarian are both strong signals of cosmopolitan political attitudes but they are less distinctive signals that lead to people being willing to interact with a person. Being an omnivore, on the other hand, is an even more important characteristic for the willingness to interact with a person, than for the inferred cosmopolitan political attitude. While the characteristic "omnivorousness" is a direct signal of openness, the characteristics "doing yoga" and "vegetarianism" might have some potential connotations of closedness or ideological dogmatism. Thus, for the prospect of interacting with another person, the cosmopolitans are looking more for signs of openness than for anything else in the lifestyle characteristics of the other person.

The mediation analysis showed that the lifestyle characteristics were interpreted as both signals of social class and of political attitudes but that the latter one was generally the stronger signal. There are many different potential reasons for this. On the one

hand, this could be due to the fact that the cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics themselves do not have such a strong social class connotation, as, for example, the traditional highbrow or lowbrow characteristics do. Since engaging in the cosmopolitan lifestyle is not only correlated with social class but also strongly correlated with other characteristics, such as age, the association between social class and the cosmopolitan lifestyle might not be that salient for people.

On the other hand, the fact that the lifestyles are stronger signals of political attitudes than of social class positions might be caused by the cosmopolitans being a group of members from the new academic middle class. People from privileged social positions, who do not lack basic material resources, are not as conscious of their own social class position as people from lower classes are. Thus, they might not see the cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics, which they share, as signals of social class positions. It might be the case that communitarians, who often are from lower classes, see the cosmopolitan lifestyle much more as a signal of social class than the cosmopolitans do.

Lastly, the strength of the political signal over the social class signal of the lifestyles speaks to the salience of the cleavage. The fact from the earlier results, that the cosmopolitans recognized the cosmopolitan lifestyle characteristics as a signal of affiliation with their group, is already evidence for the salience of the cleavage. It means that the cosmopolitans recognized the cosmopolitan lifestyle as their own, which, in turn, is evidence for the existence of a collective group identity and a consciousness about their own position. The strength of the political signal over the class signal shows that the cleavage is recognized for what it is: A conflict that has a social class component to it, but which issues of contestation are cultural and political in nature. The cleavage is not independent of but distinct from the traditional class conflict.

The salience of the conflict as a political one might also be caused by the fact that the cosmopolitans became conscious of the cleavage and became politicized by a number of distinctly political events, like for example the electoral success of the populist right. Thus, they might see the cleavage much more in terms of a political fight against the populist right than as an antagonism between two social groups, that has a social class component to it.

As for the generalization of results, the relative homogeneity of the causal effects across the sample leads to the conclusion that the results can be generalized from the sample to the target population. However, whether the target population of students living in Berlin as a proxy group of likely cosmopolitans is representative of the whole cosmopolitan cleavage group, is another question. As the students are quite young and not part of the workforce yet, to name just two aspects, they probably differ from other cosmopolitans and should be regarded as a subgroup. The effects are, thus, not necessarily generalizable to all cosmopolitans. The students are, nevertheless, an interesting group in themselves, as well as an important subgroup of the cosmopolitans.

5.2 Limitations, Future Research and a Reflection on the Used Terminology

The study has the following limitations. Along with the use of the conjoint survey experiment come some methodological limitations that are about the external validity of the findings. First, although multidimensional vignettes are more realistic compared to unidimensional survey items, inferences from hypothetical situations always have to be questioned about capturing real world behavior. Second, respondents have been shown to be more empathetic towards individuals than towards collectives in vignettes and other survey items, which would cast doubt on inferences made about real world behavior between social groups that was attained from evaluations of individual profiles (Mutz 2011). Third, as the equal distribution of lifestyle traits across all profiles in the experiment deviates from the actual distribution of profiles in the real world, the estimates from the sample might be biased (Cuesta et al. 2019). Fourth, as not all assumptions necessary for the estimation of the causal effects from the conjoint experiment were met, the results, again, might contain some biases.

As for broader limitations, while the study aimed at analyzing the cultural dimension of the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians, the study only focused on the cosmopolitan pole of the cleavage. While it did highlight how the cosmopolitans use their lifestyle to distinguish themselves from the communitarians, this covers only half of the phenomenon. Future research should focus on the communitarians, as well as on people, who are in between the two cleavage poles to contrast their distinction practices with those of the cosmopolitans. In addition to using survey experiments, drawing even more on concepts from social psychology, as well as using qualitative methods might both be fruitful approaches for future research, especially for focusing on the reactions the lifestyles elicit, on the perceptions of the groups of themselves and of each other, as well as on their distinction practices.

Reflecting on the usage of terms in this study, calling the new cleavage “cosmopolitanism” vs. “communitarianism” is not ignorant of the fact that both cleavage groups also hold values beyond cosmopolitanism and communitarianism and that the cleavage is labelled differently in some parts of the literature. The terms were used because they are one of the central terms existing in the literature and because they reflect the second and more recent societal transformation that led to the emergence of the cleavage. They also come with the advantage of connecting the values of the cleavage groups to distinct political-philosophical traditions, which emphasize the ideologies and the normative claims that lie behind the concrete political attitudes of the groups (Zürn/DeWilde 2016; Koopmans/Zürn 2019).

However, the use of these labels and their philosophical connotations is not supposed to give normative legitimacy to any of the claims, attitudes or distinction practices of the groups. It is especially not aimed at glossing over some of the more troublesome aspects of the value sets, attitudes, and behaviors of the groups. While cosmopolitanism, in theory, adheres to universalistic principles, it can be adopted as a self-serving ideology that brings social status to the adopter and that, if enacted as social policy, will further enhance the life chances of the winners of globalization.

While communitarianism, on the other hand, is legitimately concerned with the limits of social communities, in which justice and morality is feasible, it can be adopted as a form of whitewashing of nativist and xenophobic attitudes (Koopmans/Zürn 2019).

The same holds for the depiction of the lifestyle of the cosmopolitans as being an expression of openness. While it is the case that the cosmopolitans consume a broader and more diverse range of cultural products, a scientific description of this is no normative judgment in favor of cultural openness over cultural closedness, or about the groups practicing one or the other. It also needs to be reiterated that openness does not equal tolerance. Cultural consumption habits around openness, like for example, omnivorousness, do nevertheless exclude certain kinds of products or genres. The excluded ones are typically those favored by opposing groups. Cultural openness is thus nothing more than another form of distinction practice that does not have any more claim to legitimacy or moral superiority than any other distinction practise does.

5.3 Conclusion

The contribution of this study is threefold. First, it contributes to the research on the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians by analyzing the cultural dimension of the cleavage. It showed that the cosmopolitans use their lifestyle to distinguish themselves from the communitarians by using lifestyle characteristics as markers to identify the group belongings of other people and for evaluating with whom to interact. Distinction practices based on lifestyles thus play an important role in the conflict between cosmopolitans and communitarians. As another result, the study showed how the cosmopolitans interpret their lifestyle more as a signal of political attitudes than of a social class position. On the one hand, this can be a sign that the cosmopolitans in general do not like to think of themselves as a social class. On the other hand, this is a sign that the cleavage is salient as a distinct political conflict.

Second, the study made an attempt at integrating two previously unconnected theories from different fields of sociology: lifestyle research based on Bourdieus theory of cultural distinction from cultural sociology and cleavage theory from political sociology. It showed that analyzing lifestyle differences between cleavage groups and their distinction practices can contribute to understanding the parts and dynamics of cleavages that lie outside of the strictly political antagonisms. While this study made use of lifestyle research as a tool for studying cleavages, one can also imagine the integration of both theories going in the other direction. In this way, insights from cleavage theory would be utilized to research lifestyles, for example by highlighting the inherent potential for political conflict that lies in lifestyle differences between groups, milieus or classes, especially if there are asymmetries in the legitimacy of the lifestyles.

Lastly, the study broadly showed how political debates over issues such as European Integration and immigration are tied to the social and cultural divisions that underpin them. In the same manner, the rising political polarization in Western European societies can only be understood in relationship to the cultural conflicts that mirror

and amplify it. Seemingly arbitrary and innocuous practices such as listening to a specific kind of music, travelling to certain countries or eating a special kind of food can have an impact on socio-political conflicts. As for the cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians, it will probably increase in relevance and become the most important conflict in Western societies. The issues of European integration and immigration will not lose its relevance any time soon, and neither will the structural antagonism between the conflict groups.

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