THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF POLITICAL ELITES

Edited by
Heinrich Best and John Higley

The Palgrave Handbook of Political Elites

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The Palgrave Handbook of Political Elites: Introduction

Heinrich Best and John Higley

In view of a hundred-year-long discussion of political elites and the cascade of references to them today in academic and public discussion, it is astounding that investigations of political elites have not previously been incorporated and assessed in a handbook. The strong positive and negative value connotations that attach to political elites and the central roles these connotations have in the language of contemporary political combat are additional incentives to take stock of facts and theories about political elites. This handbook summarizes both common ground and contested issues in the literature on political elites.

When Robert Putnam published his *Comparative Study of Political Elites* 40 years ago (Putnam 1976), that literature was already large. Putnam surveyed some 600 books, articles, and documents that had appeared in English since Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, and Robert Michels published pioneering works about political elites early in the twentieth century. In cogent chapters, Putnam distilled the extant literature's main topics and gave a good sense of its breadth: the inevitability of political elites, interactions between them and wider social structures, processes of political

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elite recruitment, sources of elite motives and beliefs, different structures of political elites, elite-mass linkages, and how political elites are gradually or suddenly transformed.

At the time of Putnam's book, scholars studying political elites were embroiled in arguments with Marxists about which conceptual approach to politics, an elite-centered or a class-centered one, had greater explanatory value. Neo-Marxism was in vogue, and scholars who focused on elites during the 1970s remember the brickbats hurled regularly at them by neo-Marxists. The chasm between the two approaches seemed no less deep than when Mosca, Pareto, and Michels first posed the study of elites as an alternative and antidote to Marxism. During the 1970s, moreover, the chasm was a scholarly manifestation of the global conflict between liberal capitalism and state socialism. Amid oil shocks and economic stagflation; authoritarian rule in much of the world; upheavals in Iran, China, and Poland; as well as terrorist actions by "revolutionary" groups such as the *Brigate Rosse*, Red Army Faction, and Weather Underground, the 1970s were a decade of tumult and uncertainty. It was by no means clear how the scholarly conflict between elite-centered and class-centered approaches would play out. Although Putnam's benchmark book did much to move the study of political elites toward the scholarly mainstream, it remained a relatively specialized undertaking and, in neo-Marxist eyes, a blinkered one.

During the four decades since Putnam's book appeared, world political configurations and scholarly discourse have been turned upside down, so that political elite studies, not class analyses, are now in vogue. This change has been associated with three global developments. One was the third wave of democratization, which began to flow almost exactly when Putnam's book went to press. Although the third wave spawned a vast and conflicted research literature, political elites and their roles in democratic transitions and consolidations were at its center. Indeed, much of the debate about democratization boiled down to whether the third wave was driven mainly by elites or by mass yearnings for democracy (Huntington 1991; Higley and Gunther 1992; Diamond 1999; Collier 2000).

The inability of political elites in state socialist countries to reform their economic and political systems and avoid system collapse was a second, closely related development. Failures of state socialist elites to enact system-saving reforms and intricate elite negotiations to spawn fledgling democratic regimes did much to bring studies of political elites to the fore (Kotz and Weir 1997; Mawdsley and White 2000). The global financial crisis that began in 2008 and its protracted economic and political consequences have been the third main development. The extent to which actions and inactions by political and

business elites caused the crisis and made recovery from it so halting have been key issues (e.g. Blinder 2013; Wolf 2014; Best and Higley 2014). The rise of nationalist-populist elites mobilizing crisis-rooted discontents among wide swaths of voters is another important issue.

As a consequence of these developments (and, of course, others), books and articles about political elites pour forth, and references to them are ubiquitous in scholarly and public discourse. Today, a Putnam-like survey of relevant literature would have to be several magnitudes larger than his was four decades ago. There is barely a political elite in the world that has not by now been the subject of at least one study, and political elites in most countries have been studied multiple times from numerous angles. Causal connections between political elites and a wide variety of social and political phenomena are now routinely asserted.

Directions in Political Elite Studies

On the axiomatic basis of the early elite theorists' postulate about the inevitability of political elites and the overwhelming body of historical and empirical evidence that supports the postulate, political elites must be viewed as a universal feature of all at least moderately developed societies. Following fundamental shakeups of political and social orders, political elites inevitably form anew, and in processes of renewal or transformation, they display an enormous variety of structural manifestations and adaptations to societal changes. The specific characteristics of political elites are related systematically to their performance and of societies over which they preside.

Political elites are defined in this handbook as *individuals and small, relatively cohesive, and stable groups with disproportionate power to affect national and supranational political outcomes on a continuing basis*. They consist of several thousand persons in all but the tiniest of modern societies. Political elite members hold top positions in large or otherwise pivotal organizations, institutions, and social movements, and they participate in or directly influence political decision-making. Political elites include the familiar "power elite" triumvirate of top business, government executive, and military leaders (Mills 1956) along with persons and groups holding strategic positions in political parties and parliaments, major interest organizations and professional associations, important media enterprises and trade unions, and religious and other hierarchically structured institutions powerful enough to affect political decisions.

This definition of political elites, or one very close to it, is now standard in the literature, although scholars use different methods to identify "proximate decision makers," as Putnam termed them (1976, p. 11). Some scholars and observers have much larger aggregations of influential persons and groups in mind when they refer to elites (e.g. Collier 2000, pp. 17–19; Murray 2012, pp. 17–20), but in most studies, political elites at national and supranational decision-making levels are treated as numbering only a few thousand persons. For example, a series of systematic studies of the US political elite since Putnam's book appeared have identified about 6000 individuals holding roughly 7000 top positions in institutions and organizations that together control more than half of America's total resources (Dye 1976–2014; see also Lindsay 2014). To give another example, the polycentric political elite presiding over the European Union and Euro Zone is estimated to consist of 600–650 persons, many of whom simultaneously hold top decision-making positions in their home countries (Cotta 2014).

Analyzing the backgrounds and demographic profiles of political elite members—their family and class origins, ages and genders, educations and careers as well as their religious, ethnic, regional, and other affiliations—long constituted the dominant approach to studying political elites. This was in no small part because public biographical and other documentary sources were readily available for analysis. During the past 40 years, however, scholars have availed themselves of computers, statistical techniques, and many advances in communications to undertake survey studies of political elite attitudes, interpersonal networks, and participation in decision-making. These surveys have largely displaced the earlier analysis of elite members' biographies. Research on political elites has become much more multidimensional and focused on what elites do than on where they come from (Higley 2016). Consider, for example, the several comparative surveys of political elites in European countries that have been conducted in recent years (Best et al. 2012).

Recent studies cast doubt on the accuracy and utility of earlier models of political elite structure and behavior, which derived mainly from analyses of elite biographies. The debate between adherents of pluralist, power elite, and ruling class models generated much heat during the 1960s and 1970s, but that debate has cooled, because the rich data stemming from survey studies show that elite structures and behaviors are more complex and multifaceted than earlier models depicted. However, there is as yet no clear replacement for earlier models. Contemporary theorists of political elites do not agree about elite structures and behavioral dynamics and how they vary from one country to another or from one historical period to another in a particular society.

This is to say that theorizing has not kept pace with the collection of more diversified and rich empirical data about political elites. There is no general and accepted theory that drives studies today, and its absence is a main challenge. There is, for example, no widely accepted typology of political elites that would inform a theory positing causal relations between changes in elite types and changes in political regimes or in institutional effectiveness. These and other unresolved issues are refrains in this handbook.

The Handbook's Structure

In early 2015, the Research Committee on Political Elites of the International Political Science Association invited several dozen specialists on political elites to contribute chapters summarizing and assessing recent conceptual and empirical advances in their areas of expertise. Organized in six sections, the handbook's 40 chapters contributed by these scholars illustrate the field's diversity and richness, its achievements, and its shortcomings. Chapters build on studies of political elites that have accumulated, showing how they illuminate a wide range of political phenomena. The handbook has been co-edited by a half dozen prominent analysts of political elites who have played leading roles in the Research Committee. It would be wrong, however, to regard the handbook as summarizing studies conducted or sponsored by the Committee. The volume contains a much wider array of scholarship about political elites that will, we hope, stand as a lasting contribution to this important area of social science.

The handbook opens with a section devoted to old and new theories concerning political elites, with its chapters highlighting both continuity and innovation. The handbook's second section describes and discusses methodological techniques and instruments devised for identifying and studying political elites. Its third section canvasses patterns of traditional political elites and those today in the world's major regions: sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the West, with special chapters on Chinese and post-Soviet Russian political elites. The fourth section discusses attributes of political elites in the main sectors and institutional settings of modern societies—the executive, parliament, the economy, media, for example—and how these fundamentally differentiated elite groups relate to each other. The penultimate fifth section explores characteristics and resources of political elites vis-à-vis mass populations, while the sixth and final section dissects challenges that political elites confront today. Each section begins with an introduction by its editor(s) that gives an overview of themes elaborated in the section chapters. With an extensive

bibliography, the handbook provides readers with a comprehensive stocktaking of what is known about political elites and their consequences for politics and society.

It is important to emphasize, in conclusion, that the statuses and situations of political elites are always precarious and subject to internal conflicts and external pressures that threaten elite persistence. The ways in which elites cope or fail to cope with this precariousness are kaleidoscopic. The handbook seeks to cover their main dimensions and manifestations.

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Section I

Theories of Political Elites

Jan Pakulski

2

The Development of Elite Theory

Jan Pakulski

The body of thought known as elite theory has deep historical roots.[1] Embedded in the intellectual legacies of Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, first systematic formulations of the theory were produced by a critical and skeptical generation of European liberals—principally Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels, Max Weber, Joseph Schumpeter, and José Ortega y Gasset—all of whom wrote between the 1890s and 1940s. The theory's trademarks are a focus on elites as principal political and social actors, a conceptual pairing of elites and non-elites, and, most important, a political and methodological realism combined with an anti-utopian view of what is not possible politically and socially in all organized (at least somewhat developed) societies.

In all such societies, a bureaucratization of power facilitates domination by political elites that consist of top politicians, heads of state agencies, business tycoons and managers, leaders of organized labor, media moguls, and leaders of consequential mass movements. These networks of powerful individuals and tiny groups control the major decisional centers in modern societies. Elites mobilize the populations over which they preside for various causes and measures. Effective governance depends upon talented and skilled leaders imbued with political will, confidence, and foresight. Elite theory concentrates on the extent to which elites are endowed with these qualities and on

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shortcomings that produce political decay and lead to replacements by new elites better endowed with such qualities. In these and other respects, elite theory staunchly opposes Marxist and other strands of radical political and social thought.

The early exponents of elite theory attacked the promised advent of egalitarian and fully democratic societies as an illusion and an ideological pipe dream. They extended this attack to ideal renditions of Enlightenment beliefs, portraying them as illusions, myths, and deceptions. The development of modern societies, the early elite theorists argued, hardly bore out beliefs about linear progress and the triumph of reason. Instead, periods of relative order and stability are followed, more or less inexorably, by periods of disorder and conflict, and the rule of reason is at most fragile and patchy. Especially in an era of mass politics, political behavior is driven mainly by the hopes and fears of populations that lend themselves to manipulations by demagogues. Social hierarchy is a strong barrier to egalitarian reforms and leveling revolutions, while democracy in its representative form works primarily to sustain competitive governing elites. However, such elite democracies are fragile and unstable. Cunning and vulpine political leaders allied with business speculators gradually dissipate authority and exhaust a society's wealth. This leads to a crisis in which more resolute and authoritarian leonine elites take over. They also decay—lose their ruling capacities—thus triggering crises and causing their own downfall. Such cycles of elite ascendancy and decay are observed in all known large-scale societies.

The early elite theorists had as their targets Marxist-socialist visions of a wholly egalitarian society and radical visions of a pure (direct) democracy. They held these visions to be delusions that were both deceptive and dangerous. Because there is no recorded case in history of a wholly egalitarian society, Marxist visions are deceptive. Because they erode the legitimacy of a liberal political and social order, visions of pure elite-less democracy are dangerous. The pursuit of a classless society or a pure democracy is therefore both futile and risky. Moreover, the early theorists added, utopian egalitarian and democratic visions pose formidable obstacles to the development of an objective and realistic social science. Yet such a social science, grounded in historical-empirical evidence, is the foundation on which a workable politics must be built.

This critical diagnosis was the basis for elite theory's tenets about the cyclical degeneration and regeneration of elites (Pareto and Mosca) and the charismatic mobilization of mass populations (Weber), as Jan Pakulski points out in Chap. 3. They also form a background for a democratic method for selecting and constraining state leaders and elites through competitive elections

(Schumpeter). Concentrations of power and elite rule are not only constant and ubiquitous in history; they are all the more conspicuous in conditions of omnipresent bureaucratic organization, regulatory states, and mass media used as a tool for shaping public opinion. Yet in some circumstances the existence of elites can be compatible with important degrees of individual freedom and dignity secured through legal-rational authority (Weber) or through a system of "juridical defense" (Mosca).

These and other tenets of elite theory have been subjects of theoretical debates canvassed by John Higley in Chap. 4 and Andras Körösényi in Chap. 5. Although the early elite theorists, especially Pareto, denounced democracy as fraudulent "poppycock,"[2] Weber and Schumpeter worked to effect a theoretical reconciliation between the existence of elites and democracy's practical workings. They stressed that democracy never amounts to "people's power" in a literal sense. Nevertheless, as a regime type involving open and regular electoral competitions for leadership, democracy dignifies voters by rendering them "king-makers" ("authorizers" of leaders) and occasional deposers of incompetent "kings." And although such democracy cannot ensure political and social equality in other than a legal sense, it can in auspicious circumstances produce the stable political order that is a precondition of individual freedom and dignity.

But while these outcomes are possible, they are by no means certain—an important point at the beginning of the twentieth century. The early theorists agreed that neither elite nor mass conditions in Europe during the decades surrounding World War I were conducive to stable political orders. They instead anticipated, in Weber's striking phrase, a "polar night of icy darkness and severity." This would entail plebiscitary rule and "Caesarist" mobilizations of mass publics, the collapse of vulpine elites and their replacement by leonine ones, the decline of judicially protected liberties, the perpetuation of oligarchy, and rule by mediocre populist demagogues.

The elite theorists were proven right, but their predictive success did not translate into an acceptance of elite theory. During the "Age of Extremes," as historian Eric Hobsbawm (1994) labeled the "short twentieth century" between 1914 and 1991, utopian visions were ascendant. Marxist class analyses and conceptions of participatory democracy offered more alluring visions and dominated political and intellectual discourse. Both of these utopian streams of thought propagated hostile and distorted renditions of elite theory. Marxists portrayed elite theorists as bourgeois ideologues and reactionary cynics whose thesis about the inevitability of elites was nothing more than an apology for the unsavory *status quo*. Enthusiasts of participatory democracy painted elite theory as anti-democratic and authoritarian in thrust. These

characterizations contributed to the theory's lengthy eclipse, even though scholars such as Robert Dahl, C. Wright Mills, Suzanne Keller, Giovanni Sartori, and G. Lowell Field and John Higley tried to re-state and re-assert an elite-centered interpretation of politics and society.[3]

In light of these and other ideological reasons for elite theory's eclipse, it is hardly surprising that its revival during the twentieth century's final decade or two coincided with Marxism's loss of credibility, the collapse of Soviet socialism, and the inability of radical democrats to extend participatory democracy beyond tiny and isolated communities. The century's closing decades were also marked by the obviously central roles that leaders and elites played in forming the European Monetary System, re-orienting socialist China toward a market economy, dismantling the Soviet Union, and undertaking top-down democratizations of Central East European countries when the Soviet Union collapsed.[4] These developments highlighted the relevance and utility of an elite-centered perspective and theories grounded in it.

Elite theory has undergone important modifications. First, concepts of elites and non-elites have been made clearer, more operational, and more value-neutral. Contemporary conceptions of political elites define them as networks of individuals and small, relatively cohesive, and stable groups with major decisional power. Political elite members are today typically conceived at the national level as incumbents of top executive positions in the largest and most resource-rich organizations and movements. They are identified through combinations of positional, reputational, and sociometric research methods.[5] These methods produce a spectrum of delineations in contemporary societies that range from elites numbering a few thousand persons to elites defined as the top one or two percent of wealth holders. Accompanying these delineations is a widening recognition of internal elite stratification involving central or inner circles that consist of the most pivotal elite persons and groups, but also involving a somewhat lower stratum of influential persons and groups from which the most pivotal elite members are usually drawn. The concept of non-elites has been disaggregated into different and distinct population segments and strata, such as the agricultural-artisan, manual-industrial, and non-manual white-collar components of workforces, or into "insiders" who are securely employed and "outsiders" for whose labor there is no pressing need.

Second, elite theory's principal tenets have been streamlined to hold that (1) in all larger societies and especially in complex modern nation-states, power is concentrated at the top of organizational hierarchies in the hands of elites; (2) power in all such societies flows predominantly in a top-down direction from elites to non-elites; and (3) in all larger societies the characteristics and

actions of elites are crucial determinants of major political and social outcomes, including the type of political regime in a society. This streamlining tends to cleanse elite theory of many questionable normative assumptions and dubious ideological overtones, thereby widening its plausibility (see Higley below).

Elite theory now exists in two versions: neo-elitism, which is closer to the perspective of Mosca and Pareto, and demo-elitism, which is closer to the perspective of Weber and Schumpeter (see Körösényi below). Neo-elitism stresses the importance of elite autonomy as a precondition for political effectiveness, as well as the limits on political and social possibilities that result from the inevitable concentration of power in the hands of elites, the self-interests of elite persons and groups, and the needs and protections that different patterns of elite interaction do or do not provide elite persons and groups. Demo-elitism highlights alliances and power reciprocities between elites and non-elites—more or less simultaneous top-down and bottom-up flows of power—although it recognizes that bottom-up flows are often orchestrated by elites. Demo-elite theory also portrays elites as guardians of democratic institutions and as competitive "polyarchies of merit" that show various degrees of tolerance, political effectiveness, and adaptability (Best and Higley 2010).

Third, the scope of elite theory has been extended in at least four important ways:

1. Contemporary students of elites not only recognize the complexity of modern power structures ("lattices of leaders"), and therefore the differentiation of sectorial and other elite groupings, they also recognize the increasing importance of supra-national elites, such as the those heading the EU, the IMF, and the World Bank, in shaping national-level elite relations and actions. Elites are depicted as situated within complex and dynamic "power networks" whose core components usually include key political, administrative, business, and media/opinion-making actors, but whose boundaries vary in rigidity and generally tend to be porous.[6]
2. The role of political leaders at the level of presidents and prime ministers is recognized as increasingly critical in directing political change, especially in times of crisis, as a consequence of partisan de-alignment and the weakening of party organization, the rise of mass patronage parties, the heavy mass media concentration on a few paramount leaders, and a plebiscitary politics that involves constant campaigning and a personalization of politics amounting to "leader democracy."[7]
3. Elite recruitment is viewed as relatively open, and elite mobilization of popular support is thought to rely heavily on persuasion rather than

coercion. Elites are seen as legitimizing their actions by invoking the "merits" manifested in taxing formal educations, extensive career achievements, and professionalism in serving the public.[8]
4. Instead of assuming substantial consciousness, cohesion, and conspiracy among elites, the complexity and variability of elite organization, especially the extent of integration and the fragility of cohesion and consciousness are stressed, as John Higley discusses in Chap. 4.

These theoretical extensions have been accompanied by a massive number of empirical studies of elites that are as yet only partly systematized. The extensions and studies do not amount to a new and general theory of elites and society comparable to Pareto's general theory. Rather, they constitute attempts to move from empirical generalizations to elite typologies—reviewed by Ursula Hoffman-Lange in Chap. 6—and some middle-range theoretical hypotheses that manifest the continuing attempt to bring together and generalize the thought and research findings of recent decades. Although acceptance of an elite-centered perspective appears to be increasing and theorizing about elites appears to be intensifying, the quest for a general theory has been largely abandoned. We know more and more about political elites—their diverse forms and configurations, complex dynamics, and impacts on societies—but these advances in knowledge are far from cumulative and systematic. Proliferating research on elites must be contrasted with the relative paucity of theory that situates elites as *the* crucial variable for understanding politics and society. But as John Higley has cautioned,

> Elite theory has no place for idealized visions of democracy or social revolution, nor does it have a place for the spread of new values that dispose human beings toward a consistent and thorough altruism. Human conflicts inevitably dilute social cohesion and constitute political problems that elites must manage as best they can. However well or poorly they accomplish this task, elites are the central actors in politics, but the theory that centers on them is unlikely to have many enthusiastic adherents (Higley 2008).

This cautioning note reverberates more strongly now, at the time of widening crises, than it did at the beginning of the new century.

Notes

1. Elite theory and the elitist paradigm have nothing in common with the popular usages of "elitist" or "elitism" referring to assertions of individual superiority and allegedly nefarious cabals. John Higley discusses these and other confusions in Chap. 4. See also Field and Higley (1980).

2. Yet Pareto chose Switzerland as his later home, and praised it: "The best government now in existence, and also better than countless others that have so far been observable in history, is the government of Switzerland, especially in the forms it takes on in the small cantons—forms of direct democracy. It is a democratic government, but it has nothing but the name in common with the governments, also called democratic…" (Pareto 1916/1935, para 2240, n.1).

3. Putnam (1976) provides an overview of post-WWII elite theorizing.

4. See, for example, Higley et al. (1998).

5. "[P]ersons who are able, by virtue of strategic positions in powerful organisations and movements, to affect political outcomes, usually at the level of national states, regularly and substantially" (Higley and Burton 2006, p. 7).

6. For example, Higley et al. (1991), Dogan (2003), Blondel and Muller-Rommel (2007).

7. For example, Femia et al. (2009), Pakulski and Körösényi (2012).

8. For example, Dogan (1989), Cotta and Best (2007).

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3

Classical Elite Theory: Pareto and Weber

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The circulations and qualities of elites and leaders were abiding concerns in the sprawling theories of Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) and Max Weber (1864–1920). Although writing in the same period and in nearly adjacent countries, Pareto and Weber knew little or nothing of each other, neither cited the other, and had quite different intellectual lineages and political postures. An intellectual descendant of Niccolò Machiavelli, Pareto was a sophisticated liberal skeptic deeply disappointed by Italy's bumbling and corrupt political regime. An offspring of German historicism and idealism, Weber was a staunch nationalist who believed that Germany's greatness was inhibited by its dysfunctional imperial regime.

Pareto and Weber had, however, a shared hostility to Karl Marx's theory of class struggle and of capitalism as the penultimate stage in humanity's march to a classless society. Pareto depicted Marx's scenario as an ideological illusion that ignored the inevitability of elites and economic-political cycles that made history a graveyard of failed elites. Weber accused Marx of having ignored organizational and bureaucratic imperatives in modern political regimes, imperatives that would reach their apotheosis in militaristic and bureaucratic state socialism. Against Marx's bottom-up image of socio-political orders, Pareto and Weber juxtaposed top-down images of elites and leaders as

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powerful and relatively autonomous social actors whose strengths or weaknesses are decisive for a society's fate.

The top-down images of Pareto and Weber nevertheless differed considerably in detail and thrust. Pareto wrote explicitly about elites ("ruling classes" or "governing classes"), and he assigned them clashing psychosocial proclivities, economic allies, and patterns of behavior during successive historical cycles. Weber shunned the elite concept and wrote, instead, about leaders and their staffs, authorities and officialdoms, professional politicians and ruling minorities, especially those that controlled modern states. Pareto was little concerned with power as an organizing concept, whereas Weber pondered power at length. In terms of heuristics, Pareto maintained a resolutely positivist-determinist stance, but Weber emphasized contingent and variable social-historical developments. Pareto regarded all regimes, including ostensible democracies, as fraudulent mechanisms of elite rule ("by force and fraud"). Weber was more respectful of democracy in his analysis of the complex power configurations that emerged with modernization and bureaucratic states.

After briefly discussing differences between the theories of Pareto and Weber, this chapter highlights their complementary character. This has several benefits. It merges the normative concerns of Pareto and Weber about the *quality* of elites and leaders in a revealing and useful way. It clarifies conditions and ways in which elite and leadership failures occur. And it illuminates the roles played by elites and leaders in putatively democratic regimes.

Differences Between Pareto and Weber

In his vast but exceedingly general and rambling *Treatise on General Sociology* (1916/1935) and in lesser texts, Pareto focused on historical epochs that began and ended with basic transformations of ruling elites and political regimes, which he correlated with alternate epochs of faith or skepticism. Although Pareto stressed that the circulation of elites is a constant, his attention was riveted on sweeping revolutionary circulations that occur periodically and entail the rise and eventual fall of entire ruling elites. Weber also looked at great historical "switches" and "breakthroughs," which he attributed to charismatic religious and political leaders, but in his overtly political analyses, he focused on novel social changes, especially the emergence of modern power concentrations with no historical precedents.

Pareto illustrated the cycles he discerned in history with myriad examples from ancient Greece, Rome, and medieval Europe. Weber's analysis

concentrated on watershed political, economic, and social developments in Europe during the modern historical period that, he believed, manifested the increasing rationality of power and governance, as well as the ascendancy of bureaucratic organizations.

Pareto distinguished two basic types of elites—predominantly leonine or predominantly vulpine—and he interpreted history as primarily a record of the two types' alternating ascendancies and decays. Weber was inclined to regard modern ruling groups as *sui generis*—as products of the increasingly rationalistic organizational environment that was modern instead of traditional, deliberately constructed instead of inherited, differentiated and specialized instead of uniform, professionalized instead of amateur, and complex and efficient instead of simple and dilatory.

Neither theorist doubted that powerful ruling groups controlled the societies of their time. Pareto sketched ruling elites that encompassed opposing parties and allies rotating in and out of government and squabbling endlessly over public policies. He insisted that competing factions and groups nevertheless constituted an intertwined web of patrons and clienteles held together by a "common accord" that stemmed from "an infinitude of minor acts, each determined by⋯present advantage" (1916/1935, para. 2254). For Pareto, a modern ruling elite was "a great nexus of influence and pressure" (Femia 2006, p. 7), whose members lived by taking in each other's washing, and whose inner leaders looked after the interests of as many members and clienteles as possible (Finer 1968, p. 447).

Weber discerned in Germany and comparable nation-states powerful political executives in command of mass parties and bureaucratic administrative apparatuses, as well as commanders of coercive forces that made their rule irresistible. Yet, Weber observed, these state-based executives were differentiated structurally, and this made their unity precarious. Unity depended on three circumstances: (1) a hierarchical coordination and centralization of authority in the hands of uppermost political leaders and their immediate staffs; (2) a common acceptance of professional norms and a vocational ethos; (3) an informal social cohesion generated by "the principle of small numbers." Weber viewed nationalism as a unifying force, but he believed that it was more important for aligning rulers with mass publics than for preventing fissures in political executives. He noted, moreover, that nationalism can be undermined by sectional ideologies based in conflicting social classes and religious communities.

Pareto and Weber differed in how they regarded their principal theoretical competitor, Karl Marx. Pareto heaped scorn on Marx, deriding and refuting Marx's theory of surplus labor value, theorizing and demonstrating the

universality of unequal income distributions, and arguing powerfully that economic self-interest propels any modern economy. Weber took a somewhat less adversarial stance. He acknowledged the importance of class interests and their importance in underpinning the power of political leaders in nation-states. But unlike Marx, Weber viewed class and political alignments as inherently contingent and circumstantial—a subset of more general power configurations. Classes sometimes control or strongly influence governments in the manner of the landed *Junkers* in Wilhelmine Germany. But because classes compete with each other, because they vary in the strength of class identity and consciousness, because they are seldom as cohesive as Marx claimed, and because they only occasionally spawn parties and leaders capable of dominating governments, *Junker*-like formations are the exception, not the rule. When push comes to shove, Weber believed, modern states have the power to contain, and if necessary overwhelm, classes and other mass interests, even though there is always a reciprocal relationship between state and non-state forces.

Pareto was much more dismissive of modern class divisions and modern mass democracy than Weber. He regarded economic class formation as subordinate to elite formation. Similarly, he considered "the rule of the people, by the people, and for the people" a metaphysical fiction that the powerful employ for their own advantage. Always punctuating "democracies" as a label, Pareto insisted that they are in reality "demagogic plutocracies" or "pluto-democracies" controlled by the wealthy through elaborate matrices of organized interests, each interest headed by a leader who transacts self-serving deals with the leaders of other interests. Parliaments are the forums in which these deals are cut, and the image of MPs being democratically elected is a mirage. Rather, MPs impose themselves, or have their friends impose them, on mass voters. Weber (1978) likewise viewed full democracy as a fiction, yet he treated mass democratization, especially the formation of parliaments, suffrage extensions, and some degree of government accountability to voters, as facts. He accepted some degree of democracy (especially an orderly "working democracy") as the price that had to be paid if all classes and citizens were to be committed to national strength, and he also regarded it as a tribute to soldier-citizens who gave their lives for the national cause.

In sum, Pareto and Weber were as one in supposing that concentrations of power, manifested in elites and leaders, are inescapable in modern societies. Without power concentrations, elites and leaders, societies cannot realize political goals or enforce adherence to basic social values. Their ubiquity is part and parcel of all modern societies, including those that are somewhat democratized. Pareto and Weber treated this in a neutral way, viewing power

concentrations, elites and leaders as neither good nor bad, neither progressive nor decadent, neither alienating nor emancipating. But although power concentrations, elites, and leaders are factual matters, there was a hidden normative element in their analyses masked by Pareto's professed positivism and by Weber's professedly value-free stance.

Complementarities Between Pareto and Weber

The normative element in the theories of Pareto and Weber was a pronounced concern for the *quality* of elites. While Marxists and liberal democrats clung to the utopian ideal of elite-less society, Pareto and Weber envisaged an orderly society ruled by high-quality elites and leaders that should in principle be acceptable and attractive to all persons. They searched for the underpinnings of high-quality elites and leaders. This would involve, above all else, internal cohesion and the "capacity to rule," which meant the capacity to deliver prosperity for many, as well as security, stability and dignity to all. Pareto treated this capacity and its consequences in his typologies of the psychosocial proclivities of elites and the beliefs derived from and used to justify these proclivities. He stipulated, however, that elites need different qualities for different circumstances. Similarly, Weber stressed the qualitative importance of structural balances and compositional affinities between political, administrative, business and cultural leaders.

  Both theorists believed that high-quality elites and leaders are rare. They tried to clarify normative standards for assessing quality in analyses of elite degenerations and leadership failures. Pareto's intriguing theory of elite cycles (Higley and Pakulski 2012), along with his bitter condemnations of the patronage and corruption ("spoliation") rampant among Italian elites, left no doubt about what good and successful elites would look like. They would possess combinations of circumstantially appropriate leonine determination and vulpine cunning. However, because circumstances change constantly, a fortuitous combination of leonine and vulpine dispositions can never be sustained indefinitely. Sooner or later, ruling elites decline through stifling domination of leonine or vulpine dispositions, and their policies begin to fail. Only for limited periods and in fleeting circumstances can ruling elites combine and balance the leonine vigor and vulpine flexibility essential for social flexibility and dynamism.

  Weber's historical studies of world religions and capitalism's origins led him to believe that social dynamism depends upon affinities between cultural, economic, and political leaders. Capitalism's rise resulted from a unique

"elective affinity" between the ethical teachings of Protestant divines, the economic orientations and activities of early entrepreneurs, and the political leaders of the constitutional and bureaucratic *Rechtsstaat* that emerged from seventeenth-century religious wars. Weber feared that imbalances between weak political leaders, professional politicians, party organizations, and competent state bureaucrats in Wilhelmine Germany portended disaster. He contrasted those leadership imbalances in Germany with Britain and the United States, the two countries Weber admired because of their stronger leadership and more synergic relations among the "ruling minorities."

The normative element in the theories of Pareto and Weber was not hostile to democracy and democratization. However, their frequent and vociferous denunciations of demagogic, corrupt, and incompetent democratic practices in Italy and Germany, together with their acerbic dismissals of radical thinkers who embraced utopian visions of direct democracy, gave their theories an anti-democratic veneer. Having forecast the demise of the elite governing Italy's increasingly insolvent "demagogic plutocracy" before World War I, Pareto no doubt felt vindicated by the Fascist takeover in late October 1922. Lying on his deathbed less than ten months later, however, Pareto condemned the new Fascist regime for its incompetence and brutality. As Weber's life waned during 1919 and 1920, he blanched at the post-war utopianism of German intellectuals, their sympathy for the "militaristic dictatorship" taking shape in Russia, and the weak "leaderless" parliamentary democracy that had been initiated at Weimar. Had Pareto and Weber lived for another decade, the leonine Fascist elite that solidified in Italy and the "populist-caesarist" rise of Hitler and the Nazi elite in Germany would have horrified them—though they anticipated such outcomes.

Because classical elite theory has sometimes been characterized as anti-democratic in thrust, it is important to emphasize that neither Pareto nor Weber embraced anti-democratic views or sentiments. On the contrary, they soberly diagnosed and explained the "first wave" of democratization before World War I (Huntington 1991), and Weber laid the foundation for Joseph Schumpeter, who was influenced greatly by Weber, to expound his competitive theory of democracy (1942, pp. 262–90), which did much to reconcile representative democracy with the existence of political elites.

Pareto and Weber stressed the importance of mass populations in challenging and testing the quality of elites. Elites prove their quality by maintaining effective domination of these populations, which always entails a mixture of persuasion, selective patronage, pork barreling, cajoling, deception, and threats of force. As Pareto put it bluntly, "the masses" are subject to force and fraud delivered in various proportions by ruling elites. In modern regimes, Weber

believed, the masses are treated with significant respect, because bureaucratic hierarchies function according to impersonal rules and laws rather than personal fiat. Power is exercised more by bureaucratic control than by command, and when commands are issued, they are justified normatively as legitimate authority so that citizens feel a sense of duty to obey. Moreover, democratization, in which elites and leaders subject themselves to systematic mass elections, makes obedience easier. It gives citizens the dignified status of final arbiters in competitions for elective offices, and it binds them to the leaders and groups they elect.

Conclusion

A hundred years after Pareto and Weber published their major works, the elite concept and framework are still in a "recovery mode" after their long eclipse. "Elite" is impoverished semantically in public usage, and classical elite theory is seldom employed in social science, though references to leaders and leadership groups become common. Both the core conceptual pair—elites and non-elites—and the updated version of elite theory need to be further clarified and developed. The elite concept must be re-forged as a neutral analytic tool in social science and an accepted term in public discourse, while the explicative value of classical elite theory must be more clearly publicized and recognized. Pareto fathered the elite concept and made it the centerpiece of an ambitious general theory of society. Weber made seminal contributions, though he avoided the elite concept *per se* and anchored his work in a philosophy, methodology, and political outlook different from Pareto's. The theories of Pareto and Weber are nevertheless strikingly congruent and highlighting their congruence lends force and relevance to the elite concept and elite theory today.

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4

Continuities and Discontinuities in Elite Theory

John Higley

Like the birth of Marxism amid Europe's revolutionary upheavals in the middle of the nineteenth century, elite theory emerged at the start of the twentieth century in the face of crises that again threatened Europe's political and social orders. Like Marxism, elite theory contained prescriptions for the good society, one in which able and effective elites would foster individual dignity and societal well-being. Unlike Marxism, however, elite theory eschewed economic determinism and the vision of an egalitarian end point in human affairs. It offered, instead, a sober prognosis, derived from comparative historical analysis that portrayed hierarchical social organization and power concentrations as inescapable. Political and social developments depend heavily, therefore, on choices made by self-interested elites. Ideals must always be tempered by these realities. In modern societies, to be sure, elites are constrained by legal-constitutional rules and practices. Yet they usually have enough autonomy to interpret laws, modify rules, and manage public demands in ways that protect their interests. Elites accomplish this by employing the formidable powers of states and mass media, and by propitiating disgruntled groups with payoffs. Most of the time, elites rely on persuasion to protect their interests, yet the use of force is always a possibility.

Marxists and enthusiasts of democracy attacked elite theory and offered more alluring prospects. Insisting that propertied classes, not tiny elites,

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control modern societies, Marxists contended that class struggles would lead to revolutionary destructions of propertied classes and open the way to thoroughly egalitarian and free societies. Enthusiasts of democracy decried the manipulative practices of elites and foresaw a direct or mirror-like indirect rule by the *demos*. The failure of egalitarian societies or of self-governing democracies to emerge during the twentieth century revealed the utopian character of these visions, while the persistence of hierarchical social organization and power concentrations accorded with elite theory's strictures.

Yet, the dominance of utopian visions and of debates about them relegated elite theory to the century's intellectual sidelines. Seminal texts outlining the theory were misinterpreted or reviled, the theory was portrayed as inherently authoritarian, and confusions about elites, elitism, and elite theory abounded. In the century's increasingly populist discourse, elites became everyone's favorite *bête noire*, elitism was employed as an epithet for perceived exclusivity and condescension, and the early elite theory received no systematic elaboration. For example, *The Handbook of Political Sociology* (Janoski et al. 2005) treats the elite concept on just 5 of its 800 pages, while elitism and elite theory are ignored altogether. The 1900-page *Encyclopedia of Political Science* (Kurian et al. 2011) discusses elites and elite theory on just three pages and elitism on none.

Although contemporary social scientists refer often to elites, they prevailingly treat them as self-evident entities without need of definition, specification, or theoretical mooring. Dispelling such confusions, misunderstandings, and inattention is necessary if elite theory is to obtain the central place it deserves in political and other social science.

The Elite Concept

Whether used as a noun or an adjective, "elite" is a study in semantic confusion. During the seventeenth century *élite* was a French label for exclusive and expensive goods, and during the eighteenth century it was applied to crack military units and aristocratic groups claiming social superiority—"*la crème de la société*." Vilfredo Pareto (1916/1935, paras. 2026–2059) retained the term's evaluative meaning to denote individuals who most excel in all walks of life (artistic, economic, intellectual, martial, political), but in a descriptive vein he labeled those who possess power and wealth, whether they are excellent or not, as elites. Pareto observed that hierarchies of excellence and of power and wealth sometimes overlap, and when they do, elites of

distinction and merit are the result. Much more often, however, the two hierarchies are divorced, and elites lacking in distinction and merit hold sway. Seeking to construct a "science of politics," Gaetano Mosca (1923/1939, pp. 50–51) drew a distinction between a tiny political or ruling "class"(elites in Pareto's descriptive sense) and a larger "second stratum" of influential persons in which elites are embedded and from which they are usually recruited.

Elites can be defined as *individuals and small, relatively cohesive and stable groups with major decisional power.* They consist of the principal decision-makers in the largest or most pivotal organizations and movements in a society: top governmental, business, and military leaders, as well as the leaders of political parties, professional associations, trade unions, media combines, major interest groups, and important religious, educational, and cultural organizations. Outcomes that are decisively affected by elites include the basic stability or instability of political regimes, the forms and workings of political institutions, and the main policies of governments. Typically, elite persons and groups enjoy elevated social statuses—often celebrity statuses—and large financial rewards, although these and other perquisites are best viewed as correlates of their organizational positions, rather than as separate bases of their power and influence.

Elites are differentiated and stratified. Elite differentiation accords primarily with government, economic, military, and other functional sectors in a society (Keller 1963). Power distributions and relations among individuals and groups heading these sectors change gradually over time as sectors wax or wane in functional importance. Abrupt and profound crises may also alter elite differentiation (Dogan and Higley 1998). Elite stratification involves "elites within elites" variously labeled executive cores, inner leaderships, central circles, and the like. Debates about the extent and shape of elite differentiation and stratification are similar to Marxian debates about the structures of ruling classes.

There is confusion about the size of elites. In *The Ruling Class*, Mosca (1939, p. 430) described tiny "top cliques" whose shared ideas, sentiments, and policy preferences facilitate agreed actions, and he estimated that in early twentieth-century Italy, those who directly participated in, or who decisively influenced the government in Rome, numbered no more than the one or two hundred persons who held the most important state, parliamentary, and party positions. Adumbrating his "principle of the small number," Max Weber (1978, pp. 1393–1462) likewise limited a "ruling minority" to the holders of top executive positions in the German state and the main political parties. C. Wright Mills (1956, pp. 4–11) estimated that a tripartite "power elite" in

mid-twentieth-century America numbered hundreds rather than thousands of persons. Yet many who talk or write about elites blur their size. For example, in pursuing his thesis that America's white population has been "coming apart" since 1960, Charles Murray (2012, pp. 17–20) distinguishes between a "narrow elite" consisting of "fewer than a hundred thousand people and perhaps only ten thousand or so" and a "broad elite" consisting of the top five percent of adult Americans "located in managerial positions, the professions, and content-production jobs in the media"—some 1,427,000 persons by Murray's count!

Clearly, elites constitute a somewhat elastic political and social category, although it is a category much less elastic and less arbitrarily demarcated than a capitalist ruling class, an "establishment," or a "charter group," not to mention categories such as "leaders" and "influential people." Elites can be mapped with considerable precision by employing positional, reputational, decisional, and network research techniques and combinations of them (see Chap. 8 in this volume). Mappings that have been made find that national elites in today's Western societies vary in size from about 2000 persons in Norway and Denmark, to roughly 5000 in France and Germany, to upwards of 10,000 in the United States (Best and Higley 2010, pp. 6–7). It can of course be argued that these estimates are implausibly small and that elites are more numerous and omnipresent. Yet the mappings that have been done are consistent with elite theory's claim that in hierarchically structured societies like those just mentioned, power to affect national political outcomes decisively does not extend beyond a few thousand persons.

There is also confusion about the character and extent of elite cohesion. Pareto sought to forestall this by observing that elites "hold no meeting where they congregate to plot common designs, nor have they any other devices for reaching a common accord." Elite members are "carried along by the sheer force of the system to which they belong, involuntarily, and indeed against their wills, following the course that is required of the system." The road that elites follow, Pareto concluded, is "the resultant of an infinitude of minor acts, each determined by the present advantage" (1916/1935, para. 2254). James Meisel (1958), an interpreter of Mosca and Pareto, held that elites are defined by "three C's": cohesion, conspiracy, and consciousness. If these features are absent, Meisel contended, one is speaking only of an impersonal statistical category of position holders. In his influential, yet not entirely clear, rendition of elite cohesion, C. Wright Mills (1956) claimed that the frequency with which leading business, government, and military leaders in post-World War II America rotated between functional elite sectors, held interlocking positions, and voiced convergent interests and policies constituted evidence of a

tightly knit power elite. However, Mills later became less certain if there was one or several power elites:

> [P]ower in the United States involves more than one elite. How can we judge the relative positions of these several elites? It depends upon the issue and decision being made. One elite sees another as among those who count. There is this mutual recognition among the elite that other elites count; in one way or another they are important people to one another (Mills 1965, p. 163).

Giovanni Sartori (1987, p. 155) has construed Robert A. Dahl's well-known concept of "polyarchy" as denoting "a multiple, diffuse, and, at best, open constellation of power groups." Other scholars contend that the cohesion of some national elites lies in a tacit consensus about norms and rules of political behavior that keep politics from becoming violent (Higley and Burton 2006, pp. 11–12). That elites are consciously conspiratorial, as Meisel insisted they must be, is seldom evident and it is but one of several possibilities research on elites must explore.

Elitism

Populist politicians routinely employ "elitism" as a term of abuse for critics and rivals. Consider this exchange between TV anchorman Brian Williams and candidates Sarah Palin and John McCain during the 2008 US presidential campaign:

Williams to Palin:	"Governor, what is an elite? Who is a member of the elite?"
Palin:	"Anyone who thinks that they are, I guess, better than anyone else—that's my definition of elitism."
McCain (smiling):	"I know where a lot of them live."
Williams:	"Where's that?"
McCain:	"Well, in our nation's capital and New York City. I've seen it. I've lived there.⋯These elitists think they can dictate what they believe to America rather than let Americans decide for themselves." (*The New Yorker*, August 16, 2008, p. 27)

Elitism has no agreed meaning inside or outside social science. One of many meanings is a belief in the inevitability of rule by elites, which implies focusing

on elites as key political and social actors. A more diffuse and normatively colored meaning is a consciousness of or a pride in belonging to a highly selective or favored group. Still more diffuse meanings are a respect for or deference toward leadership, an esteem for accomplishments, a reverence for heritage, or an insistence that some idea or contribution is better than all others. As an adjective, "elitist" is routinely used by commentators and politicians to denigrate anyone who questions egalitarian values, who agrees with Weber that effective politics rest on talent and professionalism, or who claims, as Pareto did, that people differ innately in their abilities and talents for governing or ruling (Henry 1994).

Consistent with recognizing that elites are central political actors in all hierarchically structured societies, elitism most usefully means *identifying and promoting conditions that enhance elite effectiveness*. For example, empowering elites, or believing they should be empowered, to act with relative autonomy, lest mass pressures force disastrous policies and undertakings, is elitism. To give other examples, elitism is believing that by dint of superior information, greater experience, or wider horizons, elites are often (but certainly not always) better able than most citizens to discern and choose prudent courses of action. Still another aspect of elitism is employing *élite* in its original French and Paretian meaning of excellence in order to evaluate and thereby condemn or condone the actions and behaviors of elite individuals and groups. Giovanni Sartori observes that, unless research on elites applies such criteria of excellence, it "misses what is fundamentally at stake—which is not that the powerful exist, and not only whether power elite(s) is a plural, but ultimately whether the powerful represent authentic or apocryphal elites" (1987, p. 168).

Elitism is dualistic in application: it involves recognizing and accepting that elites require distinctive conditions to be effective; it simultaneously judges elite effectiveness according to standards of excellence or, as Sartori puts it, according to *élite* value parameters. Sartori's injunction to apply elite value parameters—qualities of excellence—is important, but they are difficult to identify. For example, qualities of excellence should not be confused with the social graces and cultural refinements of traditional aristocracies. Nor should such qualities be regarded as synonymous with intellectual sophistication, moral rectitude, or virtuous character. It is perhaps best to understand "qualities of excellence" as personal attributes that contribute to effective exercises of power, which serve collective needs and goals. Yet the personal attributes most needed depend on circumstances. Pareto theorized, for instance, that in times of political crisis, bravery and loyalty are at a premium; whereas in times of political stability, cleverness and innovativeness are what are most needed.

Qualities of excellence also have a group character. Weber held that effective ruling minorities exhibit an array of complementary attributes: charisma and passion; professional political acuity; bureaucratic rationality and objectivity; partisan commitment; a capacity for making realistic judgments unclouded by sentiment and free of emotionalism. He regarded mass democracy as accentuating the importance of charismatic qualities among political leaders, especially the quality of winning mass confidence in competitive electoral contests. Weber also highlighted the importance of administrative skills as a key quality of minorities that sit astride national states. Successful business elites, Joseph Schumpeter (1942) later added, exhibit entrepreneurial qualities, especially innovativeness. Still later, Pierre Bourdieu (1984) observed that "authority figures" must have cultural capital and social distinction. All qualities of excellence, it must be emphasized, are related to the dilemmas and actions of elites in ever-changing circumstances. When elites possess these qualities in circumstantially appropriate amounts, they are effective and successful. They create a stable political and social order in which individual dignity and prosperity are widespread. Conversely, an absence of these qualities leads to a degeneration of elites accompanied by ever-more frequent and profound socio-political crises (Higley and Pakulski 2012).

The application of elite value parameters in research on elites can be illustrated by considering elite recruitment, which is the "supply side" of elite qualities. It is plausible to believe that highly qualified, carefully groomed recruits to elite positions contribute, *ceteris paribus*, to elite excellence and effectiveness. Recruiting persons who have grown up in cosmopolitan families, who have performed at high academic levels when attending the most demanding schools and universities, who have served as diligent apprentices to key decision-makers in major organizations, and who have acquired the sagacity that often comes from long and multifaceted careers, amounts to a consciously elitist process of recruitment. Although contemporary elite recruitment processes are diverse, it is difficult to avoid observing that, on the whole, they are less and less consciously elitist because of overriding concerns with fairness, inclusivity, and representativeness when choosing persons for top positions. Indeed, in today's electoral competitions for high government office, *bona fide* credentials and qualities of excellence for holding such offices are frequently mocked. Consequently, populist demagogues, shrill adventurers, and parvenus prevail in many elections and lackluster elites are distressingly prevalent.

A common misconception of elitism is that it denigrates mass populations and implies that they are easily manipulated. This is a misconception because mass populations contain the constituencies and social forces to which elites

must necessarily appeal for support when seeking and exercising power. When elite individuals and groups fail to obtain and maintain this support, their tenures are brief. Yet it is the case that elites format constituencies and social forces by shaping political organizations and by encouraging or discouraging political identities and degrees of activism. By espousing strict egalitarian goals during industrial revolutions in Western countries, radical left-wing elite groups molded disparate manual industrial workers into nationalized and electorally mobilized working classes. They persuaded workers of their common material and ideal interests and they forged a program of class action. In these respects, working classes in Western industrial societies were in considerable measure elite creations. In short, an important aspect of elitism is recognizing the extent to which mass political alignments and loyalties are shaped by elites.

One further misconception of elitism is that it implies defending and justifying existing elites. But as the preceding (Chap. 3) noted, neither Pareto nor Weber felt any obligation to defend or justify the Italian and German elites of their time. On the contrary, they attacked both elites viciously. What elitism does imply is recognizing that elites may be successful or unsuccessful, brutal or persuasive; they may deliver what mass populations hope for or they may betray those hopes. Unlike class analysis, in which elites are discussed (if at all) in terms of ideologies and ostensible ruling class affiliations, elitism involves evaluating elites in terms of excellence and effectiveness. It entails neither defending nor embracing existing elites; rather, it entails accepting the inevitability of elites and asking why some elites succeed and others fail. This is the basic question that elite theory addresses.

Elite Theory

The originators of elite theory wrote in a period when the idea of a strict determinism in the relationships among social and political phenomena was gaining wide acceptance. Mosca and Pareto were among the chief exponents of this idea, and they looked forward to the establishment of a rigorously scientific understanding of social and political matters. Mosca devoted the opening chapter of *The Ruling Class* to a consideration of how an explicitly political *science*, by uncovering the "constant laws or tendencies that determine the political organization of human societies," could develop. Pareto offered an elaborate theory that gave the impression of being fully deterministic in so far as its categories purported to cover all aspects of human interaction.

Despite these aspirations, elite theory's progenitors did not succeed in stating and demonstrating a rigorously scientific theory of politics. Far from constituting such a theory, the lasting value of Mosca's work lay in its clarion call to focus political analysis on the dynamics of elites. Although Pareto's theory reflected a keen appreciation of scientific requirements, it rested on the fundamentally dubious notion that all populations, including elites, are divided into two basic psychosocial character types: those with a propensity to combine things in innovative ways, and those with a propensity to retain or restore traditional forms and ways. Pareto's sweeping theory plainly lacked the specific formulae whereby the insertion of coordinates for one state of social and political reality would allow the deduction of all future states, as was seemingly true of Newtonian physics, which comprised the dominant paradigm in natural science when Pareto lived.

A full century after Mosca and Pareto wrote, belief in the possibility of a strictly deterministic theory of politics and society is in retreat. The most visible manifestation of this retreat has been the collapse of Marxism as anything resembling a coherent, convincing theory of the economic determinants of social and political change. The strong revival of interest in comparative historical studies, which assign large roles to contingent events and personalities, as well as to simple "accidents," when illuminating major social and political changes, also testifies to the retreat. Except to observe that the idea of strict determinism in human affairs was itself part of the belief of Westerners in "progress" and "reason" during the two or three centuries, roughly 1700–1950, in which western countries enjoyed global military superiority and steady economic expansion, this is not the place to speculate on reasons for the attenuating belief in strict determinism during the past half century or so. It is enough to say that, when trying to utilize and extend elite theory, there is no profit to be had in employing strictly deterministic tenets such as the theory's originators emphasized (Higley 2016, pp. 1–16).

Elite theory draws on a master distinction between elites and non-elites to advance explanatory constructs that can be assessed empirically for accuracy or plausibility. But because theories are always aspectual—they explain particular aspects of an observable phenomenon or set of phenomena—elite theory is actually a constellation of aspectual theories. Some theories are clustered around the seminal works of Pareto, Mosca, and Weber; other theories seek to explain relatively specific patterns of elite circulation, processes of elite recruitment, and structures and consequences of elite networks, as well as asymmetries between elite and public opinion. During the 1960s and 1970s,

elite theories were powerfully surveyed and critiqued by three scholars: T.B. Bottomore (1964) from a Marxist standpoint; Geraint Parry (1969) from a democratic pluralist position; and Robert D. Putnam (1976) from the vantage point of comparative politics. As noted in this volume's introduction, no comparable survey and critique has since appeared, although aspectual elite theories have evolved and forced reconsiderations of elite theory's principal tenets.

In Every Complex Society, Power Is Distributed Unequally and Concentrated in the Hands of Elites

Yes, but it is now widely believed that globalization and neo-liberal economic reforms are causing a basic shift of power from political to corporate and financial elite groups that have global reach. Skeptics qualify this widespread belief in at least three respects: (1) the recent global financial crisis—the so-called Great Recession—has spawned strong demands to re-regulate markets in ways that limit corporate and financial power and curtail globalization; (2) state-based political elites have been bailing out and in effect nationalizing numerous banks and corporations in Western countries; (3) expanding BRIC economies—Brazil, Russia, India, China—are heavily regulated by, and dependent upon, national states, and this has been central to their expansions.

There is a related, but largely ignored, question about elite power's trajectory. It arises from observations that in post-industrial conditions civil society groups, which mediated relations between elites and non-elites in earlier times, are dissipating and leaving elites and non-elites more vulnerable to each other's direct penetrations and depredations (Putnam 2000). In post-industrial conditions of anemic economic growth, frustrated segments of non-elites can be whipped into frenzies by demagogues who portray elites as corrupt and crafty, and who promise to be tougher and more leonine. This sensitizes elite theorists to the possibility that competitions for power are increasingly ruthless and unchecked by norms of political restraint. One response is to ask if Schumpeter's controversial competitive theory of democracy, which is often pejoratively labeled "democratic elitism," should be reconsidered and reinstituted if possible (Best and Higley 2010).

Elite Configurations Underpin Economic and Political Success or Failure

Theories that link elite configurations with economic and political development are flourishing. One theory contends that a basic, but historically rare and contingent, "consensual unity" of elites formed in a few Western countries and was the key reason for their socioeconomic development and political liberalization. The United Dutch Provinces, England, and British colonies that became the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, along with Sweden and Switzerland, are cited as cases (Higley and Burton 2006). Other theories invoke the gradual creation of "open access" or '"inclusive" institutions—euphemisms for distinctive elite configurations—to explain why a few, mainly Western countries developed successfully but most other countries in the world did not (North et al. 2009; Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Fukuyama 2014). Still another theory roots dramatic economic and political changes in Spain and in East Central Europe during the twentieth century's final decades in cautious, inclusive, and largely secret elite negotiations that paved the way for stable democracies (Linz and Stepan 1996). Conversely, where similarly dramatic changes have involved open struggles for executive power—as happened in most ex-Soviet republics—authoritarian regimes have been the result (Zimmerman 2014).

Theories about the effects of elite configurations that form in crises and other contingent circumstances provoke important questions. Do today's gridlocked American and Euro-zone elites portend regime instability and economic decline? One theory highlights the increasing inability of political parties to sustain unity through compromises and deals. It contends that elite unity now rests more on integrative actions by prime ministers and presidents, whose charismatic qualities and political skills vary and are frail reeds on which to rely (Pakulski and Körösényi 2012).

The Social Backgrounds of Elites Are Predominantly Those of Privilege

That the holders of elite positions are recruited predominantly from privileged social backgrounds was long an axiom of elite theory. However, two relevant new sets of theories deserve notice. The first consists of sociological and cultural-anthropological theories about elite social distinction, the diverse

forms it takes, and the purposes for which elites employ distinction (Daloz 2010). Elites try less and less to conceal social distinction and instead seek to convert it, often brazenly, into political capital. Elite individuals cultivate media fame and celebrity status by appearing in settings and entertainments that have little to do with the imperatives of organizations they head. This raises questions about a symbiosis of popular culture and politics in today's societies and the media celebration of political leaders regardless of their actual political accomplishments.

A second set of theories raises questions about long-term changes in the social backgrounds and recruitment of parliamentary elites (Best and Cotta 2000; Cotta and Best 2007). Is attaining parliamentary elite status increasingly a do-it-yourself undertaking, in which image management and campaign funds supplied by corporate and financial interests are the main determinants for entering parliaments? If so, is the incidence of inexperienced, dubiously competent MPs increasing, and does this help to account for the declining importance of, and public respect for, parliamentary elites?

To Be Effective, Political Elites Require Autonomy from Mass Publics

Max Weber (1978, pp. 241–71, 985–6, 111–55, 1460) diagnosed the deleterious political consequences of plebiscitary democracy, leaderless democracy, and radical popular mobilizations. He viewed charismatic legitimacy and firm electoral mandates as essential insulations of elites from mass pressures. Schumpeter (1942, p. 290) stipulated in his competitive theory of democracy that during periods between elections, elites must be relatively free of mass pressures in order to formulate and implement effective policies. Today, the complexity of issues, the proliferation of party primary elections and popular referendums as well as omnipresent electronic and social media that subject elites to incessant, often crippling, attacks make Schumpeter's stipulation an exercise in wishful thinking.

Astute observers of democracies today depict them as jeopardized by the narrowed autonomy that elites now possess (Sartori 1987, p. 131; Hobsbawm 1994, p. 579; Zakaria 2003, pp. 240–41). They link elite failures and political crises to the colonization of policy domains by powerful special interests and social movements, which leave elites little room for maneuver. Other observers depict political corruption as the result of excessive elite autonomy (Della Porta and Vannucci 1999). Distinguishing the autonomy that is essential for

robust democracy from that which feeds failures and crises is an urgent matter. What scope and form of autonomy are necessary to resist counterproductive mass pressures, prevent deep divisions among citizens, and harmonize organized interests in support of effective and sustained policies? Most perplexing, is substantial elite autonomy compatible with firm alliances between elites and non-elites?

Conclusions

Given the political utility of decrying elites and elitism at every turn in the road, and given the inattention from which elite theory suffered during the twentieth century, it would be naïve to expect that confusions can be dispelled and elite theory can be resuscitated in any simple or easy way. This chapter has tried to clarify the elite concept, what elitism most sensibly means, and what a partial agenda for elite theory and research now looks like. When compared with competing theories of politics and society, elite theory should be judged for its greater or lesser realism in analyzing political and social phenomena, its relative sophistication in dealing with political and social complexities, and its cogency in explaining political and social changes. The time is ripe for a re-vitalization of elite theory, because the previous century's fixations on class conflicts and self-governing democracies are fading. Just as it emerged amid crises a century ago, elite theory will gain currency from this century's crisis-ridden circumstances.

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5

Political Elites and Democracy

András Körösényi

According to the early elite theorists (Michels 1962; Mosca 1939; Pareto 1935), whose views are examined in Chap. 2, the introduction to this handbook section, and in Chaps. 3 and 4, a direct form of democracy is impossible in any large bureaucratic organization, let alone in a large, complex, and bureaucratically structured nation-state. Large organizations and nation-states invariably spawn steep power hierarchies and political elites—individuals and small, relatively cohesive, stable groups with disproportionate power to affect organizational or national outcomes. The early elite theorists gave numerous reasons for this: differing individual endowments and talents, social traditions, inequalities of wealth, an "iron law of oligarchy." They observed that, as a matter of historical fact, elites have existed in every society, whether agricultural, industrial, or post-industrial; capitalist or socialist; autocratic or democratic.

The early elite theorists highlighted, in particular, the existence of political elites in ostensible democracies. Although members and factions making up such political elites compete for electoral mandates to govern, they are in reality ruling minorities who impose themselves on voters, dominate government, and enjoy the privileges that go with it. Exponents of democratic theory, especially neo-classical theorists of democracy, have portrayed elites and theories that highlight them as dangerous. Although acrimony between the two

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camps of theorists has lessened during their protracted debate, there is still a sizable gap between "neo-elitists" skeptical of democracy and "neo-classical democrats" who view elites as harming democracy.

In the classical doctrine of democracy, as Joseph Schumpeter (1942) termed it, democracy meant the sovereignty and direct self-rule by, of, and for the people. When they did not simply ignore political elites, classical doctrines of democracy depicted them as major distortions or shortcomings of democratic rule. Even if political elites have electoral mandates, are relatively representative of a population in their make-ups, and are pluralistic in their structures, they are, at best, awkward compromises or "embarrassing secrets" (Sartori 1987, p. 171) and, at worst, "abominations" (Mills 1956, p. 7). Giovanni Sartori has observed that even though "[T]he vital role of leadership is frequently acknowledged⋯.it obtains only a negligible status within the theory of democracy." At most, democratic theory regards political elites and strong leaders as pathological anomalies or necessary evils (1987, pp. 171–2). To all intents and purposes, democratic theory is incompatible with political elites. It holds that the greater their role is, the less there is of democracy.

The classical doctrine's uncompromising position, which continues to be embraced by some theorists, has co-existed with neo-classical theories of indirect democracy that are somewhat more accommodative of political elites and leaders. In these theories, governing authority is exerted by "deputies" who transmit the preferences of constituents into policies, or authority is exercised by "proxies" charged with articulating the people's "general will." Some neo-classical theories anchor popular sovereignty in a widely representative plural or "polyarchal" political leadership whose components check and balance each other and dilute and open the doors for citizen influence (Downs 1957; Dahl 1989). Theories of indirect democracy thus reduce the polarity between the classical doctrine of democracy and classical elite theory. Yet, they confront a dilemma. Either they must accept the intrusions of elites on democracy, or they must minimize, even expunge, these intrusions in order to keep democracy's normative backbone intact.

Neo-classical democratic theories differ in important ways. The neo-classical label is actually an umbrella for distinct theoretical-normative models, such as participative-deliberative democracy and aggregative-pluralist democracy. Elite theories of democracy have also differed, ranging from Vilfredo Pareto's uncompromising dismissal of democracy, to Gaetano Mosca's cautious endorsement of representative democracy, to democratic elitism's focus on elite-mass linkages, to neo-elitist contentions that configurations of elites are the basic determinants of political regimes.

I intend to assess the main neo-classical theories of democracy and the main approaches to democracy taken by elite theories. I will first outline two major

neo-classical theories of democracy, namely, participatory-deliberative and aggregative-pluralist theories. I will then compare these theories with two prominent elite theories, namely, demo-elitism and neo-elitism. I will look at how each theory conceptualizes democracy, roles it assigns to political elites and leaders, and roles it assigns to citizens. The normative underpinnings of each theory will also be considered.

Neo-classical Theories of Democracy

Neo-classical theories of democracy assume that citizens have equal moral standing and equal capacities for rational thinking and autonomous action, and that political agents of citizens have sound knowledge of the circumstances in which they act. Democracy is self-rule by equal, rational, and autonomous citizen-sovereigns who decide issues collectively and whose dignity is safeguarded by a rule of law.

Neo-classical theories take two principal forms: participatory-deliberative, and aggregative-pluralist. In the participatory-deliberative form, rule by citizen-sovereigns occurs primarily through public deliberation, while in the aggregative-pluralist form their rule is effected primarily through the aggregation of organized interests and the building of interest coalitions. The participatory-deliberative theory portrays public discourses and forums as the main modes of defining the common good. The aggregative-pluralist theory depicts the individual preferences of citizens as raw materials from which the common good emerges through a process of political articulation and interest aggregation. Interestingly, most renditions of the two theories acknowledge the role of political leadership and powerful, relatively autonomous ruling minorities, yet they seldom discuss this role in an explicit and clear way.

Participatory-Deliberative Democracy

Many advocates of this theory portray public deliberation as the major virtue of the Athenian assembly democracy. They seldom mention, however, that ever since Plato, public deliberation has been criticized as a source of demagoguery, manipulation, and irresponsible rule. In historical reality, the fear of manipulative demagogues and power-hungry tyrants was widespread in ancient Greece, and ostracism was adopted in order to inhibit these pathologies (Elster 1998a, b, pp. 1–2). Rousseau similarly feared egocentric and

irresponsible demagogues who might divert citizens' opinions from the common good. Edmund Burke, J. S. Mill, and Max Weber regarded demagogy as an integral aspect of democracy, especially of a leader-centered "plebiscitary democracy" (Weber 1978, pp. 267–269, 1129 and 1132).

A fear of demagogues and recognition of their likelihood can be found in all analyses of democracy made by participatory-deliberative theorists. Leaders and political elites are uniformly viewed as threats to an "authentic" or "ideal" participative-deliberative process, yet they are regarded as probably inescapable. It is not accidental that John Rawls (1993, pp. 231–9), one of the founding fathers of the participative-deliberative theory of democracy, sees Supreme Courts, rather than elected assemblies, as the ideal place for deliberation. Courts, according to Rawls, are more collegial and more insulated from the distorting pressures that come from demagogues and organized interests than are parliaments and open public forums.

Theorists in this stream of democratic thought specify rigorous conditions for proper, or at least adequate, public deliberations. They must take place in Rawls's (1971) "veil of ignorance," or in Jürgen Habermas's (1990) "ideal speech situation," both of which minimize personal authority, even if it is based on merit, moral virtue, or civic-mindedness. Personal authority of any kind distorts public deliberation, it violates the equality of citizens, and it compromises the rationality and openness of discussion. Participants in discussion must be free from any external obligations or "mandates" that may restrict or divert their contributions. To serve the common good, participants should articulate their autonomous and free opinions and not represent territorial, social, religious, or other segmental interests. They should act as impartial and rational individuals whose purpose it is to find the right opinion, which is an unequivocal answer—the truth—to any public question of importance. Discussion should transcend the prior views of participants and lead to their recognition of the truth. As Elster (1997, pp. 11–12) puts it, in participative-deliberative discussions "[T]here would not be any need for an aggregating mechanism, since a rational discussion would tend to produce unanimous preferences ··· Not optimal compromise, but unanimous agreement is the goal of [democratic] politics on this view."

As critics point out, however, this is an idealized and idealistic view of an assembly democracy and public deliberations. Moreover, unlike some versions of classical democratic theory, it does not advocate the rule of or by the majority, but only the rule of or by reason. It is a normative model of democracy with weak empirical underpinnings that posits what is desirable, rather than what actually exists. Self-rule of the people is realized, according to participative-deliberative theorists, through inclusive, open, impartial, and

rational public discussions—yet such discussions are recognized as utopian and radically divorced from reality. Demagogy is wished away, as are leadership and elite power that are parts of any real-world decision-making. Paradoxically, however, the strict procedural and substantive requirements of free participative-deliberative decision-making necessitate recognizing the central roles played by convenors, managers, or "guardians" of deliberation, that is, those who assure and safeguard free, autonomous, and disinterested deliberations. This recognition inexorably brings back, albeit through the proverbial "back door," leaders and elites as facilitators and sponsors of free participation and deliberation.

This, as critics point out, gives participative-deliberative theorizing a paternalistic drift. As Elster (1997, pp. 13–14) notes, the requirement that citizens participate in order to become informed and concerned about policies and take part in discussions of them presupposes persons who will manage, moderate, and regulate discussions to ensure that they are fairly and properly conducted. Such facilitators, who are typically part of an "educated intellectual avantgarde," can easily impose their own biases, views, and rules on participants. In fact, numerous studies have found that the impact of facilitators of participation, deliberation, and outcomes is frequent and significant.

Critics point to other theoretical and empirical flaws. As Adam Przeworski (1999, p. 145) notes, deliberation in itself presupposes an inequality of influence, even if theorists aim at minimizing it. Moreover, deliberation presupposes unequal information and/or reasoning capacity. Therefore, Habermas's "free speech condition" appears to be a utopia. In real life, inequality prevails and leaders emerge spontaneously, even in small groups like juries, focus groups, or debating unions. Eloquent or highly motivated speakers become "natural" leaders, and they dominate any deliberation.

Even if public debates closely approximate free deliberations, decisions reached in them are seldom self-executing and self-enacting. Key political philosophers of liberalism, such as Locke, Montesquieu, and the American Federalists, were aware of this fact, and they envisaged an executive branch of government to implement decisions reached collectively. The problem—or rather the deliberative paradox—is that implementation requires leadership to provide decisive, prompt, informed, and clearly directed action. This is another way of saying that the participative-deliberative theory faces the problem of collective action, that is, the inevitable reliance in deliberations and implementations on activists, leaders, and political entrepreneurs. If participative-deliberative groups are to provide public goods, they must be supplemented by implementing agents. The conclusion drawn by elitist critics is that ongoing deliberation as well as decision-making and implementation

require leadership, and that leaders routinely have incentives and motivations different from those of average participants and deliberators.

Aggregative-Pluralist Democracy

Some of the conundrums in participative-deliberative theory are tackled by the aggregative-pluralist theory of democracy. Its advocates regard individuals' preferences as the common good's source, and they focus attention on the articulation of this good as well as the responsiveness of a government to citizens' preferences. One should bear in mind that aggregative-pluralist theory is, in fact, a broad family of theoretical interpretations, each offering some specific answers to main theoretical questions. In general, however, aggregative-pluralistic theories are, like Robert Dahl's theory of "polyarchy" (1971), more realistic and more accommodative of elite-centered concerns.

While most proponents of aggregative-pluralist democracy view it as indirect, as involving, that is, democratically (s)elected representatives, there are some theorists in this school who advocate public referendums (Barber 1984). In a referendum-democracy, citizens express their wills on every important policy-issue directly. Therefore, self-rule by the people is achieved literally. However, direct democracy of this kind is highly vulnerable to criticism. Critics emphasize that the equality of citizens in referendums is almost always compromised by powerful interest groups whose members influence agenda-setting and shape citizens' preferences in referendum campaigns. Every aggregation of citizen preferences is problematic, because it contains the imprint of leadership on processes of public articulation and representation.

This criticism is pertinent to aggregative-pluralist theorists who focus on "democratic representation" as a necessary means for achieving self-rule by the people. When representation is wide and reinforced by strong mechanisms of accountability, people choose representatives and give them mandating votes to transmit the people's will. Problems remain, however. Critics argue that even if citizens formally give their votes to representative-candidates, democratic procedures must ensure that those elected to government office carry out policies according to the expressed preferences of voters (Manin et al. 1999). This leaves room for leaders and elites, who can be seen as merely technical articulators of the popular will (tolerated as a "necessary evil" by direct democrats), but who may play a more consequential role. To illustrate, Anthony Downs (1957) views party leaders as mere technicians, campaign specialists, or spin-doctors whose job it is to match a party's electoral manifesto with the actual policy preferences of those who voted for the party. In Downs's

model, leading politicians play the limited and passive role of deputies who "reflect" public preferences as accurately as possible.

Leaders and political elites are given a more active, but still limited, role in the "mandate" interpretation of democratic representation. According to its advocates, politicians or parties that gain the strongest support from voters at elections acquire an electoral mandate, understood as a broad authorization or normative approval, to carry out a policy or policy agenda that is consonant with their pledges during election campaigns (c.f. Manin et al. 1999). If the public policies accord with the electoral mandate given to office-holders, then the will of the people is realized, and the normative requirement of mandated representation is fulfilled. This portrayal of democratic representation is more realistic than its competitors. It acknowledges the active, although constrained, role of leaders and politicians in selecting and highlighting key issues and soliciting support for specific policy programs. The role of leaders is more obvious and prominent than many aggregative-pluralist theorists are willing to admit.

Some advocates of a pluralist conception of democracy follow the same line of reasoning. In a large and diverse society, these advocates claim, a political majority can be created by a coalition of minorities. However, the coalition-building process usually involves negotiations between leaders of factions, which is another way of saying that it involves top-down elite politics. While they in effect acknowledge elite politics, pluralists tend to be complacent about this, and they focus primarily on the role of citizens.

It is clear that aggregative-pluralist theories of democracy admit—also through the back door—leaders and elites. This poses a number of questions. How does this back-door entry square with the assumption of a universal bottom-up flow of power? How does it square with the portrayal of elections as "voters' choices" of politicians and preferred policies? Are political leaders passive articulators or active shapers of political issues? Elite theorists answer these questions in a very different—and more consistent—manner.

Neo-elitism and Demo-elitism

Neo-elitists follow the arguments of Vilfredo Pareto and Robert Michels: democracy, understood as rule by the people, is a deceptive illusion. Moreover, the price of sustaining this illusion is high: either the existence of "authentic democracy" is in practice denied and constitutes an empty category, or it is no more than as an ideal type from which all actual regimes depart radically. Democracy is and has always been more apparent than real in nation-states. All

actual political regimes have leaders embedded in small political elites whose interests differ from those of ordinary citizens, and whose interests are not reducible to class, business, or military interests.

Neo-elitists do not ignore the concept of democracy, but they give it an altogether different content. They invoke a procedural definition of democracy as their starting point. This conceives of democracy as a competition to lead a state or polity, a conception that reconciles democratic forms with largely autonomous political leaders and largely self-selected elites. It is the foundation of theories about causal relationships between characteristics of leaders and configurations of political elites, such as their degree of integration and unity, and major political outcomes, such as the stability or instability or the democratic or authoritarian character of political regimes (Higley and Burton 2006).

Demo-elitists hew more closely to the theories of Weber and Schumpeter. They conceive of democracy as compatible with governance by leaders and elites, provided that (1) democrats recognize the power and relative autonomy of political leaders and elites, and (2) leaders and elites, or at least parliamentary segments of them, ally with various categories of citizens. Demo-elitism, in other words, combines Schumpeter's conception of democracy as a *method* of leadership selection with a conception of political representation as a top-down process. In this top-down process, leaders and elite factions adjust their actions in anticipation of citizens' reactions to and evaluations of previous actions by leaders and elites (Friedrich 1963). These adjustments by leaders and elites are not constraints imposed by representation, however. Leaders and elites remain relatively autonomous managers of their alliances with segments of citizens. They manipulate these alliances and alter or end them if existing alliances prove to be counter-productive politically. Periodic elections, in short, simultaneously ensure a competitive political leadership selection and a degree of self-imposed restraint among leaders and elites.

Proponents of demo-elitism have little to say about the non-political elite groups that exist in business and financial, judicial and state administrative, media and military as well as other functional sectors of societies. Demo-elitists focus mainly on leaders and elites in the explicitly political sector of a society. Karl Popper (1966, p. 124), who, together with Schumpeter, might be regarded as a forerunner of demo-elitism, defined democracy as a procedure that allows counter-elites to mobilize popular votes to get rid of incumbent rulers peacefully. It facilitates a peaceful circulation of political leaders and elites and facilitates the swift repudiation of failing leaders and factions. Although leaders are more often selected by existing leaders and elite groups than by the mass of citizens, electoral campaigns and competitions nonetheless

strengthen political authority of elected leaders and contribute to the compliance of citizens to decisions and policies. Citizen compliance is "the result of voting, not of discussion, that authorizes governments to govern, to compel" (Przeworski 1999, pp. 43–9).

Demo-elitism, like neo-elitism, places leaders and elites at the center of theoretical attention. Unlike bottom-up accounts of the political process in neo-classical theories of democracy, demo-elitism portrays the process as animated and directed by political leaders. Instead of an autonomous popular will and untrammeled voter preferences canvassed by leaders, policies are proposed by leaders, not by citizens, and they are imposed on publics—with various degrees of success—through persuasion, including demagogy and image manipulation.

During the quarter century following World War II, demo-elitism was widely discussed in mainstream democratic theory. Demo-elitists were challenged by anti-elitists like Peter Bachrach (1967), who saw elites as mortal threats to democracy, and by pluralists, who regarded the power of leaders and elites as safely limited by checks and balances and by veto groups. Reacting to these challenges, demo-elitist theory moved in several directions. The best known were Hanna Pitkin's (1967) emphasis on elite accountability, John Plamenatz's (1973) portrayal of elites and leaders as translating public aims and sentiments into electoral appeals, and Eva Etzioni-Halevy's (1993) analysis of elites as crafting and sustaining alliances with voters by adjusting their policies and appeals for support.

These accounts departed substantially from the core of elite theory and were familiar to theorists of parliamentarism. Pitkin, Plamenatz, and Etzioni-Halevy revitalized the concept of accountable and responsible leadership originally outlined by Edmund Burke and J. S. Mill in discussions of liberal representation and parliamentary systems. Like most demo-elitists, Burke and Mill assumed that citizens are little interested in detailed political questions, and relatively few have clear policy preferences. However, voters do respond to appeals by leaders and elites, they ally themselves with particular leaders, they develop post hoc judgments of governments, and they employ these judgments to hold rulers to account.

Other demo-elitists elaborated Weber's theory of "leader democracy." In it, citizens-voters do not play an active role in the decision-making process; they merely respond to successful leadership appeals. Leaders shape the interpretations of political situations as well as the proposed courses of action. They do not act on behalf of voters they claim to represent, but by their own volition. Theorists of leader democracy also point to the impact of the mass media in

personalizing politics and making leaders the central players in politics (Pakulski and Körösényi 2012).

A rather eccentric member of the expanding demo-elitist family is Jeffrey Green (2010), who outlines an "ocular-plebiscitary" model of democracy that bears some resemblance to Weber's volatile "plebiscitary democracy" and to the media-conscious "leader democracy." In Green's view, contemporary political leaders rely increasingly on their visual image presentations and image management, and voters rely increasingly on these presentations and images when allocating their support. Voters are empowered by "gazing" at leaders' behavior in electronic media, and by applying a "principle of candor" when allocating their votes. This image-based presentation becomes "a necessary condition of any attempt by a leader to generate charismatic authority" (Green 2010, p. 130).

Conclusions

There are two main trends in contemporary elite and democratic theory. One is a trend toward a theoretical rapprochement by joining elite rule and representative democracy. In this trend, theorists portray elites as increasingly sensitive to electoral constituencies, and they see democracy in a Schumpeterian way, which is free from unrealistic expectations about power being directly exercised by the people. This realistic view of democracy, in which political leaders regularly compete for electoral mandates, amounts to a theoretical convergence between classical elitism and a neo-classical theory of democracy. The progress of this convergence brings advocates of formerly opposing positions closer to each other, but it blunts the notion of elite rule, because elites are depicted as less autonomous and increasingly constrained by electoral pressures exerted by voters. Nevertheless, this blunting does not deny the oligarchic character of contemporary democracies.

A second trend is exemplified by neo-elitists. They re-affirm the classical elitist skepticism about popular sovereignty, direct popular participation, and unfettered political representation. Democracy, understood as rule of the people's rule, is dismissed on grounds that it is an attractive but deceptive ideological formula. Neo-elitists urge a hyper-realistic understanding of organized power structures in which leaders and elites are the key actors. Leaders and political elites differ widely in their configurations, competence, and effectiveness, but their centrality shapes the scope of any viable political undertaking.

This sober, even somber view had relatively few adherents during the quarter century of bourgeoning prosperity, social stability, and safety from international threats that followed World War II in West European and English-speaking countries. Since the onset of the Great Recession and a spreading perception of political decay, the neo-elitist view has revived. Neo-elitists echo a widespread feeling that democracy has always been more apparent than real, and that the existence and domination of ruling minorities, some of them more and some less competent in exercising power, limit reformist aspirations and what is possible politically.

The classical elite theorists instigated two important debates. The first concerned the feasibility of democracy in the face of demagogic populism and utopian radicalism manifested, respectively, by fascism and revolutionary socialism. They provided a comprehensive debunking of democratic illusions and of Enlightenment beliefs of open-ended progress, ever-increasing equality, and the triumph of reason. The second debate that stemmed from the classical elite theorists has been about the historical forms and roles of political elites. They insisted that, contrary to the diagnoses and predictions of radical socialists and democrats alike, political elites are inescapable even though they change constantly in abilities and forms.

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6

Theory-Based Typologies of Political Elites

Ursula Hoffmann-Lange

Introduction

Typologies are conceptual tools used to reduce the empirical variety of phe-
nomena to a small number of ideal types. They can be constructed in different
ways. The simplest way is to classify phenomena along a single dimension. For
example, Wolfgang Zapf's distinction between delegation and career political
elites (1965: 66–7) is based on the character of an elite's selectorate. Dele-
gation elites are selected directly or indirectly by the members of a polity or
an organization in elections. Career elites are selected by superiors or by
specific decision-making bodies in organizations. Zapf's distinction is pri-
marily descriptive, because he does not develop explicit theoretical assump-
tions about a selection mode's effects on elite behavior. In similar vein, many
authors have developed taxonomies of elites based on the different power
resources at their disposal (e.g. Scott 2008; Milner 2015: 39). Some authors
also specify ideal types of political elites based on sets of multiple character-
istics. Max Weber's ideal types of bureaucrats and professional politicians are
examples.

Multidimensional typologies are usually based on more or less explicit
theoretical assumptions. Such typologies are exhaustive in the sense that they
include all analytically conceivable combinations of two or more dimensions.

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The most common form is the fourfold table, which distinguishes between elite types representing the four possible combinations of two continuous dimensions. These combinations have to be understood as ideal types in the sense that the four elite types are assumed to represent the two dimensions' end points, with real political elites only approximating them.

Most typologies of political elites utilize complex attributes that defy ready operationalization. Typologies distinguishing elites according to the degree of their value consensus or group cohesion are good examples. The same is true for typologies distinguishing political regimes according to the degree of democratic consolidation or political stability. The greater the complexity (and vagueness) of attributes, the more difficult it is to ascertain their empirical validity. Problems of empirical application are exacerbated by the fact that the concept of political elite is itself somewhat elastic and controversial. Although social scientists usually define political elites as incumbents of high-ranking positions in powerful organizations and institutions, they disagree about the amounts of power and precise positions that distinguish political elites from sub-elites or ordinary citizens. Moreover, because theories about political elites usually postulate a relationship between elite type and political regime type, problems of testing them empirically arise on both sides of the postulated relationship, while specifying the direction of the causal arrow in this relationship and then marshaling evidence to demonstrate this causality are exceedingly difficult.

This chapter's discussion of political elite typologies is limited to those typologies that make explicit assumptions about the relationship between the attributes of elites and the characteristics of political regimes. Purely analytical taxonomies of political elites, as well as typologies that focus on specific aspects of elites, such as their personality traits or the resources they control are not discussed here. This is not because the descriptive value of such taxonomies and typologies is questioned, but because they fail to make explicit assumptions about consequences for elite behavior—and that limits their explicative value.

The two most fundamental dimensions that have been the basis of much typological thinking about political elites are the degree of *elite integration* and the character of *elite-citizen linkages*. Political elite integration centers on the degree of consensus and cooperation among elite members when making political decisions. Elite-citizen linkages involve the extent to which diverse groups and interests in a society are represented in and by the political elite, that is, the relative *inclusiveness of interest representation*.

Elite Integration

The degree to which political elites are integrated is the single most important dimension that analysts debate and study. Ever since the beginning of modern elite theory in the early twentieth century, theorists have conceptualized integration as elite cohesion in the sense of James Meisel's (1958) three Cs: group consciousness, cohesion, and conspiracy. Mosca and Michels assumed that elites are necessarily cohesive because they constitute tiny minorities of persons with a common interest in protecting the privileges associated with their positions of power and influence. For their part, theorists of ruling classes have been preoccupied with demonstrating the integration of political elites in capitalist societies (Miliband 1969; Domhoff 1979, 2010). They assume that business elites are major actors who have power to veto those policies of elected governments that run counter to their fundamental interests.[1]

C. Wright Mills's portrayal of the American *power elite* (1956) exemplified a political elite believed to be characterized by extensive integration. Mills claimed that political decision-making in the United States after World War II involved a concentration of power in the hands of a small group of top position-holders in business, the political executive, and the military integrated through a dense network of formal and informal ties. Mills contrasted this power elite with the prevailing public belief in elite pluralism, which existed, he claimed, only at the "middle levels of power" in the US Congress, lower-level governmental bodies, and various moderately influential voluntary associations and pressure groups. The idea that political elites in modern democracies are much less pluralistic than they appear, and that the diversity of civil society would suggest, is popular not only among journalists and dissident political activists, but also among social scientists. From a theoretical point of view, however, Mills's analysis did not have much to offer. His book lacked a research question, and it was utterly descriptive. It was limited to providing a list of power indicators and offered myriad illustrations of how power was ostensibly exercised in post-World War II America.

Theories that posit a high degree of elite integration are often regarded as static in nature, because they emphasize the ability of elites to preserve their dominant position in a society regardless of what happens. However, Vilfredo Pareto (1935) developed a dynamic theory of elite integration and circulation. He distinguished between elites according to two different personality types, which he metaphorically labeled (after Machiavelli) *lions* and *foxes*. As discussed in Chap. 3, in any existing elite, according to Pareto, one or the other personality type predominates, and this shapes the broad contours of elite behavior and also the character of the regime associated with that elite.

Elites of the first type are conservative and favor a political order enforced by a strong authoritarian government. Elites of the latter type are innovative instead and prefer to manipulate mass sentiments through chicanery and persuasion, rather than force. Pareto assumed, however, that elites have a tendency to degenerate because they prefer to recruit new elites of their own personality type, so that one or the other type will eventually dominate the elite. The stage is then set for an elite's gradual decline, challenge, and change. "To wit, a leonine elite will be deficient in the spirit of innovation and compromise, and this shortcoming will eventually undermine its ability to keep the masses quiet; conversely, a vulpine elite will lack the will power to use force when it is needed, and this will eventually erode its authority, perhaps to the point of social anarchy" (Femia 2002: 71–4).

Once the balance tips toward the dominance of one personality disposition, counter-elites emerge within the masses displaying the opposite disposition, and they fight the ruling elite by using precisely those tactics the elite lacks. This implies that elites may be able to avoid decline by maintaining a relatively even balance of the two dispositions: "If a governing elite could apply force and persuasion in the appropriate proportions, it could, in principle, maintain itself forever" (Femia 2002: 74).

Most contemporary elite theorists have abandoned the idea that modern societies are governed by homogeneous or "balanced" political elites. They assume, instead, that modern societies contain relatively autonomous functional sectors and diverse organizations whose elites possess various constitutional, organizational, and personal resources, and who pursue conflicting interests. A high degree of elite cohesion is no longer taken for granted (e.g. Aron 1950; Keller 1963; Dahrendorf 1979). Theorists focus on how cooperation across sectoral and organizational boundaries may be achieved to prevent conflicts of interest from turning into violent power struggles. This is the reason why most contemporary typologies of political elites center on the *degree of elite integration* as a crucial dimension.

Typologies Centered on Elite Integration

Elite integration is claimed to have two aspects: The first is a voluntary, mostly tacit, value consensus about the norms and rules of political behavior that involves an acceptance of opposition and the need for conflict regulation through bargaining and compromise. The second aspect is an inclusive and integrated network of interactions in which most elite members participate and which underlies and reinforces value consensus (Higley and Burton 2006:

11). Mills (1956), Dahrendorf (1979), and Best (2010) have emphasized informal personal ties as the most important aspect of such integrated elite networks. They assume that policy formation networks and business-professional networks are insufficient indicators of elite integration because such interactions are required by the organizational positions that elite persons hold and may therefore produce no more than what Heinrich Best has termed *antagonistic cooperation*. But antagonistic cooperation can break down if it is not bolstered by a high degree of mutual trust cultivated through informal personal ties (Best 2010; Ruostetsaari 2006: 25).

It is the case, however, that informal personal ties are difficult to uncover empirically in democracies, and they are (nearly) impossible to observe in non-democratic or historical settings. Many studies of elite integration therefore rely on indirect indicators of personal ties by assuming that similar social class background, religious and ethnic affiliations and identities (Zapf 1965), common membership in highly selective and secretive social clubs (Domhoff 1979), or attending prestigious universities (Dahrendorf 1979) foster personal ties among elite members. Such indirect indicators of ties may be misleading, however, because the experiences they denote are neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for integrated elite networks. Having studied at the same university does not necessarily produce a sense of solidarity among alumni, nor does membership in a select club guarantee that its members trust each other. Conversely, informal personal ties may form among elites of different social class and other backgrounds in the course of regular professional interactions, even though these persons have little else in common. Although comparative studies of elite networks based on large-scale surveys are rare, results of those that have been conducted confirm that networks differ considerably as regards their inclusiveness and density (e.g. Higley et al. 1991; Knoke et al. 1996).

While the degree of value consensus about democratic processes and the existence of conflicts of interest can be measured by elite surveys, scholars have used a host of different indicators that have mostly been country-specific and are therefore of limited value for comparative analysis. Moreover, the existence of informal networks and a high degree of consensus about the operational rules of a political order, although empirically related, are analytically distinct and may vary independently of each other. This requires assumptions about how they should be combined: If the presence of one can compensate for the lack of the other, or if both are needed, and if their effects are cumulative rather than merely additive.

Finally, since both value consensus and the scope and density of elite networks are continua, thresholds have to be determined that are sufficient

for assuming a high degree of integration. Thus, while the assumption seems plausible that elite integration is conducive to fostering political stability, there have been few attempts to define integration's components and thresholds more precisely in ways that would facilitate comparisons across time and country. Without such refinements, speaking of integrated political elites remains imprecise, and judgments of political elite integration are more or less arbitrary.

The most prominent typology centered on elite integration ("consensual unity") has been developed by John Higley and co-authors (e.g. Field and Higley 1980; Higley and Burton 1987, 2006: 8–15).[2] Higley et al. have distinguished three ideal types of political elites. They assume a *disunited elite* to be the most common type, both historically and in contemporary societies. *United elites* are the opposite, but they take two distinct forms, *consensually* or *ideologically* united. The consensually united type shares a tacit consensus about the importance of restrained partisanship that allows for a peaceful pursuit and representation of diverse policy positions; the ideologically united type displays a uniform, enforced commitment to a single ideology or religious creed.

The theory focuses primarily on the emergence of consensually united elites that are said to be self-sustaining, because they enable succeeding generations of elite members—socialized to value compromise over ruthless insistence on getting their way—to defend and pursue their diverse interests satisfactorily.[3] In Chaps. 3 and 5 of their book, Higley and Burton (2006) have provided detailed analyses of two distinct ways in which consensually united elites historically developed: elite settlements and elite convergence.

The theory holds that the type of elite determines the type of associated political regime and that any change from the disunited elite type results in one of two other regime types, either a stable representative regime operated by a consensually united elite, or a totalitarian/theocratic regime operated by an ideologically united elite.

While the analysis of how consensually united elites have formed historically seems plausible and the instances of this happening are convincing, it is difficult to test the theory's claims systematically. The historical sequence is comparatively easy to establish in the case of fundamental elite settlements, which Higley et al. claim should not be conflated with numerous pacts that elite leaders and factions often conclude for short-term reasons. As Stepan (1986: 80) and Linz and Stepan (1996: 61) have observed, elite pacts are not necessarily durable and there are many examples of broken pacts.[4] But to test the theory's claim that, once formed, consensually united elites will persist, independent indicators are needed. Such indicators would allow us to confirm

the occurrence of elite settlements or pacts and spell out the criteria that enable the measurement of their long-term consequences.

Empirical tests are even more difficult in the case of partially united elites. Without specifying the operational criteria of partial unity and the sequence of events that lead to it, the theory runs the danger of becoming circular and impossible to falsify, as Higley and Burton (2006: 176) themselves acknowledge. Finally, it should be noted that the preoccupation of Higley and his colleagues with the emergence and persistence of historically rare consensually united (and also ideologically united) elites means that most historical and contemporary elites are lumped together in a residual category of disunited elites. The theory disregards the diversity of disunited elites and associated regimes that range from relatively stable traditional monarchies to failed states in which political order has more or less completely broken down.

In an analysis of political elites during post-communist transitions to democracy, Higley and Lengyel (2000) expanded the original three elite types into an exhaustive two-dimensional typology. They added the extent of elite differentiation as a dimension denoting multiple and relatively autonomous elite groups that limit the power of a governing elite (Table 6.1).

The fragmented elite type was added to complete the fourfold table. This addition seems theoretically fruitful because it expands the analytical range of elite and regime types covered by the earlier tripartite typology. It seems plausible to claim, for instance, that a fragmented elite may exist for a long time in a decentralized polity where the power of the central government is severely limited. Switzerland until 1798, the United States before the Civil War and Germany before 1871 may be examples of such polities.

Later in their analysis, Higley and Lengyel (2000: 7) add patterns of elite circulation to their fourfold table. They claim that the mode and scope of elite circulation during democratic transitions shape the resulting elite type and prospects for democratic consolidation. The mode of circulation can be gradual and peaceful or sudden and enforced; its scope can be wide and deep or narrow and shallow. A gradual and peaceful mode of circulation implies negotiated transitions that introduce a democratic constitution and institutionalize fair elections by virtue of an elite settlement among major and

Table 6.1 Elite typology based on the extent of differentiation and unity

Elite differentiation	Elite unity	
	Strong	Weak
Wide	Consensual elite	Fragmented elite
Narrow	Ideological elite	Divided elite

Adapted from Higley and Lengyel (2000: 3)

Table 6.2 Elite typology based on patterns of circulation and extent of unity during and after democratic transitions

	Scope of elite circulation wide and deep: strong elite unity	Scope of elite circulation narrow and shallow: weak elite unity
Mode of elite circulation gradual and peaceful (negotiated): wide elite differentiation	*Classic circulation* Consensual elite Regime: consolidated democracy	*Reproduction circulation* Fragmented elite Regime: unconsolidated democracy
Mode of elite circulation sudden and enforced: narrow elite differentiation	*Replacement circulation* Ideocratic elite Regime: totalitarian or post-totalitarian	*Quasi-replacement circulation* Divided elite Regime: authoritarian or sultanistic

Adapted from Higley and Lengyel (2000: 7)

previously opposing elite camps, that is, representatives of the old regime and leaders of groups formerly arrayed against the regime. This may result in a reconfiguration of elites (*classic circulation*) and the consolidation of democracy. But if the elites of the old regime are able to prevent a fundamental elite reconfiguration while at the same time preserving their control of central power positions, *reproduction circulation* may occur and result in a fragmented political elite and an unconsolidated democracy.

Sudden regime transitions through revolutions or coups are assumed to produce a wholesale replacement of an old regime's elite by an ideologically united elite (*replacement circulation*) and a totalitarian or post-totalitarian regime. If this new regime is unable to establish sufficient control of the society (*quasi-replacement circulation*) the result is a disunited elite, or several factions and camps which operate an authoritarian or sultanistic regime (Table 6.2).

While the Higley-Lengyel considerations were preliminary and did not provide operational criteria for measuring different patterns of circulation and resulting configurations of political elites, their approach seems conceptually promising, especially because there are ample data on post-communist and other post-authoritarian countries such as Spain, Portugal, and numerous Latin American countries (e.g. Higley et al. 1996; Hoffmann-Lange 1997).[5]

Typologies Centered on Elite-Citizen Linkages

Political elite typologies constructed by Dahrendorf (1979), Hoffmann-Lange (1992), Putnam (1976) and Ruostetsaari (2006, 2013) are based not only on characteristics of elites and the extent of their *horizontal integration*, they also

take into account the extent of *vertical elite-citizen integration* by focusing on aspects of political representation. Among these aspects are the extent of *descriptive representation*, that is, the extent to which major segments of a population are represented in the political elite, the openness of elite recruitment, and the congruence of value orientations and issue attitudes between elites and citizens. However, indicators of these elite-citizen linkages have not been provided in a uniform way and have not been applied comparatively.[6]

Focusing on cleavage structures in modern societies, Putnam (1976: 115–21) distinguished three basic patterns of value and attitude consensus at three hierarchical levels: mass publics, middle-level elites, and top-level elites. Three types of political elites are associated with three cleavage patterns (Putnam 1976: 120). What Putnam labeled a *consensual elite* embodies a traditional ruling class whose power is largely independent of social cleavages. Although cleavages are pronounced in the mass public, they decrease the higher one moves up the social ladder, thus resulting in a pyramid-shaped elite-citizen linkage pattern. What he termed a *competitive elite* is associated with typical patterns of issue conflict in democratic societies, in which elite factions are more polarized than mass publics. A cleavage pattern associated with competitive elites is the opposite of the pattern associated with consensual elites. Here, polarization decreases from bottom to top. A competitive elite corresponds to Schumpeter's competitive theory of democracy, which depicts political leaders developing policy platforms that are the foci of electoral competitions (Schumpeter 1942: 269–80).

A *coalescent elite*, finally, displays a high degree of elite cooperation in culturally divided societies with strong intermediary associations (including political parties) that represent and reflect distinct ethnic, religious, regional, or socioeconomic segments of a society. Putnam's conception of a coalescent elite closely resembles Lijphart's (2012) consensus model of democracy in culturally plural societies. While conflicts of interest tend to be pronounced among middle-level elite groups that represent the interests of the different cultural or socioeconomic communities, Putnam assumed that even deep cleavages among middle-level elites can be managed if top-level elites decide to search for compromises and institutionalize requirements for broad majorities in political decision-making.

The typologies set forth by Dahrendorf, Ruostetsaari, and Hoffmann-Lange have much in common, but they differ over which aspects of interest representation and elite integration are crucial. Dahrendorf based his typology on two dimensions: the existence of broad interest representation and the social cohesion of elites. While he assumed that the representation of all organized segments of society in a political elite is a central aspect of any liberal democratic political order, he claimed that the diversity of interests represented

Table 6.3 Dahrendorf's elite typology

	Elite political attitudes	
Elite cohesion	Uniform	Multiform
Established	Authoritarian elite	Liberal elite
Abstract	Totalitarian elite	Fragmented elite

Adapted from Dahrendorf (1979: 220)

Table 6.4 Ruostetsaari's elite typology

	Elite coherence	
Openness of elite recruitment	High	Low
Low	Exclusive elite	Segmented elite
High	Inclusive elite	Fragmented elite

Adapted from Ruostetsaari (2013: 258)

in a political elite needs to be counter-balanced by a high degree of social cohesion in the elite. He believed that common educational and professional backgrounds are an indispensable basis for mutual trust between elite factions (Table 6.3).

Dahrendorf expected that an elite with multiform attitudes but lacking social cohesion would remain abstract and resemble what Higley and Lengyel (2000) called a *fragmented elite*.[7] He disregarded the possibility that mutual trust may develop among socially heterogeneous elites and be transmitted through intra-organizational socialization. He also failed to acknowledge the potential danger associated with the existence of strong informal ties among elite members, namely, that such ties may foster shady deals behind closed doors that contribute to corruption.

Ruostetsaari's typology is based on slightly different indicators, and it is derived from survey data rather than inferred from social background data. He proposes two dimensions of elites: openness of recruitment and coherence. Openness of recruitment is operationalized as *descriptive representation*—the extent to which all important segments of a society are represented in the political elite.[8] Coherence is measured by a number of different indicators: the existence of a dense network of inter-organizational contacts; satisfaction with democracy; shared perceptions of the influence of different social and political institutions; frequency of elite circulation within and across elite sectors. Ruostetsaari fails, however, to explicate the theoretical relevance of the indicators he uses, specify their relative weights, and provide empirical thresholds of significance (Table 6.4).

Hoffmann-Lange's typology, also based on survey data, shares with Dahrendorf's typology an emphasis on the broad representation of diverse

Table 6.5 Hoffmann-Lange's elite typology

Interest representation	Elite integration	
	High	Low
High	Established democratic elite	Pluralist elite
Low	Power elite	Un-integrated elite

Adapted from Hoffmann-Lange (1992: 37)

interests by political elites, measured by the extent of descriptive representation in elite makeups and the extent of attitudinal congruence between political elites and citizens. Her indicators of elite integration include elite support for democratic institutions and an inclusive elite network in the policy formation process. However, she also fails to combine different indicators into multidimensional indices and to specify thresholds of significance.

The indicators of elite-citizen linkages and elite integration in democratic political systems thus are:

Interest Representation
- Openness of elite recruitment measured by a fair representation of all population segments in the elite[9];
- A pluralist elite with autonomous political parties, effective party competition, free and fair elections, as well as a broad variety of voluntary associations and private organizations that participate in policy formation;
- The existence of multiple linkages among elites and citizens that serve as channels for bringing citizen interests to bear in politics;
- A high degree of elite-citizen attitudinal congruence on the preferred type of political regime and policy preferences.[10]

Elite Integration
- Broad support among all major elite groups for peacefully managing conflicts of interest;
- Elite careers involving professional experience in diverse sectors that facilitate cooperative relations between leaders of different sectors and organizations;
- A policy formation network encompassing all major political parties, pressure groups, and voluntary associations.

Low values on either of the two dimensions indicate the existence of different elite and regime types (Table 6.5).

Cross-sectional surveys of elites in single democracies have collected valuable data on social backgrounds and careers, value orientations and networks,[11] and characteristics of democratic regimes. Yet these data are not sufficient to test the

assumptions underlying typologies of elite-citizen linkages. Not only must indicators like those just listed be standardized, but comparative cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are needed as well.

Conclusions

Different theoretical questions require different theories and a single typology of political elites will not suffice to cover all of their theoretically interesting aspects. I have discussed several typologies and the dimensions on which they rest, as well as some of the empirical indicators used to locate political elites on these dimensions. It comes as no surprise that the theoretical assumptions of typologies constructed for the purpose of studying specific aspects of elites, such as their role orientations and personality features, are easier to test empirically than are typologies of complex patterns such as elite integration and elite-citizen linkages. Studies of political elites have proposed a variety of indicators for measuring complex attributes of political elite types, but the limited scope of these studies prevents firm judgments about the validity of the postulated relationships between elite types and regime types.

Because elites are not readily accessible for investigation and because studies of elites are expensive, broad elite surveys are not usually comparative, and comparative longitudinal studies have been even rarer. Most of the empirical studies that have been done rely on indirect indicators based on publicly available information in handbooks or on data from omnibus surveys of elite opinions that do not allow measuring many theoretically interesting aspects of elites in a convincing way. Moreover, while theories about political elites fail to pay enough attention to problems of empirical operationalization, strictly empirical studies frequently produce much descriptive data on elite character-istics without discussing how their indicators should be combined to gauge the overall character of the elites studied. What explicitly comparative studies there are have focused mainly on specific aspects of elites, without discussing their broader theoretical implications.

In order to answer general questions about the relationship between polit-ical elites and political regimes, comparative and longitudinal studies not limited to liberal democratic regimes and encompassing illiberal democracies and autocratic regimes are needed. As King et al. (1994: 129–37) point out, a selection of cases on the dependent variable—democratic regimes—cannot determine causality. King et al. also mention a general problem of typologies that bears repeating. This is that typologies specify ideal types constituting the end points of theoretical dimensions and disregarding the reality that actual

political elites constitute combinations of intermediate positions on these dimensions. The dichotomization of continuous variables suggests, misleadingly, that extreme cases are the rule, not the exception. It is necessary to study the entire spectrum of dimensions to avoid ignoring theoretically interesting cases. This suggests a need for typologies of political elites more elaborate than those currently available.

Notes

1. It would be wrong, however, to conclude that ruling class theorists have not made important contributions to elite research. In particular, Domhoff's studies (e.g. 1979, 2010) provide important insights into the ways business elites try to assert their interests.

2. Higley has published numerous books and articles with various co-authors. The present analysis is limited to the discussion of the typology provided in Higley and Burton (2006) and a book chapter co-authored with György Lengyel in 2000.

3. Higley assumes that regimes operated by ideologically united elites are stable as well because elite recruitment is channeled through a hierarchical party or religious organization. This seems surprising, though, since—with the exception of the Soviet Union—historical ideocratic regimes have tended to be short-lived unless they started to relax the requirement that all elites need to subscribe to a narrowly defined ideological or religious belief system. Since they are usually created by charismatic leaders, they suffer from what Max Weber called the *routinization of charisma*.

4. Determining criteria for distinguishing between (durable) elite settlements and (more fragile) elite pacts may be difficult in practice, however. In their analysis of the Hungarian post-communist experience, Lengyel and Ilonszki (2012) discussed an example of the breakdown of a seemingly durable elite settlement.

5. Bozóki (2003) and Joo (2013) have applied this typology in their analyses of elite change in Central Eastern Europe and China.

6. To be fair, it needs to be acknowledged that Higley has not ignored the degree to which citizen interests are represented in elite decision-making, albeit in an indirect way. He considers the pluralist character of elites and the inclusion of civil society elites in the elite network to be a crucial aspect of a consensus elite.

7. Dahrendorf claimed that *abstract elites* may engage in two different patterns of behavior. If their members are reluctant to forge compromises, the danger of civil strife or even a seizure of power by authoritarian forces may result. If they shy away from publicly expressing conflicting positions, however, such elites will not able to take decisive action. He argued that the elite of the Weimar

Republic was an example of the first type, while the early West German elite exemplified the second type which he denoted as a *cartel of anxiety.*

8. In his article of 2006, Ruostetsaari also included value and issue congruence among elites and citizens, thus adding additional indicators of democratic representation without explicitly including this aspect in his elite typology.

9. Since people from upper middle-class backgrounds have a disproportionate chance to achieve elite positions, this near-universal empirical regularity requires defining realistic threshold values in measuring openness of elite recruitment.

10. Public opinion research has regularly shown that the degree of elite-mass congruence in political values and attitudes is far from perfect. Political tolerance is higher among elites while their policy attitudes are more polarized than citizen attitudes (cf. Hoffmann-Lange 2008). Therefore, realistic thresholds for defining a high degree of attitudinal congruence need to be specified.

11. Higley's argument that a tacit consensus on rules of elite behavior cannot be measured directly is certainly valid because the expression of political positions by elites usually requires elites to emphasize the differences between their own positions and those of their political opponents, while stating commonalities would be misunderstood by the public as indicating elite collusion (Higley and Burton 2006: 13). It can be assessed indirectly, however, for instance by studying the degree of party political polarization in roll call votes, the incidence of violent clashes between political parties or attempts at stifling political opposition by unfair electoral practices.

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Section II

Research Methods for Studying Elites

Elena Semenova

7

Research Methods for Studying Elites

Elena Semenova

Studies of elites involve assessments of the internal stratification of elite groups, the rewards they share, and the criteria by which privileges are distributed, as well as how political power is exercised (Dahl 1961; Scharpf 1997). Whether the distribution of power and inequality within a society or the individual behavior of top position-holders in various sectors of society (refer to other sections of this handbook) are concerned, the question of how researchers can study elites arises.

The lack of a sophisticated methodology for studying political elites has long been a concern. In the first comprehensive book on research methods in elite studies, Moyser and Wagstaffe (1987: 1) observed that the field "suffers from argument and confusion over key terms, a relative dearth of testable hypotheses, a failure clearly to separate normative from empirical theory and, not least, the lack of a firm data base in which the latter could be solidly grounded." During the past two or three decades, however, advances in research technology, methodological sophistication, and the employment of research methods from natural sciences have broadened and deepened the study of elites. The emergence of Web 2.0, Twitter, and other social media has facilitated the collection of large data sets pertaining to elites and spurred new methodological approaches. This introduction seeks to canvas, necessarily in

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brief and incomplete compass, the principal methodological developments (see Box-Steffensmeier et al. 2008; Dowding 2016).

The crucial aspect of every elite study is defining an elite and identifying its population. This is the subject of Ursula Hoffmann-Lange's chapter (Chap. 8). She critically discusses the three main methods for identifying elites: the positional, decisional, and reputational methods. Hoffmann-Lange also provides an overview of the major studies on political elites that have used one or more of these methods.

Research methods for studying elites can be grouped into three major categories: (1) methods for explaining how institutions affect the behavior of elites, (2) methods for drawing inferences about political outcomes from the knowledge of elites' behaviors, and (3) methods for analyzing the interactions of various elite groups (Dowding 2016: 170–187). However, this tripartite grouping of methods should be treated with caution because the same study may employ two or three types of methods.

The first group deals with the question of how institutions shape the behavior of elite members. Exemplifying this question are studies of what happened to communist elites after the collapse of communism (Higley and Lengyel 2000; Semenova et al. 2014), or how the emergence of nation-states in Europe during the modern historical period affected the formation of political elites (Cotta and Best 2007). Answers are most often sought by modeling the behavior of elite members in various institutional settings, and utilizing quantitative techniques to apply the models. This handbook section discusses two of the most common quantitative tools for analyzing and drawing causal inferences about the behavior of political actors in various institutional settings. In their chapter, Matthew Kerby and Sebastian Jäckle (Chap. 10) provide an overview of temporal methods for studying the careers of elites. They describe the change of research focus in elite studies that has followed developments in empirical techniques. These developments have enabled researchers to examine the careers of elite persons in particular settings both at a particular point in time (cross-sectional analysis) and also over time (longitudinal analysis). The adoption of survival analysis, a method native to medical research, has led to a range of studies estimating the effects of various institutional settings (e.g., the type of cabinet or the strength of the presidential power) on career durations of elite members. Recently, sequence analysis, another method adopted from natural sciences, provides new insights into political careers by switching the main focus from a single career episode, which is usually the focus of survival analysis, to the holistic depiction of entire political careers. For example, sequence analysis facilitates predictions about how the careers of elite members will differ and the speed with which they will

progress depending on sets of previous positions that aspiring elite members hold.

Researchers on elites also examine whether the type of a previous position and its importance relative to all elite positions can predict the further careers of aspiring elite members. Originating in the natural and technical sciences, fuzzy-set classification allows researchers to code not the presence or the absence of a specific type of experience gained by elite members but the degrees of experience as a continuum. Fuzzy sets help researchers to answer questions such as whether retentions of ministerial portfolios are more likely among technocratic or partisan ministers (Camerlo and Pérez-Liñán 2015).

Franziska Keller's chapter (Chap. 11) provides an overview of elite studies that have employed Social Network Analysis (SNA), which is another widely used quantitative tool for assessing the character of elite groups in various institutional settings. Social Network Analysis enables researchers to address questions such as whether political elites in authoritarian states consist of a single group of interconnected members or of several relatively distinct groups (Easter 2000), or why different kinds of elite members achieve powerful positions in specific settings (Padgett and Ansell 1993). Mapping elite networks is a powerful tool for understanding how elite sub-groups interact and how specific sub-groups are structured. Keller also discusses SNA techniques developed for simulating the actions of elite members in specific settings such as exponential random graph models (ERGMs) and stochastic actor-based models (SOAMs). For example, these models allow for predictions about how elite networks within the House of Lords will evolve depending on profession or education of elite members (Bond 2012).

While the first group of methods is based on the mathematical modeling of elite behavior in various institutional settings, the second group of methods is more inductive and aims to draw theoretical implications by explaining patterns of data (Dowding 2016: 174). Experiments, surveys, and archival research are typical methods in this second group.

Experiments (including natural experiments and quasi-experiments) have been used to isolate causal relationships between relevant variables. In political science, the experimental method has become increasingly popular, and it is applied to a range of phenomena such as voting, political mobilization, media effects, and coalition bargaining (Druckman et al. 2011). Experimental methods have not been widely employed in elite studies, although there have been notable studies of how elites process information and make decisions in foreign policy (Renshon 2015) and how responsive elites have been to lobbying activities (Richardson and John 2009).

In contrast to experiments, archival research is used widely in political elite studies, among others, historical elite studies. Typical examples have been archival research on political elite recruitment in Germany and France during the nineteenth century (Best 1990) and studies of the formation and careers of elites in communist countries (e.g., Harasymiw 1984).

Archival research is also the major method for studying the psychology of political leaders such as presidents, ministers, or parliamentarians, particularly in the context of foreign policy, as Gian Caprara and Jo Silvester discuss in their chapter (Chap. 30). The beliefs, motives, and personality profiles of elite persons are often inferred from archival materials and then analyzed using quantitative content analysis (Hafner-Burton et al. 2013). This enables researchers to address questions such as why elites escalate some conflicts into warlike actions but do not do this with some other conflicts (Winter 2004) and whether one can predict a president's performance based on his or her personality profile (Barber 1992). New computer technologies facilitate collecting, storing, and analyzing "big data" sets contracted from archives, Web 2.0 and Twitter. It is now possible to analyze large amounts of data using content analysis computer programs that reduce substantially the costs of studies (Grimmer and Stewart 2013).

Opinion surveys are a method frequently employed in elite studies. In the first part of their chapter, Juan Rodriguez Teruel and Jean-Pascal Daloz (Chap. 9) provide a detailed discussion of survey methodology, which was first developed for studying representative samples of mass populations on the basis of standardized questionnaires. Surveys proved to be both cost-effective and flexible and to provide information on a wide range of phenomena. Yet surveys can be prone to observation errors resulting from poor measurements and other shortcomings. Therefore, survey design and the method of administering surveys—for example, by telephone or in face-to-face surveys—are important research issues. Surveys were first used in elite studies to analyze the attitudes and orientations of elites and their congruence or incongruence with mass attitudes and orientations in single national states. Since the 1980s, numerous cross-national surveys of elites and of elite-mass congruence and incongruence have been carried out. The development of cross-national surveys has led to a better understanding of issues such as how elites in European countries perceive the European Union (Best et al. 2012) or how civil servants and politicians in different countries perceive their professional roles (Aberbach et al. 1981).

Finally, the third group of methods is interpretative and involves understanding a specific case and its context. In a narrow sense, the interpretative approach strongly relies on anthropological and ethnographic techniques. In

their chapter, Rodriguez Teruel and Daloz (Chap. 9) elaborate on the observations of political actors. They stress that this requires substantial social skills and knowledge on the part of researchers because establishing contacts, utilizing appropriate questions, and situating elites in their immediate environments are crucial in ethnographic research (see also Hertz and Imber 1995). More generally, in-depth personal interviews with elite members are a widely used method (e.g., Aguiar and Schneider 2012). In contrast to surveys, interviews allow researchers to depart from a standardized questionnaire if interesting information is offered, and to ask follow-up questions if the answers given are insufficient. When conducting interviews, Rodriguez Teruel and Daloz observe, statistical bias is not an issue; more important are strategies for selecting interviewees.

The range of interpretative methods is wider than interviews and observations and includes, among others, case studies of elite groups (e.g., Post 2003) as well as discourse analysis of the communications among elite groups (e.g., Van Dijk 1993). To advance political elite studies, some qualitative methods should be used more often. One such method is "fuzzy cognitive maps" which provide ways of analyzing and representing the causal reasoning of elite persons and groups. While graphic representations of cognitive maps are similar to the network graphs discussed by Franziska Keller's chapter (Chap. 11), they aim to symbolically show the flow of arguments presented in expert documents as well as analyze specific patterns of elite beliefs and reasoning. Axelrod (1976) uses this method to analyze how elite groups make foreign policy decisions.

Another interpretive method is qualitative comparative analysis (Ragin 1987), which has gained popularity in political science for establishing relations of sufficiency and/or necessity between configurations of causal conditions and chosen outcome. This method is often used in the context of small- to medium-N elite studies; for example, selection criteria for membership of the Politburo Standing Committee in China (Zeng 2013).

In sum, the range of research methods utilized when studying different elites is wide. It has been impossible to canvas the range fully in this introduction. This section has concentrated on only the most commonly used methods, their merits and demerits, and insights for researchers working on elites and others who are interested in them.

Returning to the criticism expressed by Moyser and Wagstaffe thirty years ago, there are today many reasons for holding an optimistic outlook for research on elites. The adoption of methods taken from the natural and technical sciences, the greatly increased availability of data and of techniques for analyzing data, and the marked increase of cross-national studies testify to the existence of a solid ground for testing theories of political elites. One

important step in this direction will be to carefully catalogue and publish data sets collected by elite researchers worldwide. Another step will be to establish standards of "good practice" in using research methods to enhance the quality and visibility of elite studies.

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8

Methods of Elite Identification

Ursula Hoffmann-Lange

Defining and identifying an elite population are the crucial first stage in elite research. Unlike mass populations, for which surveys rely on random sampling that allows inferences about their characteristics, the size and structure of elite populations are unknown at the outset of research. Their identification involves a number of steps and decisions by researchers.

First, a theoretical and operational definition of political elites is needed that can serve as the basis for selection criteria. In order to be universally applicable, this definition must be parsimonious and it must provide unambiguous criteria of elite status that preclude circular explanations.[1] Substantive characteristics of elites—especially characteristics with normative connotations—must be treated as empirical questions rather than being definitional aspects of elites. For instance, Meisel's (1958) definition assumes that elites are characterized by "three Cs," namely group consciousness, cohesion, and conspiracy. It excludes elites that do not fulfill all three criteria and therefore violates the requirement of universal applicability.

A definition of elites as groups or individuals with regular and substantial influence on important decisions within an organization or a society is general enough to make the elite concept applicable to all kinds of social systems (Putnam 1976; Higley and Burton 2006). When applied to whole societies, this definition includes all political and societal elites involved in influencing

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policy decisions, either because they are constitutionally authorized to make binding decisions for a polity or because they command important resources enabling them to influence important decisions. Such resources are, *inter alia*, information needed by decision-makers, capacities for swaying public opinion, or veto powers to prevent or subvert the implementation of policy decisions.

While studies of single elite groups can sometimes rely on complete rosters of top position-holders and use probability sampling to survey them, studies of entire elite formations—studies of community or national elites and power structures—normally use *purposive sampling* (Tansey 2007). This makes identifying elite members an integral part of the research process. Three basic methods have been developed for purposive sampling: positional, decisional, and reputational (Parry 1969; Scott 2004; Hoffmann-Lange 2007).

The Positional Method

The positional method for identifying elites is based on the assumption that political influence in complex societies is vested in formal leadership positions located in a broad range of political, business, military, media, and various civil society institutions and organizations. The method is used most frequently by scholars, who presume that elite structure is pluralistic, but it has sometimes been employed by scholars, such as C. Wright Mills (1956) and John Scott (2004), who assume the existence of an integrated "power elite" or "ruling class." Although these theorists acknowledge that modern democracies are organizationally diverse, they claim that the diversity of organizations and interests they embody are not reflected in the elite structure. They assume that power is more concentrated in a small power elite than exponents of pluralism believe, so that participation in crucial policy decisions is limited to a small circle or knot of actors with common social backgrounds and interests that are concealed by a diversity of organizations and interests that, in terms of decisive power, is more apparent than real.

The positional method is most widely used for identifying elites at the national level. It has been applied in many countries, including Australia, Finland, South Africa, the USA, Russia, and Germany (Hoffmann-Lange 2007, p. 919). The method involves several research steps. The first is a decision about the approximate number of elite members to be included in a study. This decision usually depends upon the extent of available research funds and staff. Studies utilizing the positional method have ranged from a few hundred position-holders (Zapf 1965) to 5000 or more (Dye 2014).

The second research step involves a decision about the societal sectors to be taken into account. While the explicitly political sector is almost always included, the inclusion of other sectors depends on assumptions about their political importance. For example, C. Wright Mills (1956) assumed that the United States in the 1950s was governed by a *triangle of power* consisting of elites in the executive political, corporate business, and military sectors. Comparing British and French elites in the years immediately following World War II, Raymond Aron (1950, p. 9) distinguished five key elite sectors: "political leaders, government administrators, economic directors, leaders of the masses, and military chiefs." There is, nonetheless, broad scholarly agreement about the major sectors and bases of power in modern democratic societies:

- Politics: Constitutional authority to take binding decisions;
- Public administration: Drafting and implementation of legislation;
- Armed forces: Protection of the country against foreign (and domestic) enemies;
- Private business: Production of economic goods and services;
- Mass media: Information for the public and checks on power abuses;
- Academia and education: Production and dissemination of knowledge;
- Voluntary associations, especially business associations and labor unions: Collective political action.

Other sectors have sometimes been subsumed under these major sectors or have been studied separately: appellate courts, large churches and religious movements, major professional associations, and influential cultural institutions.

The third research step involves determining the most important organizations in each sector studied. Some sectors are comprised of distinct subsectors of organizations that preclude the application of a single criterion of organizational importance. In politics, for example, one has to distinguish between executive and legislative leadership positions as well as between leadership positions in the largest or most pivotal parties. Because modern political institutions, business corporations, and civil society organizations typically have well-documented hierarchical structures, the final two steps of the positional method involve identifying the uppermost positions in these structures and locating their incumbents.[2]

A survey study of the German national elite in 1995 provides a good illustration of the positional method for identifying elites. The German researchers' positional sample encompassed a total of 3941 incumbents of

elite positions in 14 sectors. Interviews with 2341 of these incumbents were completed with a response rate of 59.4% (Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997, pp. 38 and 65). Similarly, each of Thomas Dye's eight iterative studies of US elites between 1976 and 2014 examined several thousand positional elites in ten or more sectors and together provided an unparalleled documentation of the changing personal and professional profiles and organizational ties of US elites over four decades (Dye 2014).

The positional method does not give guidelines for specifying the horizontal and vertical boundaries of an elite. The inclusion of elite sectors and the choice of cut-off criteria for distinguishing elite and non-elite positions have to rely on the results of previous research into the importance of different sectors, organizations, and leadership positions. Although the positional method enables the identification and study of a wide range of elite groups, groups and individual position-holders cannot be assumed to be equally powerful or influential. Therefore, unweighted aggregations of multiple sectors imply that the number of respondents in the different sectors determines the distribution of characteristics in the entire elite sample. Drawing valid conclusions about *the elite* of a country presupposes a weight for the political influence of individual elite members that can only be determined by an analysis of decision-making networks (Knoke 1993, p. 29).

The positional method also risks underestimating the degree to which power is centralized or overestimating the degree to which it is dispersed and plural. Moreover, power and influence are never perfectly correlated with positions held. Holding an elite position does not necessarily imply the actual use of the power resources associated with the position. Finally, the method gives little or no attention to political influence not based on positional resources, but rather on a personal reputation for being well informed, having close connections with important actors, or possessing bargaining skills of a high order (Putnam 1976, p. 16).

Despite these shortcomings, the positional method is a sound way to study the characteristics of elites—their backgrounds, careers as well as cleavage lines within and between different sectors. It also enables a comparison of the characteristics of a country's elite with those of its population. If selection criteria are well documented by researchers, the positional method ensures a high degree of reliability. Finally, the method is also applicable to studies of historical elites. It lends itself to longitudinal analyses of developments in the organizational structures of polities and in the personal and professional characteristics of elites over considerable periods of time. For example, Wolfgang Zapf's study of German elites between 1919 and 1961 documented continuities as well as changes in the composition of elites associated

with three political regime changes, in 1919, 1933, and 1945–1949. A study of European parliamentary elites since 1848 traces continuities and changes in the social characteristics of parliamentary "party families" over a period of 150 years (Best and Cotta 2000; Cotta and Best 2007).

The Decisional Method

The decisional method identifies elites according to their active involvement in important policy decisions. The method was developed in Robert Dahl's seminal study of power in New Haven, Connecticut (1961). Dahl studied a number of decision-making processes in four different policy domains during the 1950s, relying on participant observation, official records, documents, newspapers, and personal interviews. He identified 50 top leaders and 1063 sub-leaders who participated in at least one of the decision-making processes. By initiating or vetoing policy proposals, the 50 top leaders had been the most regular and successful participants in governing New Haven.

Dahl's main finding was the high degree to which political participation and influence was specialized among both top leaders and sub-leaders. Only 3% (n = 32) of the latter had been actively involved in more than one policy domain (ibid., p. 175). Likewise, only three of the 50 top leaders had successfully initiated or vetoed policies in more than one domain; 20 of the 50 had successfully influenced more than one decision in a single domain; but 27 had influenced only one decision (ibid., pp. 181–182). Contrary to conventional wisdom, the number of social and economic notables in New Haven with influence on policy decisions was not pronounced: only 11 notables were among the top 50 leaders.[3]

Like the positional method, the decisional method involves several research steps when identifying the politically most influential persons. The first step is to choose important policy decisions and domains. This is relatively straightforward in community power studies, because the range of policies that communities can pursue autonomously is usually quite narrow. Legislation and policies that have an impact on society at large are usually the prerogative of national governments, and at that level, the range of key policies and policy domains is much wider. The wide range makes it more difficult to select a sample of policy decisions that can be considered as representative of all policy decisions in a country. It is obvious that the complexity of national policy-making cannot be captured adequately by studying who is involved in decisions about a small number of issues. This limits the decisional method's utility when studying national elites.

Although official records and documents, media reports, and direct observation usually provide the names of important participants in decisions, most decisional studies have used the positional approach as their starting point. This is usually supplemented by other sources of information as well as by additional names of important actors that are gathered during interviews. Positional elites not directly involved in decision-making are then deleted from the original list and the newly gathered names are added. Dahl identified decisional elites in New Haven by counting the number of successful policy initiatives and vetoes. Alternatively, the composition of decisional elites can also be determined by asking positional elites to name influential persons who are then selected as additional respondents if they have been mentioned by several others ("snowball sampling").

Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Lukes (2005), and others have criticized the decisional method, because it is limited to studying actual decisions and excludes issues that never reach the decision-making stage (non-decisions). This may happen if issues are promoted by minor political actors and fail to achieve the support of influential actors, or if key influentials successfully try to keep such issues off the political agenda. The probability that influentials promote or prevent decisions without being actively involved in the decision-making process is a clear weakness of the decisional method. The weakness has at least two causes. On the one hand, delegates of top position-holders or gray eminences may promote the preferences of position-holders. On the other hand, the preferences of influentials may be anticipated by those who make decisions that deliberately avoid vetoes (Putnam 1976, p. 7). In the former case, the decisional method may falsely identify actors as powerful although they are actually representing the interests of others; in the latter case, the method may miss some of the most powerful persons so that, although they do not visibly participate, their known or anticipated preferences nevertheless affect the content of decisions.

The Organizational State, by Edward Laumann and David Knoke (1987), is an example of the decisional method being applied at a national political level, although it was limited to two national policy domains in the United States: energy and health. Drawing on testimony before congressional committees, newspaper accounts, and registers of lobbyists, the authors constructed and then combined multiple lists of organizations that participated in policy decisions in one or the other domain. They asked experts to nominate additional individual and collective actors. Organizations that received at least five nominations were added to the final list. The study showed that organizations, not individuals, were the principal actors in federal energy and health policy decisions (Knoke 1993, p. 40). It revealed the existence of similar

inter-organizational networks of political influence in both domains. The networks consisted of large numbers of private (about three quarters) as well as public organizations. Governmental actors occupied the core positions in both networks and were surrounded in each by a circle of major special interests and by peripheries of minor claimants (Laumann and Knoke 1987 p. 377; Knoke 1993 p. 34). The joint involvement of public and private actors indicated that the public-private distinction did not play much of a role in decision-making, hence the authors' choice of the term "the organizational state" (Laumann and Knoke 1987, p. 382).

A large comparative study of the United States, Germany, and Japan that utilized the same methodological approach analyzed decision-making networks in labor policy-making during the 1980s (Knoke et al. 1996). Its findings supported the earlier finding of a blurred separation between public and private actors in the three countries.

The Reputational Method

The reputational method relies on experts in order to identify elites. The method was introduced by Floyd Hunter in a community power study of Atlanta, Georgia (1953) and later applied to the national level in his study of "Top Leadership U.S.A." (1959). In the latter study, Hunter started with a list of influential national associations that were asked "to give the names of five national leaders (exclusive of elected and appointed officials) considered to be of top influence in national policy-making" (ibid., p. xiv). The nominations yielded a list of nearly 500 leaders. This list was then successively amended during several rounds of interviews over the period from 1953 to 1958. Interviewees were asked which of the persons on the list they knew personally, if they had worked with some of them when developing specific policies, and to assign persons on the list an influence rating of 1, 2, or 3 (ibid., p. 167).

It turned out that "between 100 and 200 men consistently were chosen as top leaders and were considered by all informants to be of national policy-making stature" (ibid., p. 167). One hundred of them received by far the highest number of top rankings. Most of these leaders knew each other personally, while "second and third raters knew fewer and fewer of the number-one group" (ibid., p. 168). The structure of the uppermost leadership group tended toward closure: their names regularly appeared in the national press and they represented "a cross-section of national civic life" (ibid., p. 173). Fifty-two of the top 100 reputational leaders were elected politicians or political appointees, while 23 were business leaders (ibid., p. 199).

Hunter's account of how he determined his several lists of influentials was shaky, to say the least. He gave little information about the several stages of his research process, nor did he explain how his lists of influentials were presented in the interviews he conducted. It seems unlikely that his respondents, who were national leaders with tight time schedules, were actually asked to examine lists containing several hundred names. Moreover, although political leaders were excluded initially, they were included in Hunter's last two rounds of interviews. It is also unclear how data from successive waves of interviews were combined to determine the top 100 power-wielders. These methodological flaws were criticized by Dahl (1960) in a scathing review of Hunter's book. The flaws cast serious doubt on the validity of Hunter's findings.

Hunter's book points to a fundamental weakness of the reputational method. The method seems applicable in community power research where the number of political influentials is relatively small. But its usefulness at the national level, where there is a much larger and more diverse number of actors, is questionable. In complex national settings with a multiplicity of decision-making arenas, knowledge of who the consequential actors are tends to be limited to those who are personally involved in a specific policy domain. Therefore, a large number of experts for different policy domains are needed to compile a comprehensive roster of persons reputed to be politically influential. Relying on just a small number of informants instead risks reproducing subjective "images of power" rather than valid results (Scott 2004, p. 86). Since it seems impossible to find expert informants who are capable and willing to rate the political influence of hundreds of leaders in an array of policy domains, researchers have tended to use short lists of a limited number of top leaders that result in finding a small "power elite."

In combination with the positional or decisional methods, however, asking respondents to identify top influentials in their own organizations or in policy decisions in which they have been personally involved makes sense and has been successfully applied by Laumann, Knoke, and others as a form of snowball sampling.

Comparing Methods

The choice of method for identifying and studying elites is associated with theoretical differences about the loci of power and influence in modern societies and also with different objectives of elite research. Scholars who assume that modern societies are characterized by a pluralist power structure tend to apply the positional or the decisional method, while scholars who

Table 8.1 A comparison of the positional, decisional and reputational methods of elite identification

Resources of political influence	Personal involvement in political decision-making	
	Active involvement	Active involvement or indirect influence
Positional resources	Positional method: constitutionally authorized political decision-makers only	Positional method: Incumbents of leadership positions in political institutions and civil society organizations
Positional resources or personal resources	Decisional method	Reputational method

suspect the existence of a highly integrated power elite tend to utilize the reputational method or a narrowly defined positional sample. Ultimately, each of the methods focuses on different aspects of power and influence along two dimensions:

- the influence resources of elites
- personal involvement in political decision-making

A combination of these two dimensions yields four strategies for identifying elites (Table 8.1). It is self-evident that limiting research to politicians with formal decision-making authority yields the most restrictive identification of elites. Therefore, most studies using the positional method have extended the elite concept to encompass the second dimension by including elites located in a broad spectrum of public institutions and influential private organizations who are not necessarily personally involved in policy decisions. The decisional method limits analysis to active participants in political decision-making, regardless of the resources on which their influence is based. The reputational method is the most inclusive in terms of both influence resources and involvement in policy decisions. But this method tends to be more exclusionary than the other two methods, and it usually points to the existence of a small and tightly integrated power elite.

The most fundamental decision that elite researchers have to make is on boundary specification, which presupposes a single criterion of elite membership. The positional method does not specify such a criterion. This is why it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about the characteristics and structure of an elite formation from a positional sample of elites. Higley et al. (1991) solved this problem by combining the positional method with the reputational method. The holders of American, Australian, and (West) German elite

positions were asked to name influential actors with whom they regularly interacted in the context of the national policy issue on which they had been most active during the preceding year. While most of the actors named were holders of elite positions, the questioning also yielded a small number of persons who did not hold any leadership positions.

The reputational method typically requires that to be included in a study, a person must receive at least a specified number of nominations. The decisional method uses the frequency of either participation in or success in influencing a final decision to include a person in a study. Therefore, each method for identifying elites will produce a different elite population. Using data from a community power study in a medium-sized West German city, Franz Urban Pappi (1984) found that perceptions of political influence (reputation) tended to be highly skewed toward a small number of key decision-makers, while the decisional method yielded a more inclusive, pluralist elite manifesting a diversity of power resources. He found that in the decisional approach, but not in the reputational approach, the incumbents of formal leadership positions turned out to be the most central actors. The correlation between centrality in the communication network and a reputation for power was only a modest r = 0.43, which suggested that "the two measures touch different aspects of influence" (ibid., pp. 92–93).

Hicks et al. (2015) recently developed a novel method of identifying elites. They studied *reported elites* in Indonesia by relying on the co-occurrence of names in digitized national newspapers. In a first step, they included the 1500 names with the highest frequency of co-occurrence. Next, they manually screened out politically irrelevant individuals, primarily sports celebrities, foreign personages, historical or recently deceased figures as well as names that could not be pinned down. The reduced list of 815 persons was then compared to a manually collected list of 1178 positional elites made up of politicians (cabinet ministers, legislators, party leaders, regional governors, etc.), top departmental bureaucrats, the 50 richest business leaders, top military officers, judges serving in national courts, but no civil society elites. Only 22% of the positional elites were found in the sample of 815 reported elites, which included "more than double the proportion of business and military actors as the positional method, and almost half the amount of politicians" (ibid., p. 394). The authors attributed this relatively low overlap partly to national peculiarities, in particular the major role of military leaders in Indonesia, but also to the fact that their list of positional elites did not include representatives of civil society organizations that are usually included in comprehensive national elite studies (media, business and labor associations, academia, large voluntary associations). Nevertheless, the smaller share of

politicians among the reported elites was probably a substantive result of the identification method. This indicates that other elites may play a more important role in political agenda-setting than is usually assumed by elite researchers. The Hicks et al. method certainly warrants further exploration. Given the increased availability of digitized news archives, their procedure of elite identification is a convenient alternative to the positional method for setting up an initial list of (potential) elites, which can then be compared to and complemented by other methods.[4]

A similar method of using a large relational data-base for elite identification was employed by Larsen and Ellersgaard (2017). These authors started out with a sample of nationally important organizations in Denmark and then determined official committees within these organizations (e.g. advisory or supervisory boards) that comprised representatives of other organizations and thus provided inter-organizational ties. Altogether, 1256 committees with a total of 5079 members were included in the analysis. The analysis uncovered a core elite of 423 members within the overall network of these 5079 individuals. While the authors emphasized that this method ensures a high degree of reliability, it is obvious that it is not as inductive as they claim. The selection of organizations and committees involves a decision on the relevant aspects of power and influence to be studied. The inclusion of royal events in the Danish study, for example, shows that the authors considered national prominence (prestige) as a relevant criterion of elite membership. Therefore, the core elite found in the analysis deviated considerably from a purely positional elite sample. The method also requires a decision on a threshold for the number of sociometric ties an individual needs for inclusion in the core elite, which influences its size and density.

Conclusions

This meta-analysis of different methods to identify elite populations has shown that the choice of method is consequential for the results achieved. Controversy about the validity of the three classic methods of elite identification is closely related to the fundamental theoretical question regarding the degree of power concentration in modern societies. While the reputational approach tends to find relatively small and closed *power elites*, both the positional and the decisional method find pluralist elite structures in which power and influence are more specialized and differentiated. Ultimately, the question of the degree to which political power and influence are concentrated cannot be answered in

an absolute way, but a good deal of light can be shed through comparative research.

The positional method does not provide criteria for determining the influence of the position-holders selected for analysis, nor for elite boundaries. Boundary specification requires additional data about power reputation, active involvement in policy decision-making, or ties between elite members such as their frequency of communication about policies. The size of the resulting elite depends on the threshold set for inclusion: the higher a threshold is set, the smaller the resulting elite population will be. The choice of the method of elite identification and the choice of a threshold for inclusion determine the size and structure of the elite found in elite studies. Therefore, empirical research on elites is compatible with both the assumption of a small and exclusive power elite or of a large and inclusive pluralistic elite. The two recent studies of elite networks indicate a renewed interest in the composition of national elites. They have expanded the methodological repertoire of elite research to uncover important aspects of power structures, thereby broadening our ability to study the determinants of access to the central decision-making arenas in modern democracies.

Notes

1. Circular explanations about the role of elites can only be avoided by defining operational criteria for elite status that are independent of influence on policy decisions. For instance, for testing the assumption that new policies are normally introduced by elites rather than non-elites, elite status has to be measured independently from policy initiation.
2. Because elite members may hold several elite positions at the same time, the sample of position-holders will normally be smaller after eliminating positional interlocks. This requires a decision on which of several positions is the most important one. The degree of such interlocks depends on the degree of specialization of sectors and organizations (partly determined by incompatibility rules) and differs across sectors and countries. In the German elite study of 1995, the total of 4587 positions was thereby reduced to 3941 individual elite members (Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997, pp. 38 and 65).
3. Social notables were identified by their inclusion in a number of social registers, while the 50 largest property owners were considered as economic notables.
4. This method is a variant of what Laumann et al. (1983) have described as a *relational method* of elite identification. It relies on the presence or absence of a particular type of relation among political actors and allows the identification of elites who maintain "important relationships with other system members" (Knoke 1993, p. 30).

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9

Surveying and Observing Political Elites

Juan Rodríguez-Teruel and Jean-Pascal Daloz

The study of political elites lies at the heart of contemporary social sciences. Elite theorists (like Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto) acknowledged the need to sustain their hypotheses with empirical evidence, although their seminal studies lacked a systematic analysis of data. For a long time, the availability of empirical information and the utility of methodological approaches have been major obstacles in the examination of several ideas and hypotheses about the role of political elites in the political process. However, the development of new technological tools of analysis and the accumulation of information about features and opinions of those at the apex of political power have allowed for the strong development of elite studies. This has been particularly conspicuous in empirical research based on surveys and qualitative observations, which are the subjects of this chapter.

Elite research has followed four methodological approaches in empirical research (Hoffmann-Lange 2007). The first is the collection (from secondary sources) and analysis of individual features of those people considered part of the elite group targeted by scholars (i.e., prosopographical research). A second approach is based in network analysis focused on present or past links between elite individuals (see Keller's Chap. 11). Although part of this information can

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be provided by the individuals themselves through surveys, most of these connections actually are inferred from secondary sources and detailed studies of biographies.

The third and fourth approaches (surveys and observation) collect data directly from the political actors. The main difference between these two methods deals with the research strategy involving the process of gathering and analyzing data. On the one hand, elite surveys entail a strategy of inquiry based on structured questionnaires, aiming to "collect the same information about all the cases in a sample" (Aldridge and Levine 2001, p. 5). Thus, it explains elite dimensions by concepts independent of their empirical origins, replacing "proper names by variables" (Przeworski and Teune 1970, p. 30). On the other hand, by focusing on idiosyncratic features of individuals, observations contribute to a deep knowledge of cases.

The choice between quantitative and qualitative strategies in the research design has long characterized discussion in elite studies. Although in the past scholars had a greater preference for qualitative studies (Moyser and Wagstaffe 1987), the evolution of techniques and tools has favored a quantitative strategy in the past two decades. Overall, both methods (i.e. surveys and observations of elites) are complementary strategies and constitute important contributions to elite research. Hence, they are not only parts of specific research where they have been utilized, but the collected data may be employed by other scholars with different purposes. In the following pages, we aim to introduce some of the more recent examples of research based upon these two approaches, and we will identify the main challenges faced by scholars who have employed them.

Surveying Political Elites

Surveys might be considered the main tool for studying mass politics nowadays (Johnston 2008), but this is not yet the case in the study of political elites. Paradoxically, the predominance of the survey method among social scientists helped to erode the concept of elite for a long time because it abstracted individuals from their context, making elites opaque within a sociological view (Savage and Williams 2008, pp. 5–6). Moreover, there still is some skepticism about the extent of reliability in elites' beliefs gathered by surveys because of the potential lack of sincerity in answers or limitations in capturing the specific nature of elite opinions (Hoffmann-Lange 2008, p. 54). However, new technical advances in combination with approaches such as positional analysis

to identify powerful individuals (Putnam 1976, p. 15; see (Hoffmann-Lange's Chap. 8) gradually are letting surveys become a central method for the study of political elites.

Despite limitations and obstacles in implementation, elite survey analysis offers some strong advantages that bring elite studies to higher empirical and theoretical grounds (Bolognesi and Perissinotto 2015, pp. 36–40). First, elite surveys permit collection of large amounts of data, more than any other data collection technique, for a relatively lower cost in terms of money and time. Second, they leave a high degree of control of the process of inquiry in the researcher's hands, easily enlarging the scope of questions and issues that might have not been considered in the literature. Third, they allow for sampling techniques that provide statistical inference even if only a segment of the targeted elite group is surveyed. Fourth, they capture the logic of social behavior through standardized specific questionnaires, avoiding the problems of explicitly asking individuals the reasons for their behaviors and decisions. Finally, they provide an empirical framework for establishing relationships of correlation and explanation based on empirical data, which also allows for replications.

The employment of elite surveys as a strategy mainly has been aimed at responding to research questions in three substantive areas. Social and political recruitment is one of the main pillars of elite research and traditionally it has depended upon published data sources and personal prosopography. Elite surveys progressively have been added as an alternative way to gather information about individuals' origins, although social indicators are primarily used as control variables for other explanations. Another issue has dealt with elite careers, aiming to explain the factors behind political promotion and those underlying political ambition (Maestas et al. 2006). This approach has mainly been developed through candidate and parliamentarian surveys about their political experience and has been often used in gender representation studies (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Sanbonmatsu 2006; Krook 2010; Lawless 2011). The most important contribution of elite surveys, however, has been in the field of elite attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of their political roles, the political system, and the relationship between elites and masses.

From National Studies to Cross-Country Research

Although the use of surveys has increased substantively in elite studies, most research that has used surveys have been national case studies (Hoffmann-Lange 2007, p. 919) focused on the United States as well as Western and

(rarely) East European countries (Higley et al. 1975; Hoffmann-Lange 1992; Lerner et al. 1996; Steen 2003; Ruostetsaari 2015; see also Best and Becker 1997 for surveys in Eastern Europe). Hence, this research strategy rarely has been employed to analyze political elites in comparative cross-national projects, with some notable exceptions (e.g., Best et al. 2012).

Parliamentarians form the major group that has been surveyed for decades (Bailer 2014). The size of this population and their position as representatives highly exposed to the public have made them a feasible object for large surveys (Weaver and Glasser 1984). These surveys mainly were interested in identifying the basis of some relevant dimensions of the democratic polity such as political consensus and support of democracy (Jackson et al. 1982; McClosky and Brill 1983; Hoffmann-Lange 1992), the representative linkage between voters and parliamentarians (Converse and Pierce 1986; Essaiason and Holmberg 1996), elite-mass congruence (Cotta et al. 2007, 2009; Dolný and Baboš 2015), or the main factors of political recruitment within one country (Norris 1997).

The single-country elite survey of national members of parliament (MPs) has been generalized as a research design to approach conceptual dimensions of democracies. Yet there are two significant limitations that researchers should address. On the one hand, focusing on the parliamentary elite could lead to conclusions that ignore the role and influence of other groups of elites that might be more relevant in some stages of the democratic process, particularly in their outcomes (Hoffmann-Lange 2007, p. 918). On the other hand, national studies are useful for understanding the power relations and democratic functioning within a society. But a cross-country research project often is necessary to identify the factors of change and general causal mechanisms within contemporary democracies, especially as transnational processes are hollowing state sovereignty and reinforcing common trends in the evolution of power structures and the emergence of supranational elites (Cotta 2014). Moreover, the process of devolution in many unitary states is transferring powers to subnational institutions, whose elites may develop specific interests and networks (Stolz 2001). Therefore, comparative elite studies increasingly tend to employ more cross-unit surveys between nations or even between political layers other than the national ones.

Most recent cross-national elite surveys have been conducted in Europe (see Table 9.1). Common national features favor a comparative research design among European countries: There are several state units of relatively equivalent size sharing major cultural features and with parallel historical and political evolutions of their systems. Moreover, European integration has raised relevant concerns about the legitimacy of European elites, their beliefs and views

Table 9.1 Major cross-country elite surveys

Type of elite	Regional Area	Year	No. of countries	No. of respondents	Main reference
Parliamentary & business elites	Europe	2006–2007 (two waves of InTune)	18	1411	Best et al. (2012); Cotta et al. (2007, 2009)
Parliamentary elites	Europe	2014–2015	11	718	Real-Dato (2015)
Parliamentary elites	Latin America	1995–2015 (five waves)	18	6747	Barragán (2015)
National and regional parliamentary elites	Western Europe	2009–2012	15	2096	Deschouwer and Depauw (2014)
Social and political elites	Turkey, Kenya, Korea	1973–1974	3	1454	Kim et al. (1984)
Ministerial elites	Western Europe	1989–1990	12	410	Blondel and Müller-Rommel (1993)
Political and social elites	Africa	2002	7	1309	Kotzé and Steyn (2003)
Local elites	USA, India Yugoslavia	1966	3	3929	Jacob and Jacob (1977)
Local elites	Europe, USA, Japan	1990s (three waves)	27	18,086	Szücs and Strömberg (2006)
Local elites	Europe	2003–2004	17	2711	Bäck et al. (2006)
Local elites	Europe	2007–2009	16	11,962	Egner et al. (2013)
Party middle-level elites	Western Europe	1970s	9	NA	Reif et al. (1980)
National and regional party leaders	Eastern Europe	1993–1994	4	481	Kitschelt et al. (1999)

about integration, which has been studied in five waves of the European Elite Panel Survey (Lerner and Gorden 1969) and in two waves of the InTune project (Cotta et al. 2007, 2009; Best et al. 2012; Jerez Mir et al. 2016). Comparative elite surveys also have allowed checking the impact of critical junctures on elite opinions in different countries. Hence, the 2008 economic crisis significantly altered the patterns among European elites, eroding their trust in European Union (EU) institutions and enlarging the gap in views between elites from countries more affected by the crisis and the rest (Vogel and Rodríguez-Teruel 2016). This change may also have reduced the traditional distance between elites and electorates regarding the European polity (Sanders et al. 2012).

Comparative analysis of parliamentary representation has recently incorporated a multilevel dimension. The PartiRep project has provided an ambitious example of the potential (and the methodological constraints) of administering comprehensive questionnaires to political elites across state levels in different institutional settings. The findings show that the level of political representation (whether at the national or the subnational level) strongly shapes how representation is perceived and performed (Deschouwer and Depauw 2014). Indeed, representation depends not as much on who the representatives are as on where they are.

Outside Europe, elite surveys analyzing political representation, recruitment and elite circulation have mainly been national case studies. A major exception comes from the PELA project, which has gathered several waves of surveys from Latin American members of national parliaments (García and Mateos 2001; Barragán 2015). The use of survey data has permitted new techniques of measuring the populist attitudes of political elites (Andreadis et al. 2016) and assessing the location of political actors in policy and ideological spaces as an alternative to the roll-call vote method or expert surveys (Saiegh 2009). Unlike these traditional measures of behavior, survey responses seem to be less contaminated by the effects of legislative or party institutions. Comparative elite surveys have provided unprecedented data on social mobility and legislative recruitment in Turkey, Kenya, and Korea (Kim et al. 1984) and on elite and public values in several African countries (Kotzé and Steyn 2003; Kotzé and Steenkamp 2009).

When research moves from parliamentary to executive and administrative elites, constraints on cross-country elite surveys increase substantially. This is one of the main reasons for the predominance of national datasets based in comparable (rather than comparative) questionnaires. In this area, the study by Aberbach et al. (1981), in which parliamentarians, senior bureaucrats and young administrators from six Western European nations were surveyed, still

is unchallenged. During the 1980s, Blondel and Müller-Rommel (1993) launched the first cross-country structured survey of cabinet ministers in 12 West European countries to explain executive decision-making. The study requested the ministers' views on the practices of governments as well as their degree of satisfaction with respect to these practices (Blondel and Müller-Rommel 1993, p. 16). It combined survey data with newspaper reports on cabinet activities and analysis of cabinet conflicts. The main findings indicated that the relevance of the single-party/coalition form of government and structural cabinet arrangements explain different executive outcomes.

Elite surveys (predominantly using semi-structured questionnaires) also have been a useful strategy to study the EU executive elites and their role in decision-making. In one of the most recent projects on EU elites, the respondents (selected informants from the EU Commission or the Council) were personally interviewed, asked to discuss their views and, where possible, quantify their judgments on the relative power of EU actors (Stokman and Thomson 2004; Thomson 2006; Thomson et al. 2012).

Surveying local elites has permitted significant advances in the knowledge of local leadership and decision-making. In contrast to national elites, the number of individuals provides for a larger sample size, but it also forces researchers to adopt more specific sampling criteria to avoid problems of selection bias. This has favored international research teams of scholars who coordinate cross-country questionnaires to achieve a picture of local elites. The Democracy and Local Governance (DLG) framework conducted three waves of national surveys in seven West and East European countries in the 1990s. It aimed to study the development of democracy from the viewpoint of the governing political and administrative elites in middle-sized cities, explaining change in the composition and contexts of the local elites, as well as their principles and practices (Szücs and Strömberg 2006). The study helped introduce a local elite perspective in the understanding of the development of democracy although a discontinuity of the countries included in the different waves eroded the explanatory potential of the design. More recently, the Euroloc research group developed a comprehensive research study on political representatives in local governments across Europe, based on elite surveys sent to political leaders and local councilors. The first step addressed the role and position of chief executive officers, and it followed with a questionnaire for the top leaders of local assemblies, aiming to explain their political careers, patterns of leadership and their position in the local structure of power (Bäck et al. 2006). Later, its scope was extended to the members of the local assemblies, focusing on their

recruitment, representative function and the extent of powers regarding other local political actors (Egner et al. 2013; Heinelt 2015).

Methodological Challenges

Similar to mass surveys, elite surveys require a strategic decision regarding questionnaire design, sampling, interviewing and data analysis. Elite respondents, however, are substantively different from the general population not only in terms of size and position but also in attitudes and behaviors. They are not merely a specific group of the common people. Indeed, elites are well-educated individuals and key political actors whose answers are difficult to compartmentalize and isolate from their environment. These particularities must be addressed when developing a survey scheme to ensure that the data obtained really represent the targeted political elite.

One major difference between mass and elite surveys deals with the sample design. If sampling is always a crucial step in any mass survey, it becomes a hard task regarding political elites. Indeed, elite surveys relax assumptions regarding sampling because it might be difficult to achieve a real probability sample. The first decision is to identify the target population, (i.e. about whom or what the research question will try to generalize). This target population might be a functional elite group (e.g. parliamentarians, ministers, party leaders, bureaucrats), a group from a specific level or across different political levels (e.g. state, regional, local, European), a party or ideological family (e.g. the conservative elite, the social democrat elite) and even the whole political elite of a country, a group of countries, a regional area or a worldwide elite. Moreover, researchers must take into account a "historical" moment, which means including a time dimension in the analysis: Are we inferring from the current judiciary elite or from the ministerial elite of the last 50 years? All of the elements featuring the available elite population will define the sampling frame and, in turn, the main parameters for creating the sample.

For example, the InTune project conducted coordinated surveys of European-related attitudes among elites and the general population. The target elite population consisted of two groups of national elites (national MPs and top business leaders) in 18 European countries. For members of national parliaments, a sample was designed proportionally according to seniority, gender, age, party, and tenure. For economic elites, a sample was based on the top 500 firms' lists of the respective countries according to a roll-down sample, sorted in descending order by annual revenue or number of employees (Lengyel and Jahr 2012). This detailed procedure is quite unusual: Many elite

surveys choose to focus on one country case to enlarge the scope of analysis and strengthen the representativeness of the sample regarding the national elite population (Harden 2013).

The problem of elite identification (see Hoffmann-Lange, Chap. 8) prevents researchers from obtaining a truly representative probability sample in which everyone from the targeted elite population has an equal chance of being included. In addition, the few elite surveys that tried to elaborate a probability sample often did not include sampling error to contrast the validity of the statistical conclusions. Samples in surveys using the Internet (for larger elite populations) also might hinder the chances for probability samples, as it is difficult to control for the features of the respondents. In this situation, the elite survey must follow modes of non-probability sampling such as purposive sampling (selecting cases judged as typical from an elite group), quota sampling (selecting cases with particular characteristics forming quotas of particular types of elite) or availability sampling (attempting to survey all of the potential respondents of an elite population without discrimination) (De Vaus 2002). A non-probability sample—the mainstream pattern in elite surveys—imposes strong limitations when it comes to generalizing from an elite survey; the conclusions would apply only to those people included in the study or, at most, to the targeted countries, after the weighting data to compensate for national varying response rates, as was done in some studies (Bäck et al. 2006). Non-probability samples, however, might be more appropriate for some analysis techniques such as a process tracing approach (Tansey 2007).

Another relevant stage in the making of a survey is the questionnaire. Most elite surveys are devoted primarily to asking politicians about their values, beliefs and attitudes, as well as about their actions and behaviors within the political process. An elite survey is a propitious opportunity to seek out objective information that could be difficult to find thorough secondary sources (i.e. previous political posts, political origins and linkages, socialization, professional experience or sociodemographic features). Preparing an elite questionnaire involves making decisions about what items to exclude because every research group tries to introduce as many topics as possible. In this situation, some constraints must be handled cautiously when designing questions. Political elites are likely to be even more exposed to social desirability than common people unless a confident environment eases their reluctance to answer controversial answers. Similarly, politicians are more predisposed to reinterpret their previous actions in the light of the present political situation, searching for political coherence between past and present or between their prior aspirations and what actually happened. They also are likely to experience problems of recall, mixing truth and fiction, even in when responding

to apparently easy questions about objective information concerning the past. Last but not least, the length of the questionnaire is a critical feature because more than 20 minutes may produce fatigue and lack of interest, decreasing dramatically the rate of response or affecting the reliability of answers to final questions. This crucial aspect for any survey may mean success or failure when surveying individuals with little time and few incentives to extend the duration of an interview. To overcome these obstacles, the interviewer must provide a clear questionnaire without any implicit assumptions about the content of questions. Pilot tests are of great help in avoiding these problems (Lavrakas 2008, p. 583).

When the survey goes into the field, there are several modes of administering questionnaires, depending on whether they are to be completed by the politician, answered on a phone or conducted in person by an interviewer (Table 9.2). In contrast to mass surveys, personal interview is still the main strategy for conducting elite surveys to ensure a higher rate of response, reduce missing data to minimal levels, and achieve better quality data due to a stronger control of the context and over who completes the questionnaire. Yet the traditional paper-and-pencil interview (PAPI) is evolving toward a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) in which the interviewer uses an electronic device that allows for automatic coding and data file creation, among other advantages. Face-to-face interviews are confronted with different kinds of obstacles. They increase considerations of social desirability, observable characteristics of interviewers might influence the interview, and any contingency (e.g. the rescheduling of an interview meeting) might increase the costs of the method.

Likewise, surveys of party leaders, cabinet ministers, or international representatives entail strong constraints for the researcher. Although in this case personal interviews are the norm, several contingencies might interfere in the scheduled plans (e.g. sudden change of dates, interruption of the meeting, or the presence of other people during the interview). Typical problems are that time might run out or it might be impossible to return to some ground previously covered. The researcher might try to transcribe the answers during the interview or after the meeting (Blondel and Müller-Rommel 1993). When the interview can be recorded, the researcher may have a better chance of getting answers to all of the questions, even if in some cases this might require some interpretation.

When a survey is employed for larger elite groups or geographically disseminated samples, a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) may be more helpful, alone or as a complement of personal interviews (Cotta et al. 2007, 2009). Finally, self-respondent questionnaires often have been used to survey middle-level and local elites (e.g., councilors, local representatives, party

Table 9.2 Main advantages and disadvantages of different survey modes

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Personal interviews (PAPI, CAPI)	Longer interviews	Higher costs
	More complex questions	Smaller sample size
	Open questions are more free to use	Geographical restrictions
	Easy to detect saliency	Time-consuming data collection
	Visual aids to introduce some questions	Interviewer bias and effects
		Social desirability
	Control of the context	Limits to anonymity
Telephone interview (CATI, traditional)	Lower costs	Simple questions
	Less time consuming	Less effective open questions
	Larger samples	Lower response rates
	Wider geographical representation	Limited response categories
	Lesser interviewer bias or effect	Sensitive questions may become problematic
		Limits to anonymity
Mail/web surveys (CAWI)	Lower costs	Shorter interviews
	Less time consuming	Simple questions
	Larger samples	Few open questions
	Wider geographical representation	Lower response rates
	No interviewer bias or effect	No control of the context of response
	Easy to handle sensitive topics	Response bias

Source: Adapted from Aldridge and Levine (2001, pp. 51–56)

activists). In these cases, a mail survey was an option in the past, but the introduction of Internet offers new opportunities for surveying larger samples of elites through computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI). The main constraint with CAWI is the loss of control over who responds and the lack of data about the biases underlying the sample because researchers do not know who refused to participate in the survey.

Qualitative Research Strategies

Eschewing statistical and survey techniques, which form the mainstay of traditional political science, some researchers working on elites rely instead on direct observation—often combined with long, face-to-face interviews. This qualitative approach is usually justified on two grounds: (1) the tools and methods it employs are scientifically valid in their own right and (2) it can sometimes act as a necessary corrective to abstract perspectives which tend to elide significant realities from the field. The aim is to engage in an

ethnographic immersion which provides a closer understanding of the perceptions and behavior of top political actors. For instance, it is one thing to ask MPs to tick on a close-ended questionnaire whether they attach more or less importance to such and such activity. It is another thing altogether to spend weeks beside them and try to uncover how they deal day-to-day with various types of tasks. The purpose of this section is not to compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of micro-level investigation as opposed to macro-analysis, but to consider the merits and problems relating to the former in the context of elite studies. We shall start by saying a few words about the place occupied by observational techniques in interview-based research and then develop some of the methodological challenges they raise.

From In-Depth Interviews to Direct Observation

The literature on qualitative inquiry applied to elites devotes more attention to interviews than to observation. In this respect, many books, articles and dictionary entries provide advice which is relevant to the practice of interviewing in general (such as how to select interviewees; the advantages and disadvantages of structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews recording or not; and questions regarding the reliability and validity of information, coding, ethical considerations). However, and more importantly in light of what concerns us here, questions also touch on issues that are specific to the interviewing of elites—the conduct of which is sometimes deemed to be nothing less than "an art" (Cohen 1999). The ground covered here is wide. It encompasses the imperative need to familiarize oneself with interviewees' backgrounds, understanding their culture and norms of behavior, as well as the capacity to decipher their rhetorical devices and avoid unproductive monologues. When writing about qualitative research, researchers often willingly convey all sorts of useful tips based on their own experience, recommending for example that retirees (who have more time) or relatively minor figures (e.g. advisors) should not be neglected. Contradictory suggestions abound, however, on questions such as whether elite respondents should be informed about the real objectives of the research or not (Hertz and Imber 1995; Aberbach et al. 2002; Dexter 2006; Mikecz 2012). Indeed, though most specialists would agree that interviews constitute a particularly valuable source of information, mainly due to the fact that (unlike archives, speeches or autobiographies) they allow for exchanges, it remains difficult to generalize much further beyond this. As with many other qualitative techniques, interviewing elites seems to require first and foremost a certain amount of flexibility and a strong capacity to adapt.

Despite being often portrayed merely as an additional method, observation has given rise to a body of research that is liable to overcome the limitations of interviews. Crucially, ethnographic analysis of elites makes us less dependent onformal presentations of self. The point is that, when observed on a regular basis, the elites are less likely to be able to project themselves in a constantly favorable light—whereas they can probably maintain this image in the eyes of a questioner who is only spending one hour with them (Pina-Cabral and de Lima 2000). Direct observation is a well-established tool in anthropology. It has not been widely employed by political scientists, however, although there are exceptions—notably in the study of policy, leadership and political representation (e.g., Fenno 2003).[1] In an interesting development, a number of professional anthropologists have been tempted into leaving their more exotic fields of research and applying their skills instead on less traditional objects, such as Western institutions, using "participant observation" techniques. Important attempts in this vein have been made to analyze the American Congress, the European Parliament, the French National Assembly, the House of Lords and the House of Commons in London (e.g. Weatherford 1985 [1981]; Abélès 1992, 2000; Crewe 2005, 2015).[2] It is also worth mentioning that a subfield dealing with the "Anthropology of elites" has emerged, whose works are largely based on observational approaches, though it does not necessarily restrict itself to political elites (Marcus 1983; Shore and Nugent 2002; Abbink and Salverda 2013).

Whether we are considering anthropological inquiries into the behavior and perceptions of elites or the type of ethnographic description made by political scientists operating at the fringes of their discipline, two remarks are in order. First, a major goal of observation-based research is to recover meaning, to understand what makes sense to the political elites under study and endeavor to see their environment from their point of view. Second, and consequently, research utilizing observation techniques tends to be less theory-driven than that proceeding from many other heuristic traditions. The prime concern for these investigators, so to speak, consists in keeping their eyes open and reasoning in an inductive way. This approach, however, is not incompatible with serious reflections about methodological issues.

Methodological Challenges

Direct observation raises the question of accessibility to an even greater degree than interviews do. Indeed, for researchers as for anyone else, elites are notoriously difficult to approach. Nonetheless, it can reasonably be said that

political elites are slightly less reluctant in this respect than economic elites. This is due to the image of openness they generally try to convey, at least within democratic systems. That said, there can be huge differences from one context to another. In some countries, access to top officials has to be carefully negotiated, which can prove to be a very long process. Furthermore, the length of this process is not necessarily a function of the level of the contact one is seeking to reach. For example, in Scandinavia an assistant may be entitled to give you the mobile phone number of a minister, while in France even small-town officials and mayors might be extremely reluctant to hand over such a number. Culture matters as far as questions of eminence versus nearness and transparency versus secrecy are concerned.

Where observation actually takes place constitutes a key dimension. Interviews are usually conducted in offices, at best in semi-public, neutral locations such as restaurants or coffee shops. Observation, however, aims to be more ubiquitous in scope and it relies on repeated opportunities for appraisal. Ideally, one would need to have access to the subject not just in official settings during significant events like political campaigns or plenary sessions but also backstage. It is essential to build trust and to have informal conversations in order to better understand how political elites think and act beyond their public presentations. At one end of the spectrum lies the time-pressed politician who is eager to get rid of you and this requires all sorts of tricks to prolong the discussion.[3] At the other end, there are those who allow you to follow them everywhere and observe them under all sorts of circumstances. Needless to say, establishing a rapport with elites is one thing and obtaining relevant information from them is quite another. However, the location often proves to be crucial.[4]

In the literature, the potential status imbalance between investigators (especially junior ones) and elites is a much debated point. Whereas in many studies dealing with non-elite groups, the researcher can easily assume a somewhat established position as an "expert," the same does not necessarily hold when confronted with top-level people who enjoy great power and resources. Especially for the critical vein within the social sciences, which is concerned with issues of "domination" and so-called symbolic violence, this can be viewed as a problem. Many specialists however would question how much of an issue these status imbalances really entail for the observer, considering instead that they can be overcome with sufficient training and preparation.

Paradoxically, the literature also considers the problem in reverse, highlighting instead the "pitfalls of proximity." Enduring relationships between observer and observed may result in excessive empathy and a loss of academic detachment on the part of the former (Rhodes et al. 2007). Here, we

encounter an inherent tension between the closeness demanded by the observational method itself and the broader imperative not to become excessively involved or personal with the political actors studied. A common related dilemma consists of deciding whether it is more appropriate to use researchers who share characteristics with the subject of observation (in terms of social background, nationality, etc.) or outsiders who do not. Both have advantages and disadvantages. Having been brought up with or socialized into the same (sub-) culture as the group under study may help grasp quite a few significant aspects that will likely elude outsiders. On the other hand, the latter might be better able to detect dimensions that are taken for granted and thus overlooked by researchers for whom they are unfortunately too familiar.

Wealth of information is a leading hallmark of qualitative research and can give rise to "thick" descriptions and interpretations (Geertz 1973; for its application to political science, see Daloz 2011). This contextual "richness" which provides greater texture and nuance is highly desirable when the aim is to produce monographic studies. However, it is somewhat more problematic where theoretical ambitions or even comparisons are involved. We are here at the core of a hot methodological debate. More often than not, observation-based analysis does complicate matters. In the positivistic tradition of quantitative research, the norm is to handle only "objective" data or at least evidence that is not excessively dependent on what might be construed as the researcher's own subjective reading. Moreover, all sorts of highly sophisticated statistical instruments are used to guarantee the "truly scientific" nature of analysis and results. Conversely on the qualitative side, doubts exist regarding the reliability and outcome of this type of quantitative procedure which can potentially be influenced by the nature of the question asked.

Conclusions

This chapter has offered an overview of the two research strategies, survey and observation, that provide data directly from elite members. Because there is little reason to believe that one methodological perspective is inherently superior to the other, it might be argued that elite studies have everything to gain from a mixed-method approach, which combines surveys with deeper micro-strategies. As with other research methods, the advent of the Internet is going to expand the opportunities for elite studies by enlarging access to information and reducing costs and technical difficulties when processing it. Access to new data, however, may also inflate empirical expectations to the detriment of theoretical foundations if theory and techniques do not evolve

in parallel. The cost might be an increase of descriptions with weaker explanations of the forces underlying the power of elites. However, a theoretically grounded use of the new techniques, with a combination of different methods and rigorous analysis of big data, might pave the way to a new golden age for elite research.

Notes

1. See his long methodological appendix on "participant observation."
2. These authors do not hesitate to use concepts such as "tribes" or rituals, as if they were studying alien communities.
3. Such as letting your interlocutors know that you have previously met with some of their main opponents, alluding to the fact that the latter have told you a lot about them and that you would like to hear what they themselves have to say. At times, especially when dealing with the polished cant of media-trained politicians, the close observation of an office might prove to be a better source of insight and a good fallback strategy.
4. During fieldwork in sub-Saharan Africa, Daloz was able to experience the progression from being granted an interview in an office, being invited to a prestigious club, to a party held at a politician's home, to his living-room downstairs and finally to his living-room upstairs. Yet, once again cultural relativism has a bearing. For instance, political elites may be more willing to talk when at home. However, depending on cultural context, it may appear either entirely appropriate or most unsuitable for the researcher to pay close attention to what surrounds them in such an environment.

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10

Temporal Methods in Political Elite Studies

Sebastian Jäckle and Matthew Kerby

Students of political elite studies have a natural interest in developments over time: political actors are elected/appointed, they hold office for different periods of time, and then they leave that office for a variety of different reasons. Addressing questions related to this trajectory requires methods that include a temporal perspective. In this chapter, we consider an evolutionary shift in the temporal methods applied to political elites and their career paths. This shift began in the mid-1980s and consolidated in the 1990s and early 2000s. The subfield of political elite studies continues to move forward using sophisticated methods borrowed from the natural sciences and cognate social sciences; methods, which until recently were not widely employed due to the limited availability of the computing power required to conduct these types of analyses.

Whereas the canon of contributions in elite studies is founded in the realm of theory (see Section I) and then extended to individual or comparative case studies, the prospect of large N quantitative analysis and the exponentially expanding resources of career-based data added a new dimension to the study of political elites.

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At the center of this transformation, we find the adoption of statistical tools to study political elites which complement existing theoretical, qualitative, and descriptive analyses.

Earlier Methodological Contributions

The trigger point for this sea change can be traced back to two publication milestones: one pertains directly to research on elite careers; the other makes its contribution indirectly. The first is marked by the publication of Jean Blondel's *Government and Ministers in the Contemporary World* (1985) in which he challenges his peers and future scholars with a call to arms: "the study of ministers and of ministerial careers is in its infancy." He described the analysis of political leadership as "vague" and as "providing few guidelines for research; the analysis of the characteristics of ministerial careers is even less advanced," and "works on the ministers themselves ⋯ are very rare: who they are, how they come to office, what their expectations are when they reach the top have scarcely begun to be examined" (Blondel 1985, p. 8).

Blondel set the bar high and responded to his own fighting words with what is probably still the most comprehensive, comparative and empirical account of ministerial careers. His descriptive and data-rich study reports on the backgrounds and cabinet careers of over 20,000 cabinet ministers from 154 countries across different political systems for the period 1945–85. He introduced future generations of scholars to the distinction between amateur and specialist ministers and provided an initial demonstration that the individual backgrounds of ministers could be used to explain the variation in patterns of ministerial duration and movement within and ultimately out of cabinet. Blondel also provided the first proto-measure of ministerial durability (see Chap. 36).

Blondel (with Müller-Rommel (1993, 2001) and with Thiébault (1991)) subsequently published additional contributions on the careers of ministerial elites that delved deeper into the East and West European cases with a more detailed focus on the background of ministers and how these backgrounds were reflected across states and political systems in the European context, as well as the relationship that these backgrounds had with ministerial duration. However, these endeavors remained valuable yet primarily descriptive and theoretical exercises based on a rich and extensive data set.

In the tradition of Blondel, elite studies have primarily applied descriptive statistics to present trends over time. For example, Theakston and Fry (1989)

show that the percentage of British Permanent Secretaries who graduated from Cambridge increased from 16 percent to 30 percent between 1900–19 and 1965–86, while the numbers for Oxford alumni remained largely constant. Richard Rose (1971, p. 408) showed that the average duration of a minister in the British cabinet decreased about 10 months between 1900–14 and 1955–70. Similar approaches can be found in other studies; they all present an average picture of elite developments during certain periods of time with respect to different characteristics such as elites' socio-demographic background, female representation and party affiliation in parliaments or the number of ministerial reshuffles in cabinets, to name but a few (Best and Cotta 2000; Blondel 1980). In order to make longitudinal comparisons regarding parliamentary or ministerial elites, a focus on natural time intervals such as legislative or cabinet terms often makes sense. For cross-country comparisons, analyzing fixed intervals is the norm as demonstrated in Blondel and Thiébault (1991) where the authors compared the share of ministers with prior regional political experience (Thiébault 1991a, b, p. 37) or the mobility of ministers through cabinet posts in 14 western states between 1945 and 1984 (Bakema 1991, p. 90).

These descriptive approaches help to reveal overall patterns, yet their limitations are evident: aggregating information by means of summary statistics always entails a loss of information, a reduced complexity, and the even more serious problem of ecological fallacy, that is potentially misleading inferences from the aggregate to the individual level. Given that most theories of political elites focus on individual politicians and their careers, aggregate analyses should therefore only be the first step. For example, a sound test of ministerial selection theories will require data on all of the individual politicians eligible for ministerial appointment.

Continuing with the preceding example, one major methodological approach with which to examine ministerial selection is to use logistic regression on the pool of potential candidates to estimate the effects of relevant explanatory variables on the probability of ministerial appointment (Bäck et al. 2016; O'Malley 2006). Including a temporal aspect into these models is possible either by including count-variables that measure time served in parliament or by means of parliamentary term fixed effects (Kam et al. 2010; Klein and Umit 2016). Yet, these models constitute a poor choice in cases where temporal issues of transition between certain career stages are of interest.

Event History Analysis

The second significant milestone that preceded the contemporary, empirical study of elite careers deals precisely with the difficulty that classic (logistic) regression approaches face when modeling an event of interest but not the time it takes to reach that event. King et al.'s article "A Unified Model of Cabinet Dissolution in Parliamentary Democracies" (1990) set the stage for methodologically advanced political elite studies. Their event history model of government duration effectively reconciled two competing camps in the government survival debate: one side argued that government survival and termination was a function of the attributes the government possessed when it formed (Warwick 1979; Strom 1985), the other side believed that it was tempered by random exogenous shocks (crises, scandals, etc.) that it endured or failed to endure over the course of its existence. The approach presented by King et al. accommodated and combined both sides' positions in a single-event history model that provided the basis for numerous further works on government survival (Diermeier and Stevenson 1999; Jäckle 2011; Saalfeld 2008; Warwick 1994).

King et al.'s approach was primarily concerned with two phenomena: how long it takes for something to happen (e.g. government termination), and the likelihood of that something happening given that it has not happened yet: in effect, duration and durability.[1] Further, their model allowed for the inclusion of static and time-varying covariates hypothesized to positively or negatively affect the likelihood of experiencing an event while simultaneously accounting for the passage of time.

Originally developed by biostatisticians and epidemiologists to model the effects of drug treatments on patient recovery and the time until that recovery, event history analysis (EHA) has been adopted by a wide variety of disciplines to model time to event: engineers model duration until machine failure, economists and sociologists have used event history models to ascertain the causes of change in employment status or the duration of marriage until divorce.

The key variable of interest in EHA is the hazard function $h(t)$, which refers to the "instantaneous probability that an event occurs given that the event has not occurred yet" (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1997, p. 1427). It is obtained by combining the survival function $S(t)$, which provides the probability that an observation or individual will "survive" beyond a specified amount of time, and the probability density function of the time to an "event" $f(t)$.

The relationship between $S(t)$ and $f(t)$ and its culmination in the hazard function $h(t)$ can be seen in the formula:

$$h(t) = \lim_{\Delta t \to 0} \frac{\Pr(t + \Delta t > T > t | T > t)}{\Delta t} = \frac{f(t)}{S(t)}$$

The best way to imagine the hazard function is to think of it as the speedometer in a car that is traveling to a destination. The speedometer records how fast the car is traveling to a destination conditional on the car having traveled a particular distance. If we transplant the analogy to a political activity, the hazard function could record the rate that an individual is approaching the end of their political career given that they have reached some kind of career benchmark.

The rationale for the use of EHA over other statistical techniques to model time to event phenomena is well documented (Blossfeld et al. 2001; Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). The advantages typically fall into two camps: censoring and the distribution of the residuals. Censoring takes place when an individual's full duration is severed, either at the beginning, at the end, or both the beginning and the end. Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (2004, p. 16) caution, "⋯ if censored and uncensored cases are treated equivalently, then parameter estimates from a model treating the duration time as a function of covariates may be misleading (that is, the relationship between the covariates and the duration times may be under- or over-stated)." EHA can handle both left- and right-censored models whereas OLS regression is unable to distinguish between the uncensored and censored observations. For example, in ministerial durability studies a spell of a minister who is still in office at the end of the observation period—and thus his full duration cannot be observed as we do not know when she will leave office—would be treated as right-censored in an event history environment. In OLS regression, this case would have to be either dropped from the dataset or used the same way as fully observed durations—both options would induce serious bias. Censoring in event history therefore enables researchers to exploit partially observable data. Furthermore, the censoring approach can also be applied to cases of competing risks, that is the unit of analysis can experience different types of events (see Diermeier and Stevenson 1999).

Regarding the distribution of the residuals, Cleves et al. (2002, p. 2) suggest that the most significant advantage EHA has over OLS when studying duration-related topics lies with the assumed distribution of the residuals. Whereas linear regression expects the residuals to be normally distributed, this assumption is typically unreasonable for time to event phenomena.

Further, the time until the occurrence of an event by definition must be positive, whereas theoretically, the normal distribution can unrealistically accommodate durations that are less than zero.

As computing power increased so too have extensions of EHA. Whereas early applications focused on time to a single event with the added question of whether to specify the shape of the hazard or employ a semi-parametric Cox proportional hazards model,[2] increased interest and application has seen the approach extended to modeling multiple and repeated events (Box-Steffensmeier and Zorn 2002; Diermeier and Stevenson 1999) while also accounting for time-varying covariates and unobserved heterogeneity (Box-Steffensmeier et al. 2007). In part, these extensions reflect a shift in the structure of the data used to conduct EHA, which in the early years of adoption, were typically characterized by single spell observations that recorded the time to event (or non-event) and a limited number of variables hypothesized to affect the hazard rate. Contemporary EHA can accommodate fine-grain panel data that records variation across an unlimited number of time-varying and static variables over increasingly smaller temporal units. With the continuing and rapid development of cloud-based data analytics, the capacity and power limitations imposed on large-scale elite career analysis using EHA are quickly disappearing.

To turn the story back to political elites, once this method had been "revealed," applied and circulated by the government survival enthusiasts, it was only a (short) matter of time before others realized that the black box of government could be opened and the same technique applied to the individual, and multifaceted actors who populate the government apparatus: presidents, prime ministers, ministers, party leaders, bureaucrats, judges and others in the family of political elites. The wording of the research questions only changed slightly. Rather than ask what explains the variation in the durability and duration of governments/cabinets, it was reworded as "what explains the durability and duration of the individuals who occupy the offices and institutions of government?" From the perspective of cabinet ministers, this was not simply a minor add-on to the government survival literature; indeed, the early forays into modeling ministerial survival involved demonstrating that government and ministerial survival were distinct phenomena despite their close thematic proximity (Huber and Martinez-Gallardo 2008).

The first significant application of EHA to the study of political elites was provided by Bienen and Van de Walle (1991, 1989) who modeled the career paths and time to political exit of 2256 political leaders using both parametric and Cox proportional hazards models while controlling for and exploring a variety of biographical traits as well as country- and regional-specific

institutional characteristics. Their conclusions emphasized the effect of time in power as a predictor of future time in power. Or to put it more succinctly, once leaders are in power for a long time, they become more entrenched and harder to remove from power (Bienen and Van de Walle 1991, pp. 98–99).

Bienen and van de Walle set the foundation for a host of future work on leadership survival which has extended and focused their initial contribution to include studies on the survival of authoritarian leaders (Bader 2015; Escribà-Folch and Wright 2010; Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Kono and Montinola 2009; Lehoucq and Pérez-Liñán 2013), democratic leaders in parliamentary and presidential democracies (Burke 2012; Clark et al. 2012; Cross and Blais 2012; Horiuchi et al. 2015) as well as large(er) N comparative analyses of leadership survival across regime types (Burke 2012; De Mesquita 2005; Kennedy 2009; Pyenson et al. 1998; Williams 2011).

By far, the component of political elites that has subjected itself most readily to the adoption of the event history approach is Blondel's original unit of analysis: cabinet ministers. Fischer et al. (2012) highlight this affinity in their review of the extant literature on ministerial durability and duration. The richness of research that employs the EHA approach published both before and after Fischer et al.'s review highlights the effects of macro variables such as political systems, government types, party systems and prime ministerial style, the nature and size of the selectorate, political environmental stimuli and shocks as well as a micro-level host of static and time-varying individual ministerial characteristics. Indeed, the menu of variables hypothesized to have an effect on the hazard of ministerial survival has now reached a point that a routine listing of "common" traits is unwieldy.

Despite the growth in the number of independent variables, the majority of these ministerial analyses occur within the confines of single country case studies at both the national and subnational levels of politics (Dowding and Dumont 2014, 2009). But, as ministerial career data becomes more accessible and freely distributed, the number of country cases increases as well, to the point that we have now reached a crucible in the study of ministerial elites whereby cross-national comparative studies based on common datasets are becoming more prevalent (Bäck et al. 2012; Bright et al. 2015; Claveria and Verge 2015; Dowding and Dumont 2014; Hansen et al. 2013).

Of course, what actually constitutes the boundaries of duration is not fixed. Is ministerial duration bounded by the date that an individual is first appointed to cabinet and the day that they leave? Or is the duration clock reset when government turnover occurs, even if the roster of governing parties and ministers effectively remains the same? Ultimately, the answer to the question depends on the nature of the research question and its relationship

to time until a terminal event. This leads to an additional realization that time to an event, characterized by the termination of a ministerial career, may not be the only game in town. More recently, EHA has been used to study not the ends of careers but rather their beginnings by modeling the time to appointment in cabinet (Fleischer and Seyfried 2013; Kerby 2011; Smith and Martin 2017) as well as relating ministerial survival to post-ministerial careers.

While leaders and ministers make up the dominant component of elites analyzed using EHA, they are not the only one. Research into the careers of judicial elites (Curry and Hurwitz 2016; Kerby and Banfield 2014; Maitra and Smyth 2005; Zorn and Van Winkle 2000) has examined the determinants of court vacancy. Scholars have also begun to examine the career durations of non-elected bureaucratic elites (Fleischer, Forthcoming; Zhou 2001). However, the focus of temporal studies of elite careers typically falls on those elites for whom accessible data exists, for example party leaders and executive elites. As more data is made available through increased academic sharing and through open-government data programs, the range of elites available to study will expand as well.

The scope and the rate of adoption of EHA to examine the careers of political elites are impressive. Nevertheless, the limitations of the approach, particularly with respect to the ability to consider single career spells suggest that additional tools are needed if one wishes to consider elites' careers in their entirety. In order to overcome this hurdle, researchers have turned to a complementary technique, SA, to overcome the challenges the EHA approach fails to address.

Sequence Analysis

This chapter's preceding paragraphs demonstrated the importance of including a temporal dimension when studying the careers of political elites. Another method particularly suited in that regard is sequence analysis (SA). Introduced to genomics in the late 1960s to study DNA-strings, SA entered social sciences through sociology where it is used primarily to analyze life courses with regard to work or family trajectories (e.g. Fasang 2012). These sociological biography studies can in many ways serve as a blueprint for political elite studies which focus on the careers of politicians, although peculiarities of the political arena require some adaptation to be made. The major difference between EHA and SA is a shift of focus from explaining single or multiple transitions within trajectories by trying to model the underlying process that generates the sequence of states (EHA) to a more holistic description of the complete

trajectory (SA). The problem with the former is that single transitions which mark specific developments or setbacks in the course of a political career can and should not be uncoupled from earlier events. Or, as Becker (1963, p. 23) put it with respect to the development of deviant behavior: "in fact, all causes do not operate at the same time, and we need a model which takes into account the fact that patterns of behavior develop in orderly sequence." The final behavior of actors within social systems can only be understood when the "chronological succession of these phases" is known (Gauthier et al. 2014, p. 3). As far as the careers of political elites are concerned, methods that focus solely on certain events may miss a relevant part of the story.

Data Requirements for and the General Idea of SA

Based on the assumption that social processes can be subdivided into a finite number of stages that succeed each other, SA facilitates the analysis of biographical data with respect to its different partitions while keeping the holistic view of the complete sequence: SA simultaneously takes into account the stages, their order, and their durations. This feature makes the method much more appropriate to examine complete biographies than techniques focusing on single states (e.g. last position before assuming office) or approaches that compile all career stages without taking into account their order or duration. SA thus helps to identify certain distinct pathways within life courses or political careers.

Every SA requires two types of information: (1) information on the types of states the individuals can adopt and (2) information on the duration of the states. A state must be clearly delimitable from other states and it must last for a certain measureable duration. The universe of all states is called an alphabet. The change from one state to another at a certain point in time can be termed an event. Yet, while EHA models the hazard of events, SA studies the chronology of succeeding states and their particular durations. Or put differently, "sequence analysis can play a fundamental role in bringing the much neglected trajectory concept, the actual 'course,' back into the life course" (Aisenbrey and Fasang 2010, p. 450). Within EHA, the order of the events (and their corresponding states) is in many cases predetermined.[3] In contrast, within SA, there are often numerous possibilities as to how the sequence of states can be arranged empirically. Another argument in favor of SA is that it does not require any distributional assumptions.

There are different ways to represent sequences (for an overview, see Gabadinho et al. 2011, p. 9). The most common form is the most natural:

the state-sequence format (STS) which lists each successive status in consecutive columns. The time axis can either be measured using calendar time (sequences start at a certain date) or clock-time (sequences start at a certain point within the life course, e.g. graduation from university).

Five Steps of Sequence Analysis

A typical sequence analysis encompasses five steps which will be described hereafter using the example of the careers of German Federal Constitutional Court judges (Jäckle 2016).

First, we present aggregate measures of the complete population to get an impression of the data using transversal frequency plots or descriptive statistics such as the mean time a person remains in a state (Fig. 10.1). Each column in the transversal plot indicates the frequencies of the states in a given year. For example, about 20 percent to 25 percent of the FCC judges pursued university careers in the 20 years before being elected to the FCC. The white area represents nonexistent values.[4] Measures such as the Shannon entropy for the state distribution (Gabadinho et al. 2011, p. 20), Elzinga's measure of turbulence (Elzinga and Liefbroer 2007) or the complexity index by Gabadinho et al. (2010) help to give an overview of the trajectories' complexity.
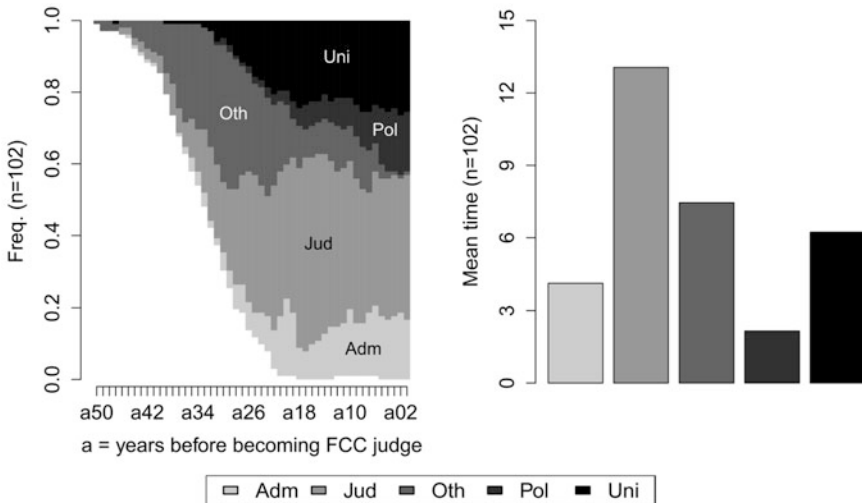
Fig. 10.1 Complete sequences of FCC judges—transversal frequency plot and mean time in each state

Second, the systematic analysis of the sequences begins by calculating the proximities (or distances) between them. The most common procedure is the so-called Optimal Matching (OM) analysis. The basic idea is to transform a sequence A into another sequence B using different types of transformation operations (substitutions, insertions and deletions). For each of these operations a certain cost is set (either unitary—the same for all transformations, theory based or derived from the empirical transition data). Setting the costs is the crucial aspect of the OM procedure. The OM algorithm then finds the specific transformation procedure that has the lowest costs. The number of operations necessary for this lowest cost transformation is defined as the distance between sequences A and B (Lesnard 2014, p. 40; Robette and Bry 2012). A variant of the OM procedure, well suited for biographic research as it measures the resemblance of career trajectories in a way that comes close to social scientists' understanding of the term "similarity of trajectories", is the longest common subsequence (LCS) proposed by Elzinga (2007, pp. 14–16), also known as the Levenshtein II distance.

Third, SA identifies groups with similar career patterns. While methods such as latent class analysis or multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) can be applied at this stage, the standard approach involves some sort of cluster analysis (Barban and Billari 2012). Different clustering algorithms have been proposed: they range from the Ward-method to more recently developed fuzzy clustering techniques (Zwinkels and Mills 2015).

Fourth, after clustering, several strategies can be employed to identify the optimal number of clusters in terms of high homogeneity among the sequences within a cluster as well as high heterogeneity between the clusters: dendrograms, the inverse scree test, silhouette analysis (Rousseeuw 1987) or an MDS-plot (Piccarreta and Lior 2010). Although, rather than follow these tests blindly, in many cases it is a good idea to check whether the clustering solution with the best statistical fit also produces a reasonable and interpretable result. Most researchers will therefore accept a less optimal clustering solution if this enables them to interpret the clusters in a more meaningful way.

Fifth, the clusters can be presented using transversal frequency and regular sequence plots: while the latter shows which career-steps follow upon each other, transversal frequencies help to get an idea of the general patterns within a cluster. Furthermore, the estimated clusters can be used as independent or dependent variables in different regression models. For example, Zwinkels and Mills predict the obtainment of ministerial offices based on eight clusters derived from an SA of pre-parliamentary career data (Zwinkels and Mills 2015).

Applications of Sequence Analysis

While SA has a proven track record in sociology, it has only recently made its way into research on political elite. Apart from the Zwinkels and Mills paper on Dutch parliamentarians' career trajectories to cabinet, the technique has been applied to examine the careers of Spanish members of the European Parliament (Real-Dato and Alarcón-González 2012), German state secretaries (Tepe and Marcinkiewicz 2013), the post-cabinet careers of German Länder ministers (Jäckle 2014), the paths of district and list-MPs in the German Bundestag (Manow 2012), and judicial elites (Jäckle 2016; Kerby and Banfield 2013). All these studies show the potential of SA to identify proto-typical types of careers out of more or less publicly available biographical data. The estimated clusters may also speak to theory. For example, regarding the question of whether classic springboard careers or clearly separated career paths are the norm (Stolz 2003, p. 241), Person (2014, p. 25) clearly finds the latter for German state secretaries. Furthermore, it can be used to test whether sequences differ with respect to certain covariates. For example, Jäckle (2016) showed that there are virtually no differences within the careers of FCC judges with respect to the nominating party.

Problems for Sequence Analysis in Political Elite Studies

In order to reap the benefits of SA, the observation period should be as long as possible and the alphabet should consist of not more than about ten different states. Another problem associated with the definition of the alphabet is the question of how to deal with phases where politicians have two or more relevant jobs or political positions. Neither the standard approach—code only one of the positions (see Brzinsky-Fay and Kohler 2010, p. 361)—nor the alternative—combine parallel positions into a new state (Pollock 2007)—is fully adequate when applied to the study of elite careers. While the latter approach works well in many life-course analyses that focus on simple demographic variables (e.g. number of children), it reaches its limits in the case of a large alphabet. Yet, it could be useful when accounting for parallel career trajectories within a political party, a cabinet and private business.

Determining the costs for the OM analysis is essential for any SA. The available procedures (e.g. Hamming, Levenshtein II) nevertheless have all been developed with a different notion of "similarity" in mind (typically applied to

the field of genomics), one that often does not truly fit an elite researcher's understanding of similarity. In particular, the question how to integrate the temporal component of social sequences—something that is not rooted in the classic biological sequence analysis method—is still far from being solved (Halpin 2010; Lesnard 2014). And finally, SA is primarily an inductive and exploratory approach—but this does not have to be a disadvantage: "Sequence analysis is better seen as complementing more conventional strategies than competing with them. In particular, it allows researchers to comprehend the overall structure of complicated longitudinal data, and it gives a holistic perspective that can help put the spell-focused hazard rate model, or the period-by-period transition-focused model, into context" (Halpin 2010, p. 367).

We began our review of temporal methods in elite studies with the diagnosis that the concurrent evolution of computer power, data availability, and new statistical methods developed in other disciplines paved the way for novel developments and applications in analyzing elite career paths. Now it is incumbent on the community of political elite scholars to further assess, apply and develop them with respect to the peculiarities of our research object—political elites.

Notes

1. For further elaboration, see Laver (2003).
2. The main advantage of the semi-parametric Cox model over parametric models is that the latter need to know a priori the functional form of the baseline hazard, which is notoriously difficult to theorize. The Cox model instead only assumes that there is a certain time dependency and thus a baseline hazard. By applying the partial likelihood estimation procedure developed by Cox (1975), this assumption is already sufficient to estimate the covariates' effects. For more details, see Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (2004, pp. 75–91) and Therneau and Grambsch (2000).
3. For example, a woman can only give birth a second time after haven given birth a first time.
4. Whenever a dataset contains sequences of different length, such as in this case where only for a small number of FCC judges information on the complete 50 years prior to their election to the Court is available, these de facto not existing values should be included as an extra category in the plots. Otherwise, the interpretation of the transversal frequencies becomes distorted.

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11

Analyses of Elite Networks

Franziska Barbara Keller

Social network analysis (SNA) has been identified as a promising method to further research on political elites (Hoffmann-Lange 2007). This chapter presents some of the most important research on networks among political elites (as opposed to the economic elites covered in Chap. 34) conducted in the last 50 years. It highlights how SNA provides methods, tools, and concepts that are particularly useful to address four problems with which the study of political elites has struggled: elite interactions, identifying elite groups and their social structure, measuring elites' (in particular, latent) power, and defining who should be counted among the elite. These four issues provide the structure of this chapter. In practice, there is of course considerable overlap, and many of the studies discussed in one section could easily have fitted elsewhere. Due to the limited space available, the SNA methods and concepts will be explained only quickly and mostly in lay terms—the interested reader can find more detailed explanations and definitions in the studies referenced.

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What Is Social Network Analysis?

Analysts of political elites frequently use the term "network." This is particularly common when examining elites of non-democratic countries or exploring opaque informal politics occurring in democracies. However, they tend to use this term as a metaphor (Ward et al. 2011), and so it ends up denoting a group of individuals who are "connected" in some, usually not clearly specified, way.

When social network analysts talk about networks, they mean data of a specific format: a dataset describing the characteristics of the actors and another dataset describing the relationship of the actors. The units in the first dataset (*nodelist*) are the actors or *nodes*, and may be individuals, social groups, organizations, or countries. In more unusual analyses, they may even be texts or concepts. The second dataset describes the relationships, ties (or *edges*) between the *nodes*. It usually takes one of two formats: (1) an (*adjacency*) *matrix* in which each row and each column corresponds to one unit of the other dataset in the rows and columns, or (2) an *edgelist*—a dataset with at least two columns in which the names or identifiers of the two connected actors are listed. In matrix form, the cells indicate if the actors in the row and the column share a connection. If different types of connections are possible, then there may be matrices for each kind of connection—for example, a friendship or a business relations matrix. In the edgelist, additional rows indicate the nature of the relationship between the two actors.

As a consequence of vague definition, much of the non-SNA research on networks and connections among the political elite is limited to the effect of "being connected." The latter is usually defined as belonging to the same group as a powerful figure, for example being a member of his ethnicity or family, or having direct friendship or coworker ties to such leaders. Fisman (2001), for example, has estimated how much profit firms tied to the family of Indonesia's president Suharto reap from their connections, while Shih et al. (2012) have shown that Chinese elites connected to important patrons attain a higher rank in the Chinese Communist Party.

SNA allows the testing of much more nuanced hypotheses, and can thus better capture the complexity of elite relationships. Instead of just measuring direct connections to important leaders, it usually examines all possible dyads among a set of actors. We can thus distinguish between those with direct and indirect ("friends of friends") access to powerful figures, examine how the presence of a patron-client relationship between A and B influences the relationship between B and C, or determine who is located at the center of the whole elite network. The following four sections illustrate how SNA's

versatility can help address some of the problems encountered when studying political elites.

Elite Relationships and Interactions

The most obvious application of a relational approach such as SNA is the analysis of elite interactions and relationships. Researchers have conducted such an analysis using dyadic data—meaning a dataset in which the unit of observation is every possible pair of elites, usually with a column indicating whether there is a specific relationship or interaction occurring between the two. Modeling how elites form relationships using a regular logistic regression is problematic, because these dyads are not independent observations: dyads A-B and A-C both feature actor A. If actor A is particularly sociable, then this will influence the chance of a tie existing in A-B and in A-C, violating the independence assumption. While some of these problems can be addressed by correcting the standard errors or including actor-fixed effects, the approach still has many other shortcomings (Cranmer and Desmarais 2011). For instance, it cannot examine the effect of indirect ties: what if not just friends of the president profit from their ties, but also friends of his friends? Dyadic data also cannot study the more complex forms of interactions mentioned above, such as *triadic closure* or *transitivity*, which describe the phenomenon where if two individuals (A and C) who are both friends with a third party (B) are more likely to be friends themselves. SNA has shown that this behavior is extremely common in most social environments, as is a tendency of well-connected individuals to attract even more connections (*popularity*).

Network analysts have developed different tools to correct for or analyze such common social phenomena. Quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) has long been used to examine the similarity between networks on the same set of actors addressing some of the problems of non-independence of observations (Krackhardt 1987). But even QAP regressions cannot incorporate *endogenous network effects* such as *transitivity* and *popularity* mentioned above. Network analysts have therefore increasingly turned to the most advanced and versatile methods: ERGMs—exponential random graph models (Lusher et al. 2013)—and the related SOAMs—stochastic actor-based models for networks (Snijders et al. 2010). With the help of these models, the researcher can simultaneously examine three groups of factors influencing tie formation: (exogenously given) *actor-level attributes*, *(exogenous) networks as covariates*, and *endogenous network effects*. In a network recording who addresses whom in a parliamentary debate, an example for the first effect would be male MPs being more likely to speak to

others than female MPs. If MPs are more likely to address individuals with whom they sit on parliamentary committees, then this *exogenous network* can be included as a covariate in the model. And if MPs are more likely to address those who are addressing them in the debate, then a *reciprocity* parameter can be included as *endogenous network effect*.

SNA has been used by researchers studying interactions among members of parliaments and assemblies, because these bodies keep extensive records on how their members vote, or with whom they propose bills or pose inquiries. These databases can be used to construct networks of interactions between MPs.

James Fowler (2006a, b) has popularized this approach in the American Politics literature, studying co-sponsorship of bills in the US Congress during the last decades. He finds that representatives who co-sponsor many bills with others can collect up to ten more votes for their bills than the average member of the House. In the Senate, this advantage is even larger: up to 16 more votes. Network analysis of cooperation in legislative bodies is also increasingly applied to other democratic countries. For example, Parigi and Sartori (2014) have examined co-sponsorship in Italy in the 1970s and find that politicians from the same region cooperate with each other. But they do so continuously only if they also belong to the same party. The authors think that this is because working across the aisle with individuals from the same region would have weakened the party and undermined its national reach. In Germany, Metz and Jäckle (2016) have constructed networks from joint minor interpellations ("kleine Anfragen") and find evidence for different modes of cooperation among German opposition parties—some more centralized, others more decentralized. Such patterns in the elite interaction may not become evident until the network of interactions is visualized using SNA.

But there are many more ways in which networks between political elites can be constructed. Desmarais et al. (2015a), for instance, take joint press conferences to establish a tie between two US senators, arguing that sharing limited spotlight with other senators is a much better indicator of closeness than signing one of hundreds of legislative bills. Such co-appearances at public events have been used for constructing networks among political elites in the past (in the Soviet Union, see Faust et al. 2002), and may be useful for Big Data projects scraping newspaper archives in the future (Mahdavi 2014).

Researchers have also explored the reach of the network beyond the doors of parliament, and inquired into how its members interact with lobbyists. Building on earlier work by Laumann and Knoke (1987) on the communication ties between individuals working for lobby organizations, governmental agencies, and congressional committees, Carpenter et al. (2004) show that

lobbyists are more likely to communicate with each other not just when they share a similar ideological stance, but also if they are both communicating with a third actor—an instance of *transitivity* mentioned earlier. The authors suggest that communication is thus not just determined by strategic efforts to coordinate lobbying, but also informed by a genuine interest to gain a better understanding of the policy and possible alternatives.

Other researchers have chosen to focus their attention on judicial instead of legislative politics. For instance, Box-Steffensmeier et al. (2013) examine "lobbying" of Supreme Court judges through *amicus curia* briefs. They show that individual judges are influenced by the number of supporters for either side, but only in close decisions. But the support group's relative power, as measured through network centrality measures discussed below, also matters.

Unlike policy networks research—that is, research on relationships between actors involved in devising and implementing a specific policy—this field of research tends to measure elite relationships mainly through behavioral data collected by the bureaucracy, not necessarily by interviewing the elites involved. There are exceptions, however. Osei (2015), for example, asks all Ghanaian MPs elected in 2012, with whom they have discussed important political decisions in the last six months. She finds very dense networks, connecting members of different parties and ethnicities, and argues that this density has helped consolidate democracy in Ghana.

Researchers studying policy networks also often use SNA (Knoke et al. 1996; Laumann and Knoke 1987; Fernandez and Gould 1994), but they almost always collect their data using interviews with the actors involved. There is a formidable literature on this topic (see Wu and Knoke 2013), but it usually examines not the elites themselves, but the organizations which they represent. The respondents thus answer questions about the cooperation of the different interest groups in and outside the government when drafting and implementing government policies. For a long time, most studies tended to focus on the making of a few individual policies or policy areas. In the United States, Berardo and Scholz (2010) have extensively studied and interviewed political actors involved in the management of estuaries. Using SOAMs, they found that these actors strategically reach out to popular partners, that is groups that interact with many other groups.

But increasingly, researchers try to discover more general patterns by comparing different issue areas (Grossman 2013) or interactions between different policies. Fischer and Sciarini (2016) have produced network studies on different policies in Switzerland. They find that for some policy fields, cooperation in one influences cooperation in another. Asking organizations about their interactions when shaping one policy only—as is commonly

done—may thus omit important drivers of cooperation more generally. Such interactions between networks are again much easier to analyze using the SNA methods described earlier.

Policy network studies and networks among MPs are only the two most common studies of political elite interactions. One of the more unusual studies of elite politics is Faulkner and Cheney's (2013) analysis of defections during the Watergate scandal. Coding extensive material released in the wake of the event, they construct networks of positive and negative interactions among the co-conspirators. They find that the early defectors were often individuals in "brokerage" positions (see *betweenness centrality* below), that is, the only connectors between two groups of conspirators. Documents released after court cases or investigations have been a fruitful source for SNA in criminology and terrorism studies, but remain underused in the study of political elites. Only the recent anti-corruption campaign in China has started to attract the attention of network analysts, such as Keller and Wang (2015), who adopt contagion models from epidemiology to explain the timing of arrests.

As an interdisciplinary field, SNA thus offers novel ways of thinking about how political elites interact with each other, and also provides the statistical techniques to test associated hypotheses—in addition to the useful visualizations discussed in the next section.

Social Structure, Cleavages, Groups

Researchers studying political elites are often interested in describing them in the aggregate, identifying groups among them, or discerning their social structure. This is usually done relying on individual characteristics (e.g., education, geographic origin, or ethnicity). SNA adds to these elite interactions. When such data are available, researchers can test their assumptions about the importance of elite characteristics: do politicians from the same region interact more often with each other? One of the beauties of SNA visualizations is that it is often easy to spot cleavages, subgroups, or see how centralized elite interactions are. *Community-finding algorithms* can also help discern distinct groups within a network. And unlike analyses based on individual-level characteristics, structures can emerge endogenously from the data.

Unsurprisingly, the oldest examples of SNA applied to political elites were exactly concerned with revealing their social structure. Floyd Hunter (1953) traced the connections of Atlanta's top leaders through their joint memberships in civic committees, corporate boards, and social clubs. Laumann and Pappi (1976) picked up Hunter's line of research, but used interviews of the

elites of "Altneustadt" (the pseudonym for one small German city) to understand their ties to each other. Moore (1979) transported this approach to the national level in her American Leadership Study, and later compared the network of the US political elite to those in Australia and West Germany (Higley et al. 1991). Higley and his co-authors found that in all three democracies, the informal network structure—with ties defined as interactions on important political issues—provided all major elite groups access to the decision-making process.

This relatively benign interpretation of the elites' nature contrasts with that portrayed in another strand of research. Starting from Mills' concept of "power elite" (1956), researchers have sought to uncover the existence of relatively small group of elite persons who determine national (Domhoff 1990) and international (Carroll and Sapinski 2010) policies. These studies often construct *bipartite networks*—networks which contain both actors and organizations (or events), and in which ties indicate that an actor is or has been affiliated with the organization. Through matrix transformation, these networks can be turned into *unipartite networks* with actors only, who are connected to each other through their shared organizational affiliation. The most famous example of such affiliation networks is the corporate (board) interlock studies among economic elites [see Chap. 34]. There is in general a considerable overlap between the network analysis of economic and political elites in these studies, with authors arguing that these two type of elites are either closely connected or identical.

The phenomenon of "revolving doors" is usually taken as evidence for the latter. In their contrast of staffing patterns during the Clinton and Bush administration, Etzion and Davis (2008) argue that the Bush administration was much closer to corporate interests because it recruited more heavily from among corporate officers and directors, especially for ambassadorial positions.

Other analyses rely on joint membership or work in governmental agencies, corporate boards, or clubs to establish elite ties. Their authors usually argue that such ties imply close contact among the connected elites, or that they provide them with opportunities to exchange information and coordinate action to further their interests. Useem (1984) and many others (see Knoke 1994a for an overview) thus suggest that the existence of a dense network between the core elite persons allows them to dominate the political discourse and set the agenda.

The claim about a densely connected "core" elite, however, has not gone unchallenged. Heinz et al. (1990) have interviewed lawyers and other actors representing private interests active in different policy fields. They find that these networks have a "hollow" core—but admit that this might be due to

omitting government officials in their analysis. Higley and Moore (1981) find a densely connected core in their network, but it isn't occupied disproportionately by members of the upper class—a finding that seems at odds with the idea that this core dominates the country.

Other critics (Knoke 1994b) have pointed out that the mere potential to coordinate through these densely interconnected centers of the elite network does not prove that coordination took place. This point is well taken, but also illustrates a wider problem with a large part of the SNA literature in general: it is overtly focused on describing networks, as opposed to testing hypotheses about outcomes of interest. However, recent studies have started to address this. Desmarais et al. (2015b), for example, show that challengers who are well entrenched in extended party networks have more electoral success in US House elections—even after controlling for campaign expenditures.

Other researchers have used the overall network structure to explain elite cohesion. Studies on co-voting in the US Congress (Moody and Mucha 2013) have used SNA visualizations and measures to illustrate increasing polarization in the US political landscape. And van Gunten (2016) has explained different levels of elite cohesion and coherent reactions to economic crises in Mexico and Argentina with the level of fractionalization in the elite network.

Some of the more unusual social network studies on political elites include Easter's (1996) examination of informal ties between Transcaucasian Soviet Communist Party leaders around Stalin in the 1920s and 1930s. Easter argues that this network—coded from personal correspondences, biographical data, and personnel files—created an informal structure that facilitated successful state building. Keller (2016a) explores which forms of ties drive patronage networks between top members of the Chinese Communist Party and finds that co-worker ties play a much more important role than alumni ties, or shared provincial origin. Woldense (2016) analyzes a network in which the elites are not the nodes, but their ties are. He examines how Ethiopia's emperor moves his officials between different positions in the bureaucracy to prevent the rise of potentially threatening cliques. SNA thus provides additional tools to discover groups and cleavages among the elites, and analyze the social structure created by their interactions.

An alternative to the most common elite SNA is illustrated in Fig. 11.1. Here, nodes are different positions held by members of the Chinese Central Committee during the course of their careers (1977–2006). Arrows indicate how those political elites move from one position to another. Positions are determined by an algorithm (force atlas implemented by Gephi (Bastian et al. 2009)) that tries to place connected nodes closer to each other.
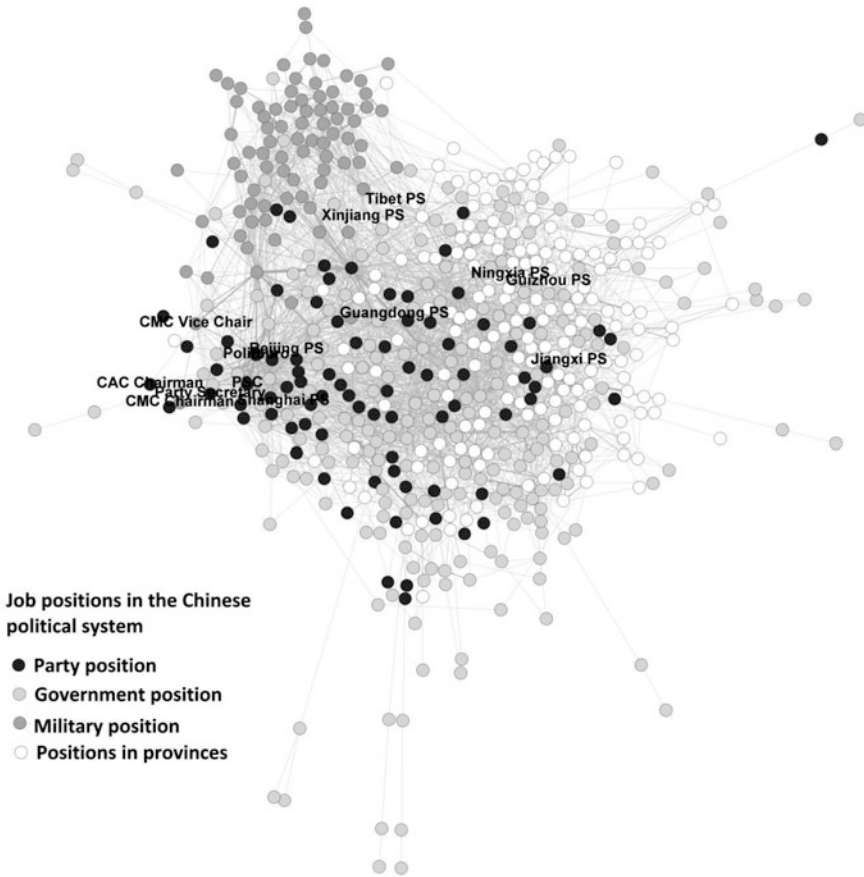
Fig. 11.1   Job positions in the Chinese political system. Source of data: Shih et al. (2012), Keller (2016b)

Gray (military) positions form a separate cluster on the top left, because military officers rarely hold civilian positions nowadays (note that the absolute position—left/right or top/bottom does not have any meaningful interpretation). Party (black) and government (light gray) positions are interspersed, on the other hand: frequently moving personnel between those two types helps the party maintain political control. Important positions such as the Party Secretary General, the Chairman of the Central Military Committee (CMC), or the Central Advisory Committee (CAC) are located middle right. The party secretaries (PS) of the province-level cities Beijing and Shanghai are positioned close to this power center, while the (nominally equivalent) party secretaries of

poor or small provinces, such as Ningxia, Jiangxi, and Guizhou, are further out in the periphery. Tibet and Xinjiang, with their strategic importance and large military contingents, are placed closer to the military cluster.

Measuring Power and Influence

Usually, we can only measure power or influence when we observe it being used. But surely the greatest power is that never wielded, in other words, the situation in which others change their actions in anticipation of the powerful figure's reaction. Social network analysts have argued that an actor's position within the overall network can sometimes capture this form of latent power.

One of the most cited studies in SNA is Padgett and Ansell's (1993) examination of the marriage and economic ties between families in Renaissance-era Florence. They show that the Medici family holds a uniquely powerful position in these social networks constructed from thousands of archival documents and records. As the head of the only family with extensive ties to two largely separate groups of families, Cosimo de' Medici appeared inscrutable like a sphinx, able to play one role and show one face to one part of the network, and another to the other part of the network.

This unique position is capture in a measure called *betweenness centrality*,[1] one of the most popular among different network centrality measures. It is closely related to the concept of *structural holes* (Burt 1995)—the idea that a group of actors may be connected among themselves, but not (or only very distantly) to a larger part of society. Such a "gap" in the network is called a *structural hole*, and creates (brokerage) opportunities to any actor who closes the gap by connecting the two parts of the network. Such a broker often ends up being highly *betweenness central*.

Contemporary political leaders also profit from such betweenness central positions. Keller (2015) shows that betweenness centrality in coworker networks among the top Chinese political elites helps identify patrons (important informal leaders) and can measure their power even after they have officially retired from all their positions. Another centrality measure, *closeness centrality*[2] captures popularity as a coalition partner and closeness to different patrons, and therefore helps predict the identity of future members of the inner circle, the Communist Party's Politburo.

The proliferation of different centrality measures has led to some pushback in the SNA community, with experts stressing that researchers should provide theoretical justifications for using specific centrality measures. In-depth knowledge of the nature of the actors and ties involved and how they use their ties

should factor into that decision—as could more formalized models or simulations.

For example, the most basic measure of network centrality—*degree (centrality)*—simply counts the number of ties each actor has. Even this measure could be further refined by distinguishing between incoming (*in-degree*) and outgoing (*out-degree*) ties in directed relationships (e.g., superior-subordinate relationships). Or the ties may be weighted by their strength: in his research on co-sponsorship of bills in the congress, Fowler (2006a) divides a co-sponsorship tie by the number of other cosponsors of the same bill, in effect arguing that providing support for an unpopular bill is more meaningful.

Figure 11.2 shows a network of Chinese political elites (the members of the 17th Communist Party's Central Committee) in 2007. Two individuals are connected if they have worked together in the past and the lower-ranking person was promoted during that time. The size of the nodes is proportional to their betweenness centrality. Current Party Secretary Hu Jintao, but also his predecessor Jiang Zemin and former Premier Zhu Rongji, score highly on this measure of informal power, as does future Party Secretary Xi Jinping. The part of the network on the left contains mainly military officials.

Defining Membership Among the Elite

One of the most persistent problems of elite studies is determining who should be counted among the elite. In almost all cases, researchers directly or indirectly rely on (their own or other's) expert opinion. Even those who employ the positional or decisional approaches (Hoffmann-Lange 2007) will require some expert judgment on what positions or what organizations they should use to identify members of the elite. But the problem is particularly acute for the reputational approach, where one may worry that the set of elites could have been quite different if different experts had been asked to identify the elites.

In SNA, this issue is known as the boundary problem (Lauman et al. 1989). And while the field has not found a definite solution to it, it has proposed some alternative solutions on how to separate elites from non-elites. Three concepts seem particularly relevant: principled snowball sampling methods (such as respondent-driven sampling), core-periphery measures, and statistical analyses of nomination networks.
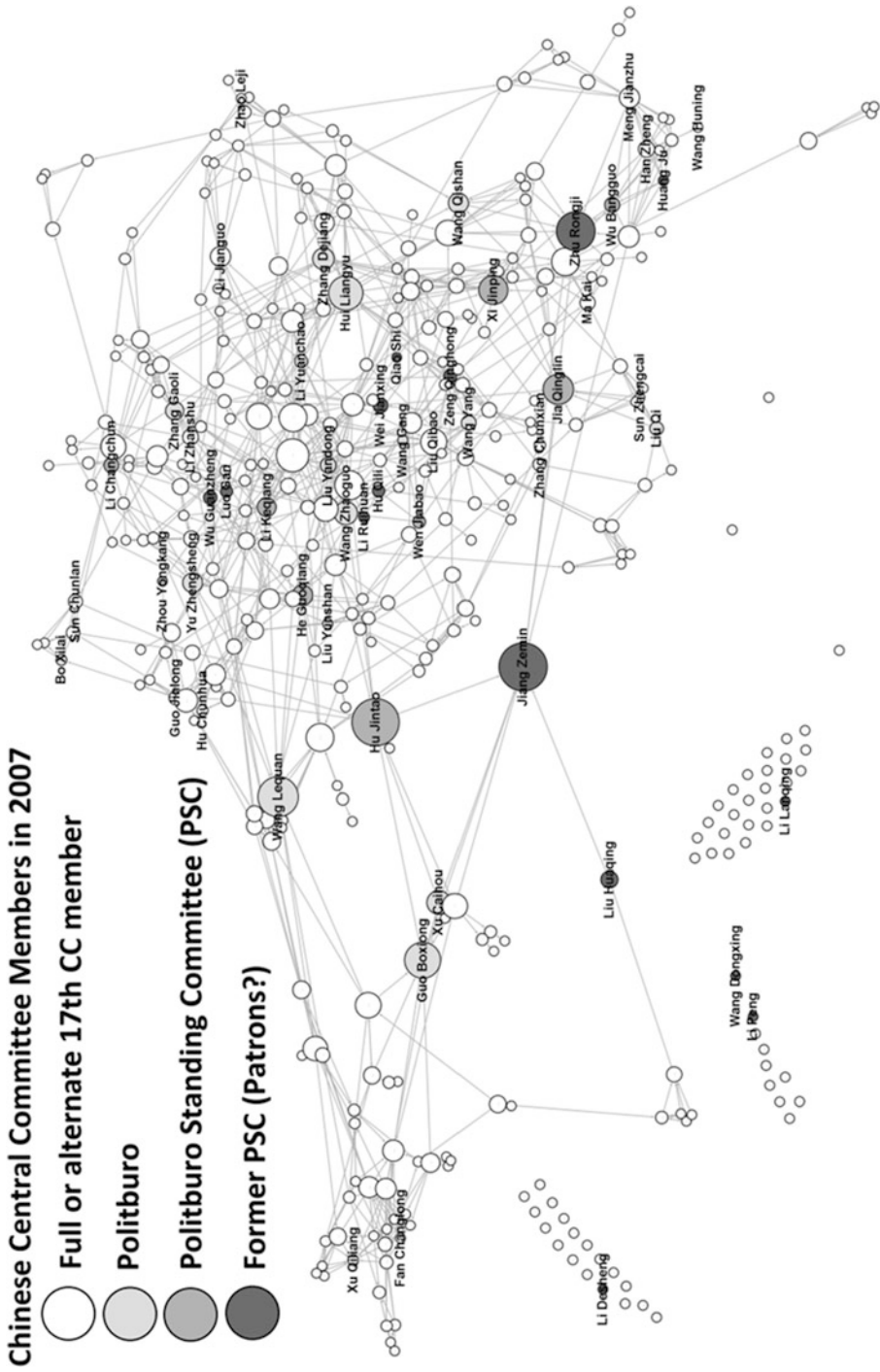
Fig. 11.2 Chinese Central Committee members in 2007. The position of all nodes is determined by the layout algorithm force atlas implemented in Gephi (Bastian et al. 2009). Disconnected nodes are placed to save space. Data source: Shih et al. (2012), Keller (2016a, 2015)

Some elite studies gather their sample through snowball sampling: they start by identifying a few individuals, and ask them to name others who they consider to be members of the elite. Those nominated get to name others in turn, and so on. Snowball sampling is known to produce biased samples (Heckathorne 1997): for instance, because actors are more likely to form ties with others like them (*homophily*), the sample might resemble the individual with whom the sampling was started. However, network analysts have started to think more systematically about this procedure, and have shown that unbiased estimates can be derived from a snowball sample if certain—albeit rather strong—assumptions are met (Heckathorne 1997; Gile 2011). If this is not the case, they can still resort to continuing the snowball sampling until no new individuals turn up.

How does SNA specifically help? The first thing to notice is that the snowball sampling reveals a network—more specifically, a network of "who refers whom to the researcher" ties. Thinking about the problem in this way helps assess inference claims. If the underlying reference network consists of two or more completely separate components, and the researchers start their sample with only one expert, then they may come to the erroneous conclusion that the elite consists only of the members on one of the components. This may for instance be the case if the different elite groups do not recognize the others as belonging to the elite, and hence will never refer the researcher to an outgroup individual.

Network theory, however, would conclude that this outcome is relatively unlikely—a so-called large connected component tends to contain the vast majority of all individuals in most social networks that are not exceedingly sparse. More common is the existence of many disconnected individuals. The snowball sampling method will thus likely overestimate how connected the elite is, and may be biased in other regards as well, if those disconnected individuals differ systematically from the rest.

Another form of bias that troubles researchers, in particular researchers relaying reputational methods, is informant bias: who outside experts and members of the elite network consider to be members of the elite may well be influenced by preconceptions unobserved by the researcher. SNA provides tools to at least study this bias, which may give the researcher some sense of the magnitude and direction of the problem. Fischer and Sciarini (2015) show, for instance, that the assessment of the power of policy actors is influenced by how similar the two actors are, and how often they interact. A similar bias presumably influences their likelihood of nominating each other as belonging to the elite. Conducting a network analysis of the nomination network should thus

help researchers of political elites assess if certain actors may be overrepresented, and spend more energy seeking out underrepresented groups.

The studies on "cores" in the elite network structure mentioned earlier finally provide yet another way of determining elite status: the core of a network cast much wider could be defined as the real elites worth studying. If network data on a large number of individuals is available, then the researcher can have the elite definition emerge *endogenously* from the core of the network.

In short, SNA can help clarify the basic question of who should be included in elite studies. Furthermore, thinking in terms of certain SNA concepts may help even qualitative researchers discover members of the elite who might otherwise remain hidden: Parkinson (2013), for instance, finds that important "brokerage" roles connecting different resistance movements in Lebanon are often occupied women—who might have been ignored by researchers focusing only on the (male) leadership and uninterested in exploring the latter's (female) networks.

This chapter has hopefully shed some light on how SNA could and already has helped address pressing issues in the research of political elites. But there are many other problems to which it could be applied, in particular with the increasing availability of interaction data based on social media or electronic archives.

Notes

1. In order to calculate betweenness centrality, one examines all possible pairs of actors, determines which is the shortest connecting path along network ties, and counts the number of such shortest paths a given actor intercepts. A mathematical representation of this is: $C_B(N_i) = \sum_{j<k} \frac{g_{j,k}(N_i)}{g_{j,k}}$, where N is the actor i in question, and g indicates the shortest path between two other actors j and k. The denominator counts the number of possible shortest paths, the numerator those in which actor i is included (Freeman 1979).

2. Closeness centrality measures how close an actor, on average, is to all other actors along network ties. Mathematically: $C_C(N_i) = \frac{1}{\left[\sum_{j=1}^{g} d(N_i, N_j)\right]}$ $i \neq j$, where d indicates the shortest path between actor i and j (Freeman 1979).

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Section III

Political Elite Patterns in the World's Main Regions

John Higley

12

Patterns of Political Elites

John Higley

Elite theory contends that different patterns of relations among political elite persons and groups are associated causally with different political practices and regimes in national states. Some patterns provide elite persons and groups with considerable security and ways of defending and advancing their personal and group interests peacefully. Other patterns make elite power wielding a precarious, highly uncertain game in which conspiracy and violence are key elements. Different patterns result in different modes of political elite behavior: relatively benevolent or predacious, relatively calculating or capricious, and relatively cooperative or conflicting. Although a country's level of economic development, class structure, ethno-religious makeup, international situation, and much else may change, its pattern of elite relations and the kind of politics stemming from it strongly tend to persist until and if a profound crisis or other abrupt event triggers a basic change. The systematic study of political elites thus involves identifying main patterns of their relations in modern societies, how and when changes from one to another pattern occur, ways in which mass populations affect elite relations, and the chief political and other consequences of each pattern.

These are complex and controversial matters. Political elites are somewhat elastic formations with unclear boundaries, they frequently act deceptively and secretly, their inter-relations are intricate, their ties to mass populations are

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multifaceted, and elites are certainly not the only determinants of political outcomes. Reducing political elite relations to a few basic patterns and claiming that this helps explain variations in the politics of national states strikes many scholars as a gross simplification. In our democratic age, politics is commonly thought to reflect the kaleidoscopic makeup of modern societies—their historical legacies, economic successes and failures, political cultures, citizen identities, formal constitutional and institutional structures, and so on. Moreover, because there is always both persistence and change in political elites, the danger of underestimating persistence and exaggerating change, or of doing the opposite, is large.

By analyzing the relations and practices of political elites in the world's major regions and many of its most important national states, this section of the handbook addresses these complexities and controversies. The nine chapters that follow do not adhere to a single template of political elite relations. They are, instead, richly detailed analyses of how political elites have been and are configured across the globe. To give the chapters maximum space, I will keep introductory observations brief.

Political Elite Relations

Efforts to specify the main patterns of relations between persons and groups that comprise political elites and link them to types of political regimes and other major political phenomena have been a long-standing aspect of elite theory and research. In Gaetano Mosca's early formulation, "The varying structure of ruling classes [political elites] has a preponderant importance in determining the political type, and also the level of civilization, of the different peoples" (1923/1939, p. 51). Mosca contrasted the elites of feudal societies, which he portrayed as based on heredity and military valor, with elites in modern industrial societies, which he regarded as anchored primarily in wealth. He contended that a democratic regime depends upon an open, balanced, and politically restrained constellation of "ruling minorities" that represent all "social forces" of importance. Vilfredo Pareto, Mosca's contemporary, depicted strongly centralized, militaristic regimes in pre-modern societies as operated by "Byzantine" political elites, whereas behind any modern "parliamentary regime" there stands a "demagogic-plutocratic" elite cartel, in which business leaders ("speculators") collude with the leaders of trade unions and other popular forces to advance their respective interests. Pareto argued that such elite cartels are inherently unstable and prone to degenerate into

"pluto-demagogic" and finally "military-demagogic" formations, a process that transforms parliamentary regimes into plebiscitary and then authoritarian regimes (Pareto 1921/1984; see also Finer 1968; Femia 2007).

A number of scholars drew on political developments during the twentieth century to flesh out the distinctions drawn by Mosca and Pareto. The French sociologist Raymond Aron distinguished between "Western" and "Soviet" political elite patterns, although he immediately acknowledged profound differences between Western patterns such as those of British and French elites, and he largely ignored elite patterns in countries emerging from colonial rule (Aron 1950). Reviewing modal elite patterns in Germany during the century after national state integration was achieved in 1871, Ralf Dahrendorf (1967, pp. 217–269) distinguished authoritarian, totalitarian, cartel, and liberal patterns. He argued that an authoritarian pattern characterized political elites during the Imperial and Weimar regimes, a totalitarian pattern was on flagrant display in the Third Reich and the post-World War II German Democratic Republic, whereas a political elite cartel exhibiting timid and insecure relations stood behind the fledgling West German democratic regime following recovery from World War II. Dahrendorf held that Germany's great political misfortune (down to the mid-1960s when he wrote) lay in the absence of a liberal political elite pattern and the kind of robust democratic regime it creates. A few years later, Robert D. Putnam (1976, pp. 115–21) combed studies of political elites in various countries to distinguish between consensual, competitive, and coalescent patterns, which he tied, respectively, to communist, stable democratic, and fragmented multi-ethnic regimes. Other scholars have made similar distinctions between the patterned relations of political elites, but no set of distinctions has been widely adopted.

Common to most of these analytical efforts is the idea that political elites vary across countries and within them over time according to the extent of their internal differentiation and integration. Differentiation is the process through which persons and groups comprising political elites become more numerous, organizationally diverse, functionally specialized, and socially heterogeneous (Keller 1963/1990). Integration refers to the structural and behavioral modalities of elite relations and is often discussed in terms of elite cohesion or unity. In short, differentiation involves the proliferation of diverse elite persons and groups as societies become more complex and institutionally compartmentalized; integration involves how these persons and groups organize their relations and engage with each other politically. Clearly, each dimension affects the other: increasing elite diversity implies a dispersion of political power; integration implies efforts by elite persons and groups to contain or offset power dispersion.

Patterns of differentiation and integration have received much attention. Analysts who view politics through a modernization lens have usually regarded the increasing differentiation of elite persons and groups as of paramount importance because it fosters a plurality of competing groups that check and balance each other (Etzioni-Halevy 1993). They depict integration as emerging osmosis-like from political cultures rooted in the economic and technological changes associated with modernity. An influential idea among analysts of integration has been that political elites are characterized by consciousness, cohesion, and conspiracy (Meisel 1958). If it cannot be demonstrated empirically that persons and groups in key political positions display these collective attributes, they cannot be said to constitute an "elite" in any meaningful sense. Applying these criteria, scholars long debated the existence of unitary "power elites" in the United States and other Western democracies (Mills 1956; Miliband 1969; Dahl 1971). More recently, my colleagues and I have treated patterns of elite integration as highly variable, distinguishing between "united" and "disunited" patterns and further between "consensually" and "ideologically" united patterns (Field and Higley 1980; Higley and Burton 2006).

Agreement or disagreement about political game rules and codes of political conduct is an especially important aspect of political elites. Widely agreed rules of restrained political competition are a hallmark of elites who manage to tame politics. Their operational code is "politics as bargaining" according to the principle of "give to get" (Sartori 1987, pp. 224, 229). Alternatively, where elite persons and groups profess unanimous agreement about the rightness of a single ideology, religious doctrine, or ethnic creed, politics has a monolithic character in which elites march to the commands of one or a few uppermost leaders (Piekalkiewicz and Penn 1996). It follows that where there is neither voluntary game-rule agreement nor the uniform profession of a single doctrine, integration is weak so that politics are untamed and prone toward violence.

The varying configurations and changing dynamics of political elites in the world's major geographic regions are subjects of the chapters that follow. The initial chapter examines "power elite" patterns in the pre-modern world. Subsequent chapters examine post-colonial configurations and dynamics of elites in the score of contemporary Middle Eastern and North African countries, the five main countries of South Asia, the half dozen most important countries of Southeast Asia, the main patterns of political elites in Latin America, the broad patterns of elites in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the evolution of political elites in Western countries. Because of their singularity and importance, political elites in contemporary China and in post-Soviet Russia receive separate, chapter-length analyses.

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13

Pre-modern Power Elites: Princes, Courts, Intermediaries

Jeroen Duindam

This chapter examines the central princely establishment, princely dynasties, and their impact on elite formation in society at large. A single person ruled most polities in world history. These rulers, more often male than female, were usually able to transmit power to their offspring. A sequence of successors on the throne engendered an extended family: sisters married among elites and younger brothers founded collateral lines. Rulers' offspring and relatives by marriage formed the first two elites of most dynastic polities. Chiefdoms, kingdoms, and empires, irrespective of differences in scale, were organized around a conspicuous center or court. Palaces organized hospitality on a grand scale, included regional and social segments of the population in their staffs, and attracted visitors. Moreover, courts were hubs of extraction and redistribution: offices, rankings, and benefits were distributed from them.

While the prince stood at the heart of this machinery and was often elevated to near-divine rank, it is difficult to establish who wielded power in practice. At all courts, several groups competed. Spouses, concubines, and servants at the domestic heart of the court were potentially powerful; these inner-court groups enjoyed easy access to the prince. Magistrates and military leaders at courts—the upper layers of pen and sword elites—did not as a rule share the same level of access. Moreover, these two outer-court elites were often at loggerheads. Beyond the inner-outer and pen-sword divides, family networks and personal

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rivalries complicated matters. Multiple antagonisms allowed perspicacious princes to rule by fomenting strife. Conversely, by elevating their prince to nominal omnipotence, servants could, in practice, dictate policies and reap benefits.

The cohesion of a realm depended on the connection between its conspicuous center and its outlying regions. Here scale was important. How many echelons of servants stood between the palace and local power holders? In small African chiefdoms, clan and village leaders could themselves flock to the royal court on special occasions; in larger realms, most conspicuously in the major empires in history, intermediaries maintained the connection. Retaining the loyalty of these middlemen was, arguably, the key challenge facing central leadership.

Intermediaries can be divided into functional groups—soldiers and clerks, sword and pen, the latter often mingling with religious elites. However, religious elites could take different shapes and were not always closely integrated in the machinery of political power. These functional groups could be observed in many domains. In the millennium before the industrial revolution, they could be recruited in various ways: heredity, enslavement, examination, or religious vows. Heredity prevailed in Europe; West Asian Islamicate power elites were often recruited as slaves; examinations gradually became the dominant model in China and some of its tributaries. More sporadically, kings presented themselves as spiritual leaders and turned their fervent disciples into devoted elites. Different groups, moreover, could be recruited through different mechanisms.

These regionally differentiated patterns of elite recruitment went together with markedly contrasting styles of elite self-representation; descent, merit, and loyalty were common in elite self-representations but were proportioned differently for nobles, slaves, scholars, and religious disciples. These proportions changed over time and were never wholly consistent in any of the world's regions. Moreover, and more fundamentally, delegation was universally subject to patrimonial pressures. Everywhere, social reproduction and heredity played a role; everywhere, too, rich merchants as well as successful warriors found ways to enter the upper echelons.

The connections between center and periphery can be pictured as a pyramid of family networks, whose competition for a share in the bonanza of the court tied regions and the court together. Yet this configuration could at times lead to disorder and breakup. In fact, the cyclical alternation of phases of devolution and integration so strongly present in the moral views of contemporaries can be seen in this light. Kings sometimes squandered their subjects' taxes on luxury and entertainment, losing legitimacy and provoking divine disfavor, as

well as rebellion. However, this moral breakdown can be rephrased as signaling the incapability of kings to satisfy the needs of increasingly autonomous elites. In practice, popular revolutions could be successful only where and when elites no longer willingly supported the ruler.

Princes and Dynasties

Looking back on history, we tend to focus on polities characterized by forms of government that pointed toward our own age. We identify with antecedents from ancient Athens and the Roman Republic via the bustling urban centers of Renaissance Italy, the Dutch Republic, and post-1689 England to the revolutionary experiments in America and France with their modern offshoots. However, the rule of a single person was by far the most common form of government in pre-modern world history. Kingship, predating the rise of farming and the domestication of animals, became predominant with the growth of urban settlements and the emergence of larger-scale polities. Arising in many areas and spreading through emulation, migration, and conquest, kingship retained its prevalence down to the First World War. During this long history, most polities characterized by social differentiation, hierarchy, and some form of tribute or resource extraction were governed by chiefs, kings, or emperors. This observation has immediate consequences for this handbook's focus: elites were defined, in part, through their relationship with a ruler.

The first elite that emerges as a consequence of princely power is the house or dynasty of the prince. Most parents strive to transmit their status and wealth to their offspring, and princes were no exception to this rule. We commonly label as dynasties princely houses that have accumulated several generations in power. However, practices of reproduction, kinship, and succession led to very different dynastic families (Duindam 2016). It is important to note that polygynous reproduction was the rule for dynasties in most of world history. Only in Christian Europe did monogamous marriage form the basis of legitimate succession. Consequently, European royal families remained small and were, moreover, often faced with extinction. Elsewhere, harems led to the proliferation of male and female offspring, particularly where the ruler's younger brothers were allowed to found their own collateral lines. In the final decades of the Chinese Ming dynasty (1368–1644), for example, princes numbered between 100,000 and 200,000 (Rawski 1998). Where polygyny went together with violent competition among rivals for the throne, the

inflation of princes was less likely. To give an extreme example, from the late fifteenth to the late sixteenth century, Ottoman sultans were expected to kill their brothers, as well as their brothers' offspring, upon their accession to the throne (Alderson 1956). Fratricide reconstituted the Ottoman dynasty anew in every generation.

Throughout recorded history, there was a strong preference for supreme rule in the hands of a male sovereign. While there is no evidence for the existence of matriarchy, as postulated by some nineteenth-century scholars, a sizeable minority of polities across the globe did accept the female line as the basis for succession and inheritance. Here royalty was viewed as being transmitted by female blood—males triggered reproduction and contributed their characteristics, but only the womb passed royalty on. Matrilineal societies reserved leading positions for women, but males were the preferred candidates for supreme power. This caused intriguing complications (Goody 1970), notably the fact that kings could not be succeeded directly by their sons. Succession thus moved 'sideways' to the king's sisters' sons or to brothers borne by the same princess. Matrilineal sideways descent tended toward the diffusion and circulation of power; it could lead to frequent phases of violent contestation, but it also fostered the connection of numerous groups to the throne. The same tendencies can be found in patrilineal polities where succession was based on election, acclamation, or circulation among a group of families sharing a distant ancestor. Particularly in Africa, the bias against concentration of power in the hands of a single dynastic line was often reinforced by prohibitions against the succession of royal sons. Candidates competing for the highest honor, peacefully or violently, were forced to seek the support of elites. Here, too, diffusion and competition created a pool of eligible candidates—a dynastic elite based on real or imagined chances to succeed to the throne.

The practice of eldest son succession (male primogeniture) gradually became the rule in early modern Europe, but it had been followed in many other regions and periods, and it limited rights of succession rigidly. In Europe, monogamy reduced the numbers of royals, while primogeniture prescribed a clear order of succession among princes. But the Chinese case shows that limiting rights of succession could go together with inflating the numbers of princes. In principle, only sons of the ruling emperor, preferably those borne by his empress, rather than by concubines, were eligible for regular succession, although brothers occasionally succeeded. In China, however, numerous collateral houses formed a reservoir of royal extras who could be adopted to prevent extinction of the main line. When examining dynastic elites, we always need to consider both the numbers and rights of princes. It is

essential to note, moreover, that those entitled to succession were always a troublesome group. Potential successors were stakeholders in the dynastic venture, yet their status could easily turn them into formidable rivals. Why respect the successor designated by tradition or by the ruling king, or why wait patiently for the king's death?

Everywhere, the right of succession to the throne conferred great prestige and, at the same time, created serious tensions with the incumbent ruler. Princes could be sent out to govern peripheral provinces or lead armies, being powerful at a safe distance. Alternatively, they could be kept under surveillance in the restricted settings of palaces, in close proximity but mostly without major responsibilities (Ebrey 2006; Tardits 1987). Even heirs apparent designated by their ruling fathers or by tradition could see reasons to rebel against their progenitors. Fathers and sons frequently clashed vehemently, particularly during very long reigns. The Qing Kangxi emperor (1661–1722) in China struggled with his son and heir apparent; King Yongjo (1724–76) in Chosun Korea ordered his son and successor, Sado, to commit suicide after a tragic series of misunderstandings. In eighteenth-century Europe, conflicts were equally persistent, though less violent: Frederick II of Prussia (1740–86) was jailed by his father and threatened with execution; George II of Britain (1727–60), who himself had clashed with his father, was in open conflict with his son Frederic, Prince of Wales. Groups alienated by an incumbent king, hoping for a better position under the future king, turned toward the successor. Even subdued and loyal princes would serve as points of orientation for disaffected elites.

In the majority of polities, succession was limited to the male line, or, at least, the male line was much preferred over the female line. This provided the groundwork for another mechanism of elite formation: alliances formed via princesses. A king's sisters and daughters were in a complicated position; they combined the supreme dignity of their ruling house with the reduced status commonly attributed to women. Not only was their marriage almost by definition hypogamous, that is, below their rank; even royal women could expect to be forced into the subservient role dictated by tradition. Notwithstanding this imbalance between royal blood and gender status, women did conclude alliances. In Europe, marriages among sovereign and hence near-equal dynastic houses became the norm. European kingdoms were the result of alliance and inheritance more often than conquest. Spain, for example, originated in the marriage (1469) of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon. Constant intermarriage of European princely houses created new composite states, but the spread of succession rights also caused numerous wars among contending candidates.

While dynastic marriages can be found elsewhere, it appears to have been more common to wed princesses to pillars of the state—to administrators, soldiers, or spiritual leaders. Numerous Ottoman viziers and pashas were sultanic in-laws. The offspring of sultanas and these political leaders were no longer formally part of the house of Osman, but they did form an elite. Elsewhere, too, the affines of dynastic clans, related to the ruling house through marriage, formed a second elite, often closer to leading government office than the first elite of princes entitled to succession. Similarly, royal harems were the basis of a pattern of wife-giving and wife-receiving that held together wider elites and the royal establishment in the palace or court.

The Court

A dynasty is a family writ large, the court an extended household, the palace a conspicuous house. The first two elites commonly found are related to royalty by descent or alliance. The third group held elite status primarily because of its service to the prince. Among those serving the prince at court, two functions can be distinguished: household servants organizing daily activities and administrative specialists organizing the government of the realm. These groups were not necessarily neatly separated. In Europe, the admixture of household and government remained remarkably strong well into the eighteenth century. Nobles dominated in both spheres, although they had to accept the rise of legal and financial specialists in royal government. In China, these groups had long since been compartmentalized spatially, functionally, and socially into two spheres: the domestic-female-eunuch inner-court; and the administrative male outer-court. West Asia with its Persian-Arabic-Islamic traditions of governance also tended toward markedly separated spheres, with the harem at the heart of the palace, where men other than the prince were not expected to enter and only women and eunuchs were allowed.

The inner and outer domains reflected differences in gender, function, and status. Typically, inner-court domestics, preponderantly eunuchs and women, held relatively low status. However, proximity to the ruler made it possible for these groups to exercise great power; rulers tended to choose their favorite companions and confidants from among them (Tougher 2002). Outer-court elites, such as male magistrates and generals, were either recruited from high-status groups or were quickly promoted to high status because of their function. They represented powerful social interests and were disposed to view policies from the standpoints of their positions. Rulers hesitated before confiding in these dignitaries: they only occasionally served as carefree

companions. Male outer-court elite shared a sense of resentment over the 'illegitimate' schemes of inner-court servants. The statement of a Byzantine chronicler that 'when a viper bit a eunuch, it was the viper that died' (Magdalino 1997, p. 163) would have been appreciated by Chinese magistrates. Rights of succession created tension between the ruler and his relatives; high social status tended to increase the distance between the ruler and outer-court elites, whereas lower status groups, including exiles and social outcasts, were preferred candidates for favor. In Europe, in the absence of the harem, similar patterns can nevertheless be observed. Nobles served as leading honorary domestics, ranked among the highest royal advisors, and at times became true favorites (Elliott and Brockliss 1999). Yet they, too, took offence at the rise of low-ranking servants or mistresses in the daily environment of kings. Dissonance between accepted social hierarchies and fleeting hierarchies based on favor and access can be found at all courts.

Palaces were the hubs of redistribution on a large scale. Princes were the "fountain of honor," and their courts, more often than not, invited in numerous guests for banquets, festivities, and solemn rituals. During such occasions, princes meted out punishments and rewards: agents were demoted or promoted or reassigned to other posts. Special honors and titles were conferred on loyal servants, whereas others saw their titles withdrawn and their properties confiscated. These practices all unfolded in the convivial environment of the prince, who used the confluence of his servants during highlights in the religious and festive calendar to conduct business. At African courts of small realms and without script or multi-layered hierarchies of government, the hospitality, ritual enactment, and festive enjoyment brought elites together. In the Chinese case, at the other end of the scale, huge distances, a formalized administrative apparatus, and a withdrawn style of rulership reduced the relevance of direct interaction with the emperor. Yet both ritual performance and distribution of honors can be found in all courts, and statements by princes from many ages and places underline the key relevance of these two domains.

Together, the common pattern of rifts between different groups and the all-important distribution of favors powerfully suggest the age-old stratagem of rule by dividing. This was always an option, and it has been a recurring explanation in studies of kingship and power (Elias 1983). Kings curbed elites by supporting or even creating other elites; at the individual level, they reduced ambitious characters by supporting their rivals. Both at the level of groups and of families or individuals, this balancing mechanism was a distinct possibility, and many examples of it can be cited. However, the balancing option entailed grave risks. Dynastic rulers were expected to maintain divinely ordained

hierarchies, whereas manipulation subverted order, created conflict, and might cause violent upheavals. While the heavy hand of the divine canon may have kept many princes from fomenting strife, it is clear that most among them were simply incapable of balancing to control outcomes. Only astute characters at the height of their physical and intellectual power could expect success. Youngsters and graybeards on the throne, an inevitable and frequent occurrence, were easy prey for the experienced servants and advisors in their environment. Moreover, hereditary succession often put weak figures on the throne that were intimidated by the daunting responsibilities incumbent upon them and happy to leave their tasks to others. After a decade-long attempt at active governing, the perceptive Ming Wanli emperor (1572–1620) lost patience with the endless obstacles complicating his personal rule, and he withdrew into the inner court. Safavid Shah Suleiman (1666–94), the object of an ongoing struggle between inner- and outer-court factions, sought solace in drugs readily procured by his servants. Toward the end of his life, Habsburg Emperor Rudolf II (1576–1612) sheltered behind the back of a notorious favorite who prevented others from reaching the emperor's ear. Whatever their prince's character, elites flocked to the court not only to pay their compliments to the highest lord but first and foremost to serve their own interests. Behind the screen of princely omnipotence and the top-down distribution of honors, we should expect to find a tug of war among persons, families, and groups.

Intermediary Elites: Functions and Recruitment

Every pre-modern society imagined an ideal hierarchy of social groups living in harmony, with each fulfilling its specific function. In China and its cultural sphere, scholars formed the upper layer, followed, respectively, by peasants, artisans, and merchants. The 'circle of justice' in Islamicate West Asia depicted an orderly arrangement in which the dynasty provided justice through its soldiers, who were maintained by taxes paid by subjects, who depended on the ruler's justice—where the circle started again. The European division of the realm into three estates—*oratores, bellatores,* and *laboratores*: those who pray, who fight, and who work—offers yet another perspective on an ideal social order.

These idealized hierarchies never described social reality. They left out many groups and suggested an imaginary, unchanging order. Often, moreover, they reflected the aspirations of one dominant social layer. The Chinese model gave pride of place to scholars, excluding warriors and religious specialists who were undoubtedly conspicuously present in practice. Conversely, the three-tiered

hierarchy of ruler/military upper layer/population commonly present in the 'circle of justice' highlighted the soldiery and left out scholars as well as merchants. The European three-order model subsumed a huge variety of groups under the *laboratores*. Merchants, it seems, were the underdogs overall, partly because making money without producing anything was frowned upon, but surely also because rich merchants were typically social climbers whose wealth opened doors that remained closed to others.

Limiting our discussion to court-related power elites—to the intermediaries bringing together center and periphery—we can safely assume that certain functional categories were always present: soldiers and administrators—the sword and the pen. It is difficult to imagine any larger political entity without soldiers. Religious ritual specialists, too, can be found in any society, yet they did not necessarily relate closely to the machinery of government. In polities where a script was available, the accumulating tasks of government engendered the rise of clerks, most notably in the 'technical' domains of tax collection and adjudication. With the expansion of their numbers and the extension of their fields of expertise, these administrative specialists tended to acquire an *esprit de corps* that set them apart from soldiers, as well as from religious-ritual specialists. They occupied high moral ground and pointed out to their princes the do's and don'ts of good governance. The close approximation of clerics and clerks in the European context reflected the semi-monopoly of learning in the hands of the clergy until the later Middle Ages. In China, the dominance of magistrates and their scholarly literary brand of moral Confucian learning explains the downplaying of the military, as well as of Buddhist and Daoist practitioners, in the written historical record. The religious groups were never integrated into the machinery of Chinese government. In West and South Asia, Islamic law scholars could serve dynastic governments in many capacities, but they did not form a clergy in the European sense, nor were these people of the Holy Book ever collectively integrated into the state. In most domains, sword, pen, and book cultivated different ideals and lifestyles, and as we shall see, they were recruited in different ways. Tension among such elite groupings surfaced regularly, yet collective antagonism could be offset at the individual and familial levels by pragmatic alliances and patronage networks.

The fourteenth-century North African writer Ibn Khaldun related the predominance of pen and sword to different phases in his cyclical view of dynastic power (Ibn Khaldun 1967). New dynasties rose to power thanks to the unswerving loyalty of their nomadic Bedouin warriors; at the apex of the dynastic cycle, people of the pen made possible well-ordered taxation and an increasingly luxurious urban lifestyle. However, luxury and exploitation of the population then led inexorably to a decline in moral fiber, rebellions, the rise of

an untarnished rivaling dynasty, and the renewed dominance of the sword. A similar pattern can be found in the Chinese cyclical view of dynastic power, which inevitably included the rise of military men in phases of dynastic change (Wilkinson 2015). Yet in contrast to the account of Ibn Khaldun, who idealized the solidarity of nomadic warriors, civil magistrates were defined as the norm in China. European history has been pictured as a steady rise of administrators—first clerics, then university-trained legal and financial specialists—over the traditional sword nobility. Typically, these new men in government were called "nobles of the robe," a label reminding us that nobility remained the standard form of elite power.

How were the leading elites recruited? Considering a variety of governments in *the Prince,* Machiavelli drew a sharp distinction:

> …all principalities known to history are governed in one of two ways, either by a prince to whom everyone is subservient and whose ministers, with his favour and permission, help govern, or by a prince and by nobles whose rank is established not by favour of the prince but by their ancient lineage. Such nobles have states and subjects of their own, and these acknowledge them as their lords and bear a natural affection towards them. (Machiavelli 1961, pp. 14–16)

He then elaborated his case, using the Ottoman Empire and France as examples. More generally, Europeans saw enslavement, subservience, and despotism in Asia, whereas they pointed to the 'free' hereditary noble elites in their own countries. Diplomats and missionaries traveling to the Ottoman Empire and to China noted that in these territories personal merit ranked high as a criterion for advancement, whereas outside of the ruling house, hereditary power was frowned upon. While visitors deplored the "whims of oriental despots," several among them commended the social rise of talented persons and the role of education.

These clichés contained more than a grain of truth. The Abbasid caliphal dynasty (750–1258) had employed Turkic slave soldiers (*ghulams, mamluks*) to replace unruly tribal military formations. Its example was followed by many other dynasties (Crone 1980). Slave soldiers even established their own dynasties, most notably the Mamluks of Egypt (1250–1517), who after chasing their Ayyubid masters away henceforth recruited the sultan from among their own ranks. From the late fourteenth century onward, the Ottomans (1299–1922) enslaved young outsiders for use as soldiers in the janissary infantry corps. They soon started educating these young boy slaves for other purposes. The careful selection (*devshirme*) of boys in villages along the margins of the empire and during campaigns was followed by their conversion

to Islam and by a thorough education. The most talented youths ended up in the palace school, where they underwent extensive training before they were sent out to hold leading office. Those climbing to the highest level as pashas and viziers often wedded sultanas: they were the sultan's in-laws as well as, nominally, his slaves. The administrative elites of the sultan, with the exception of the legal scholars (*ulema*) trained in Islamic schools (*medreses*), were recruited as slaves (*kuls*).

Machiavelli's view did not encompass China, but Jesuit missionaries would soon report that all Chinese magistrates were selected through a highly demanding and competitive three-tiered system of civil service examinations (Elman 2000). Nobility existed there only as a reward for outstanding services, whereas hereditary status was reserved for the ruling imperial house. The Ming army was organized in part on the basis of regionally based hereditary military colonies, yet the social status of these groups never approached that of the learned civil magistrates. Jesuits' reports popularized a somewhat idealized view of a merit-based society governed by philosopher kings who appreciated learning and ethics more than military prowess. Under the Qing dynasty (1644–1912) the balance tipped toward hereditary and military power in the hands of the Manchu conquest elite and its allies among peripheral peoples (Elliott 2001). Nevertheless, the examinations retained their crucial role for the recruitment of magistrates governing China proper.

Kingship has powerful religious associations: kings were often seen as holding responsibility not only for order on earth but also for the harmony of heaven and earth—the dead and the living. Moreover, religious leadership was the first responsibility of semi-princely figures such as the pope, the caliph, and the Dalai Lama. More incidentally, rulers spearheaded religious movements, rising to power as the spiritual leaders of a flock of devotees. Shah Ismail (1501–24), the charismatic founder of the Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) of Persia, was at the same time the Sufi Shi'ite spiritual leader of his brotherhood of disciples, their commander on the battlefield, and their shah. Akbar (1556–1605), the consolidator of Mughal rule in India, likewise viewed himself as the spiritual guide of his inner circle of disciples-servants-comrades. Heterodox religious sentiments, moreover, gave unity and force to rebellious movements across the world and played a role in the rise to power of leaders such as the Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang (1368–98).

Forms of recruitment in Asia contrast sharply with the predominance of the hereditary landed elite in the upper echelons of European kingdoms. Machiavelli rightly underlined the strength of noble regional elites across Europe. From the late Middle Ages onward, nobles were challenged by the rise of social climbers in state service, yet they managed to adapt: a mixed but reinvigorated

noble upper layer stood at the heart of most European polities (Scott 1995). Nobles were integrated into the state, but this entailed a shift in power and habitus rather than a 'crisis' (Zmora 2001): connections between expanding states and noble elites became stronger in early modern Europe.

Recruitment was important for the representation and the self-fashioning of elites: nobles, slaves, disciples, and scholars cultivated very different ideals and legitimations. The balance between merit and heredity was discussed everywhere; genealogy was important for Chinese lineages and elite families in West Asia—perhaps particularly among Islamic law scholars. Only in Europe, however, was pedigree unreservedly presented as a requirement for high office and as the source of 'natural' authority. European ideals of nobility underlined service and loyalty; the personal oath of fealty was of great importance for hierarchies of power. Yet loyalty was linked closely to a wholehearted defense of the autonomy of families and regions: kings were expected to respect their rights and freedoms. Ottoman pashas and viziers, the "slaves of the sultan," whose pedigree was irrelevant and who were not expected to cultivate local roots, should show total subservience—their only alternative was rebellion. Chinese magistrates ideally frowned upon hereditary office: families persisted in power, yet they would hardly admit this openly. Learning, intelligence, and character were underlined, and, most of all, moral rectitude. This did not prevent straightforward officeholders from criticizing the emperor in their remonstrations, but they were expected to do so in a most deferential tone. Service and subjection were essential here too.

The marked differences in elite self-fashioning reflected profound ideologies and need to be taken seriously. On the other hand, the social and political trafficking of these groups appears to have been far closer than we may surmise from their contrasting reputations. Leading Ottoman dignitaries used their office and their personal connections to establish wide-ranging patronage networks. Surely, they were power holders and brokers in much the same way as European high nobles. Factions of these "slaves of the sultan," moreover, several times in the seventeenth century decided to dethrone and execute a sultan: behind the person on the throne stood a mixed and competing elite that cannot be seen as docile or disinterested. As we shall see, this elite was increasingly able to transmit its positions to offspring and affines. In China, the bias against patronage and mundane trafficking in favors was especially compelling. Yet this powerful Confucian bias did not necessarily change the routines of power: we can safely assume a sharp contrast between the moral theory of service and government on the one hand, and the routines of power holding and bargaining on the other (Balazs 1965). Such sharp differences in

recruitment had major consequences, but they could not eliminate the structural relevance of family connections and patronage for power elites.

Regionally differentiated styles of recruitment, moreover, never determined access to all social elites: none of the world's regions was ever wholly defined by one specific elite type or system of recruitment. Throughout the Islamic world, it was unthinkable to use slavery for the recruitment of the *ulema*. In China, hereditary power holders persisted in frontier regions, and hereditary power was extended to other groups under the Qing dynasty. The examinations, moreover, were never the main channel of advancement for military commanders. In Europe, the church, only in part dominated by the noble elites, offered commoners a chance of acquiring elite status and high office. Across the globe, wealth created possibilities for social mobility, through alliance and assimilation with vested elites, or because of the recurring willingness of governments to sell entitlements and offices for ready cash.

Patrimonialism and the Dynastic Cycle

Distances, difficult landscapes, minimal infrastructures, and limited means of communication severely constrained the power of all pre-modern governments. The steadfast loyalty of locals could never be taken for granted; sending officials to distant provinces for protracted periods almost inevitably transformed these agents of central power into local power holders. Numerous methods were devised to prevent this shift of loyalty and purpose. Governors were not to be appointed in their home regions and should not be accompanied by family members. All office holders were to be reassigned to new locations regularly, in line with a process of evaluation that might entail severe punishment. Trusted inspectors (Carolingian *missi dominici,* Chinese censors) were sent around to check on the performance of local elites; ombudsman systems invited all people to report the misdemeanors of power holders to the ruler directly. Alternatively, local hereditary power holders could be coerced to attend court regularly, or even to leave family members and retainers at the capital while they returned to their seats of provincial power, as was the case for the daimyo lords in Tokugawa Japan (1603–1868).

Through examinations, enslavement, and devotion, princes could rejuvenate their elites, quite often profoundly. In the changeover from the Tang (618–907) to the Song (960–1279) dynasty, Chinese aristocrats disappeared; their role being gradually taken over by examination graduates. The increasing monopoly of high office by *devshirme* recruits marginalized frontier raider families, once the near-equals of the House of Osman. Prelates arisen through

the Church from lower backgrounds and with celibacy reducing their options to pursue family interests, figured prominently in European kingdoms challenged by the ambitions of noble grandees. At many courts, outsiders, exiles, and others without connections among local elites were used for positions of trust. It is no coincidence that eunuchs were the prime example of this category: not only did they have a suspect status; they were also unable to reproduce physically.

Even such new groups defined by loyalty and dependence could, however, metamorphose rapidly into vested power elites. Religious devotion has a profoundly personal character: a new prince could not always emulate the charisma of his forebear, nor did the offspring of disciples necessarily accept him as their spiritual mentor. Sons of the mesmerized disciples of the first hour, unswervingly supporting Safavid Shah Ismail, became quarrelsome local power holders. Enslavement ideally needed to be repeated in every generation, with freshly uprooted outsiders serving their prince without ever consolidating their power. In practice, slave soldiers and governors soon obtained more rights and gradually formed a semi-hereditary upper layer. From the seventeenth century onward, *devshirme* levies became increasingly rare, and sons of vested families entered the palace-based elite machinery (Kunt 1983). Even eunuchs—the outsiders *par excellence*—were able to consolidate their power through adoption, investment, and retirement from court, although they did so more successfully in West Asia than in East Asia, where social and religious prejudice against them was stronger.

Arguably, only the Chinese examination system was able to serve its purpose over many centuries: it prevented inheritance of offices, complicated continuity in power at the family level, and, at the same time, conferred legitimacy on the emperor and his magistracy. In theory, the examinations made possible the rise of paupers from rags to riches, as well as the downfall of distinguished families no longer able to compete effectively. In practice, however, examinations assisted the social reproduction of the gentlemen-scholars as a group: wealth was required to allow youngsters to train for the examinations—a drawn-out process that never guaranteed success. In addition, Late Imperial China's intricate machinery for the supervision, evaluation, and reassignment of magistrates (Guy 2010) remained unmatched before the breakthroughs of Europe on the threshold of modernity.

Elites tended to drift away from the center and pursue their own regional agendas even in highly organized China. Apparently, no single pre-modern polity could escape indefinitely from this logic. This persistent centrifugal force was reversed repeatedly by the resurgence of central power, often after periods of war or rebellion, but sometimes through the succession of a

particularly talented or forceful scion of the dynasty. Hence, it is easy to understand that pre-modern political thinkers worldwide adopted a cyclical perspective. Ibn Khaldun stressed the strength of desert peoples and the decadence engendered by settled urban luxury, yet at the heart of the cyclical process, he put the loss of group cohesion (*asabiyya*)—the loyalty binding a leader and his key followers. Once we read his view in more general and less normative terms, Ibn Khaldun's formula resembles Max Weber's classic statement on the 'routinization' of charismatic power (Weber 1978): a unified new elite around a charismatic ruler becomes a divided elite around a traditional ruler. Charisma, tradition, and legal-rational forms interlace in the pre-modern examples discussed here, with different emphasis in subsequent phases. For the breakdown of the ties between rulers and elites, many other factors have been put forward. Rapid population growth put severe pressure on the relationship between populace, elites, and governments. Imperial overstretch has been cited as causing, in particular, the disintegration of powerful empires. These alternative explanations, however, always include in their causal chains the changing relationships between intermediary elites and rulers, between periphery and center.

Epilogue: Breakthroughs and Continuities

Machiavelli overstated servility in the East in order to underscore the autonomy of European elites. Montesquieu used 'Oriental despotism' to criticize European kings who betrayed his definition of monarchy as based on honor, intermediary elites, and the sharing of power. Freedom engendered through elite autonomy, in Montesquieu's view, was the essence of Europe's political setup. These views echoed Aristotle's statements about the intelligent yet meek peoples of Asia, the ferocious but independent Europeans, and the 'spirited and intelligent' Greeks, who combined, he thought, the best of both worlds. While it is easy to ridicule such simplistic contrasts, we should ask ourselves whether they still resonate in Western thinking about East and West in the common contrast drawn between democracy and authoritarianism. Did elites have a profoundly different role in different parts of the world? Did the formidable political changes in Europe between 1750 and 1850 lead to a fundamentally different role for elites?

Repeated cycles of drawing together and falling apart were associated with a long-term strengthening of the center in Europe, as well as in Asia (Lieberman 2003). Europe, a latecomer on the global scene and a slow starter in terms of administrative capabilities, caught up with the main Asian players from the

fifteenth century onward. Incessant competition among European states coincided with their shared movement toward global hegemony. From the late eighteenth century onward, a new series of global wars, spearheaded by major European powers, put severe pressure on all states and empires: no longer could they maintain elite privilege and, at the same time, solve fiscal and military problems. The American and French revolutions emerged out of this deadlock, and they fundamentally altered the political configuration in Europe as well as the global balance of power. Moreover, European military capacities expanded rapidly as a consequence of the industrial revolution. These changes created a fundamentally different world.

The 'Atlantic revolution' engendered a new and turbulent phase of political experimentation with the consequences of popular sovereignty and assemblies based on elections. A sequence of revolutions and coups showed the difficulty of coping with open criticism of and organized opposition to regimes. How should the basic contours and rights of the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches of the state be defined? A rapid succession of constitutions in post-revolutionary France, with each constitutional committee seeking to remedy mistakes its predecessor made, reverberated throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These developments constituted a watershed in Europe but also at the global level. Yet such sweeping change should not blind us to basic continuities.

The collective leadership's power in modern states, whether in democratic or authoritarian regimes, is far greater than it was in any pre-modern state. Bloodshed was conspicuously present as a sign of dynastic power in the pre-modern world; yet the capacity for coercion and the use of force in modern states is far more impressive, even if it often is more implicit than explicit. Redistribution was a key aspect of relations between rulers and elites in pre-modern history. As long as rulers could effectively shower their elites with benefices, or at least maintain the expectation that they could do so, they were able to count on their loyalty and obedience. Analogously, corporate, regional, and ideological interest groups today seek ways to influence decision-making and obtain favors. Kingdoms included vested elites they could confront only at the cost of widespread violence. Similarly, most contemporary states have sectors so entrenched that their interests cannot be touched without risking a serious upheaval. Redistribution is, by definition, a key aspect of government, and it is a vital factor in determining balances between elites and the political center.

Finally, while we tend to look back with disgust at the dynastic and authoritarian style of rule commonly found in history, there is little doubt that, on the whole, people at the time accepted dynastic leadership much as we

now accept democracy: a system is embraced even if its practices and actors are decried. Bad kings and cruel advisors were a common theme in popular culture, along with saintly rulers and friends of the people. Coercion, pragmatism, and ideals form part of any consolidated political system, albeit in very different proportions.

Dynastic power and rule did not wholly disappear after 1800. The private worlds of constitutional monarchs today are matters of fascination among populations worldwide. In West Asia and South-East Asia, dynastic leadership came to the fore when it was tending to recede elsewhere. While Moroccan kings can look back on a long tradition, others in the region and elsewhere have invented mixtures of dynastic power and modern instruments of government. Autocratic leadership tends to develop hereditary aspirations. The Kim dynasty in North Korea suggests that age-old practices of power are more important than particular ideologies that rulers embrace. Vladimir Putin may not establish his own dynasty, but his self-representation repeats and inflates clichés from the dynastic past: the stern protector, the great hunter and sportsman, the friend of ordinary people. Political families in the USA, from the Roosevelts and Kennedys to the Bushes and Clintons, show that dynastic tendencies can be found in modern democracies. Business dynasties, which have been especially prominent in the banking and automobile industries, are a familiar aspect of modern capitalist economies, and they exemplify many of the patterns examined in this chapter.

Modern theorists of elites from Mosca, Pareto, and Michels to their contemporary successors have argued that the rise of modernity did not eliminate the existence or reduce the importance of elites. Similarly, we can conclude that no single dynastic polity can be found in Europe or Asia where the stylized omnipotence of a ruler made the intervention of elites behind the throne and in wider realm impossible, The 'iron law of oligarchy' put forward by Michels in the context of modern parties is valid for pre-modern dynastic history. Ronald Syme once coined an apt statement about Rome that applies to pre-modern polities:

> In all ages, whatever the form and name of government, be it monarchy, republic, or democracy, an oligarchy lurks behind the façade. Major differences in scale, instruments of government, and ideologies separate pre-modern dynasties from modern states, and profound differences can be discerned between regional traditions of governance past and present. Yet when we concentrate on the practices of power elites before turning to their self-representations and ideologies, the gulf separating these very different worlds turns out to be narrower than we might expect. (Syme 1939, p. 7)

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14

Political Elites in the Middle East and North Africa

Clement M. Henry

Patterns of elite relations vary considerably across the very heterogeneous region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), consisting for the purposes of this chapter of 20 of the Arab League's 22 members plus Iran, Israel, and Turkey.[1] The common experience shared by the entire region was subordination to Western imperialism. As late as 1920, this core of the Muslim world was occupied and carved up into directly ruled colonies, protectorates, League of Nations "Mandates," and recognized spheres of influence. Indeed, the various Christian powers, including the new Soviet Union, dominated virtually the entire Dar al-Islam.[2] The various forms of imperialist subjugation and consequent Islamic and nationalist reactions would decisively shape postcolonial patterns of elite relations. As noted in the introduction to this handbook section, "Once an elite pattern is established in a country, it strongly tends to persist and so do the kind of practices and political regime associated with it."

The postcolonial patterns rested on precolonial baselines altered by various forms of subjugation and efforts of liberation. Although the Dar al-Islam ("home of Islam") was a theoretical unity, it housed a variety of polities that the new civilizing missionaries would splice and dice. "To Colonize, to

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Exterminate," the title of a recent French history (Grandmaison 2005) points to colonial-initiated genocides in Algeria and Libya as well as in large parts of the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa. Even in Libya, however, there was some continuity between precolonial and postcolonial elites, since the genocide was relatively recent and mainly affected Cyrenaica. Elsewhere, new Western presences reshaped precolonial elites by extending Western education and Western-type military careers to new aspiring middle classes. Nationalist struggles for independence, in turn, gave rise to distinctive patterns of postcolonial elite relations.

This chapter first identifies patterns of elite relations in precolonial times. A typology of colonial situations follows, ranging from the genocidal extreme of French Algeria to barely perceptible Western presences in Iran, Turkey, and much of the Arabian Peninsula. The paradigmatic case of Tunisia will then be examined and systematically compared with neighboring Algeria and Morocco. Although French colonialism in North Africa was more prolonged and intrusive than in the Middle East, the resulting patterns in North African elite relations at independence may be extended to the other former British as well as French possessions of the MENA. The critical relationship to be explored is between educated villagers and urban elites. How the two were integrated largely determined the type of postcolonial regime, whether by civilians or military officers.

The regimes of the newly independent countries tended to be fragile because they virtually excluded large segments of their populations. As they enacted neo-liberal reforms in the 1970s and 1980s to meet the challenges of "globalization," the postcolonial elites faced rising oppositions based on identity politics. The imagined new communities ranged from supposedly "primordial" tribes and other ethnic identities—Arab, Berber, Kurd—to the Dar al-Islam (home of Islam), recollected from an earlier era of globalization. Nationalist revolutions that Western observers had mistakenly viewed as secular, such as Algeria's, suffered reactions from excluded populations across the MENA (Lustick 2002; Walzer 2015). Those elites who had evolved, like the Tunisians, out of organized mass struggles for independence still seem better positioned to absorb the new oppositions than their less representative counterparts in countries who had negotiated with the foreigner without ever needing to mobilize their populations for independence. Nevertheless, the fallout from the US-led invasion of Iraq, coupled with the Arab uprisings of 2011, has further divided and polarized elites across the MENA. The devastation of Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen has rendered any political elite problematic in those countries.

In Search of Traditional Elites

The precolonial MENA essentially consisted of the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Morocco. By 1830, when the French invaded Algiers, local dynasties in Egypt and Tunisia already enjoyed relative autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. In the Levant (contemporary Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria), urban notables from a number of cities served as intermediaries between their local populations and the Porte (Hourani 1968; Khoury 1990; Gelvin 2006). Ottoman reforms implemented by Midhat Pasha had already begun to define and integrate modern Iraq in the late nineteenth century. But very few precolonial polities actually matched the colonial spaces carved out by the Western powers in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The big exceptions were Egypt, Iran, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey. Even in these spaces, definitively mapped by European geographers, the reach of central power varied considerably, with the Moroccan sultan, for instance, dominating only a part of the country, the *bled al makhzen* (territory of the royal household)[3] while in constant negotiation with tribal dissidents of the *bled as-siba* (territory of dissidence). Upper Egypt, with its capital in Qena, almost entirely escaped control by Cairo until 1773. Although occupied along with the rest of Egypt in 1882, it never really identified with the Cairo-led nationalist movement against the British (Abul-Magd 2013).

Traditional elites were hardly monolithic, despite the label of patrimonialism often attached to their polities by Western social scientists. "Sultanism," the extreme case of patrimonialism in which the ruler runs his polity like a personal estate, may better fit American banana republics (dominated by modern American capital) than traditional MENA societies.[4] In nineteenth-century Morocco, the entire administrative elite consisted of a few ministers and their retainers accompanying the sultan on his armed expeditions to collect the taxes from dissident tribes. Perhaps the elite numbered in the hundreds if it is defined as "individuals and small groups with the *organized capacity* to make major and sustained political trouble if they choose" (Higley, Chapter 12). Potential tribal insurgents should be considered members of precolonial MENA elites. Delegates of weak central power, like the Glawi of Marrakech in nineteenth-century Morocco, sometimes acquired their own virtually autonomous tax farms.

All of these traditional MENA societies were almost entirely Muslim, and religious leaders, like tribal representatives, also played major roles as intermediaries with both urban and rural populations. Supplementing the orthodox ulama associated with major centers of learning such as Al-Azhar (Cairo), Zitouna (Tunis), and Qarawiyyin (Fez), a multitude of Sufi religious orders

(*tariqat* or "pathways") spread from cities across the countryside and desert oases bringing Islam closer to the people. Urban merchants, too, must be included in any study of traditional elites. The Achilles heel of traditional polities across North Africa, as Ibn Khaldun observed in the fourteenth century, was the inevitable budget deficit, brought on by excessive if often desperate expenditures on the part of profligate third-generation elites. In the Dar al-Islam, wealthy merchants could flee excessive taxation with their mobile finances.

In the Ottoman heartland, however, the sultan enjoyed greater infrastructural power based on an established bureaucracy, relatively equitable peasant landholdings, and a long-established and generally respected imperial legal system. In less sedentarized Iran, the Qajar Dynasty, backed by Turkic tribes, relocated to a fixed capital city, Tehran, but its bureaucracy could not match the Ottoman's reach. Even so, the traditional elite structure of Iran as well as of Ottoman Turkey, nicely delineated by James Bill (1972), was more complex than Morocco's, because the state was larger. Simplest of all, perhaps, was the Saudi polity carved out of the Arabian Peninsula from 1902 to 1934. It consisted of an enterprising young member of the Saud family, a few kinsmen, and the backing of the Al-Sheikh family of religious scholars—descendants of Mohammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792). They created a force of religiously inspired "brothers," the *Ikhwan* (not to be confused with the more modern reformist *Ikhwan* of the Muslim Brotherhood), who captured a large part of the Arabian Peninsula and threatened Iraq until the British stopped them in 1929.

Types of Colonial Situation

Colonial presences varied in their duration and penetration of local societies, and some of them, like that of Britain (and eventually the United States) in Iran and Saudi Arabia, had neither an obvious beginning, such as a treaty or military occupation, nor an end such as a celebrated independence day.[5] Even in Egypt, clearly falling under British military occupation in 1882, the duration of formal foreign rule is debatable. Unlike the French in Tunisia, the British did not establish a formal protectorate until after the outbreak of World War I in 1914, and they granted Egypt formal independence in 1922. Figure 14.1 assumes, however, that the effective British colonial presence lasted from the initial military occupation beyond formal independence to 1954 when the last British soldier departed from the Suez Canal, and it could even be argued that a residual British and French presence endured until 1956,
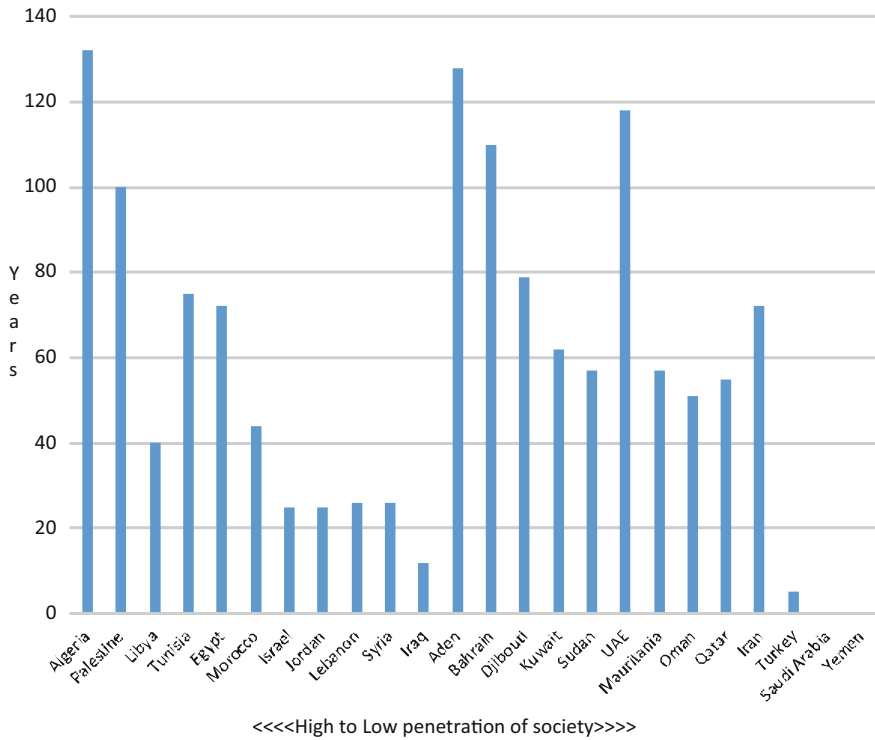
Fig. 14.1   Duration and penetration of colonial presences in MENA

when Gamal Abdul Nasser finally nationalized the Canal, and that the period of colonial control began much earlier than 1882, perhaps as far back as Napoleon's invasion of 1798 or at least to the era of Mohammed Ali, who ruled Egypt from 1805 to 1849, launched reforms in the 1820s with the help of French Saint-Simoniens, and subsequently integrated into Britain's "informal empire" (Ferguson 2003). But then Tunisian "colonization" would also need to be extended back, to include the reforming efforts of Ahmad Bey, who ruled from 1837 to 1855, trying to keep up with the Ottomans and Egyptians (Brown 1975).

Penetration of precolonial society is even more difficult to estimate. It ranged from attempted genocide and/or occupation of a "land without people" for a "people without land" to offshore naval protection represented by an apprentice diplomat to a select local family. In former French North Africa, the colonial presences can be systematically compared: in addition to clearly demarcated duration, they are indicated by the numbers of settlers, the amounts of land they stole from the indigenous populations; the latter's degree

of pauperization; the brutality of the colonial police; and indices of social mobilization, particularly of Western education. All of the indicators, except education in French Algeria, are roughly correlated with the duration of colonial rule (Moore 1970, pp. 23–58). Less systematically, Fig. 14.1 includes the rest of the MENA as well, giving a rough subjective rank order of the penetration of colonial rule into the Muslim societies.

The countries cluster in two groups along the horizontal axis indicating the penetration of colonial rule into the respective societies. The more penetrating presences are located in North Africa and the Levant, whereas the less extensive ones run from the Arabian Sea to the more peripheral parts of Northern Africa and also include Iran and Turkey. In each set of countries, the duration of colonial rule is roughly correlated with its penetration of the local society.

In North Africa, Libya is a slight exception that reflects the exceptional brutality of fascist Italy in the late 1920s and early 1930s. As for the UAE—a federation of Trucial States cobbled together by Britain and granted independence in 1971—early treaties dated back to 1853. Iran was divided into British and Russian spheres of influence in 1907, when oil was discovered, but it never became a formal protectorate. Its "independence" marks the overthrow in 1979 of a dynasty that British and American intelligence services had supported by suppressing Iranian nationalists in 1953. Ottoman Turkey lost World War I, and the British occupied Istanbul until 1923. Arguably, Saudi Arabia was an informal protectorate first of Britain and then of the United States. The only "settlers" were the oil exploration teams confined to stratified ghettos; the rest of society was thereby sheltered from foreign social practices (Vitalis 2006). North Yemen remained relatively isolated after the Ottoman defeat of 1918 until the death of the Zaydi Imam Yahia in 1948.

The variety of colonial situations, in Iran as elsewhere, defined fields of contestation that challenged traditional elites and offered opportunities for new elites to emerge and gain control of the postcolonial states. The longer and more extensive the colonial situation, the greater the discrediting of traditional elites collaborating with the colonizer and the greater the differentiation of new elites integrated in the cause of independence and nation-building. A constructive colonial dialectic required three generations, a good 60 to 80 years, to play out the master-slave model depicted by G. F. W. Hegel (1949 [1807], pp. 229–240): (1) in search of recognition, the slave emulates the master but is despised; (2) the slave asserts his free origins and resists the master but is suppressed; and (3) the slave works hard for the master, perfecting his techniques, and thereby becomes indispensable and achieves full recognition. Postcolonial elites remained vulnerable, however. As Ian Lustick has observed,

The triple conjunction of gross disparities between what the nationalists (of all stripes) promised and what they delivered, the availability of widely understood religious notions of political identity, and the presence of ambitious and talented Islamist (and Jewish fundamentalist) élites able to use those ideas to explain nationalist failures and advance their own solutions, opened 'wars of position' over the meaning of political identity in polities throughout the Middle East. (2002, p. 32)

A subsequent postcolonial dialectic expresses new identity crises in the face of regional and international pressures. (1) Ostensibly secular national elites, even if they perform neo-liberal reforms demanded by international financial institutions, prove unable to build sustainable modern economies and cultures; (2) Islamists, Arab nationalists, and entrepreneurs of alternative identities attack the national elite as collaborators with new forms of imperialism; and (3) the national elite deepens its social bases, incorporating its peripheral oppositions into less rigid visions of national identity.

The Tunisian Paradigm

Successive generations of Tunisian elites played out these three stages of colonial dialectic to achieve a relatively differentiated synthesis. A first generation of Young Tunisians consisted of an upper crust of the traditional elite, principally of Turkish ruling-class origins. Many of them were steeped in both French and Arab culture as graduates of the elite Collège Sadiki, a school founded by Kheireddine Pasha, the Tunisian reformer (Moore 1965, pp. 23–24; Perkins 2014, pp. 39–40). As determined modernizers of their "archaic" society, they accepted the French protectorate, even official French colonization, but expected to be treated as at least the equals of the generally less cultivated *colons.*

Disappointed, rejected, and in some cases exiled, the remnants of the Young Tunisians joined a broader political movement of urban merchants, religious scholars, and tradespeople—the *baldi* of Tunis and other cities along Tunisia's Eastern coastline—to call for a new Constitution (*destour*) and self-determination after the First World War. These traditional urban elites agitated to little avail in their Destour Party against a deeply entrenched French settler regime. But by this time, French education had filtered down to Tunisian villages, notably in the Sahel (coastal) area around Sousse, Monastir, and Mahdia, producing French university graduates who outnumbered the lawyers and other professionals of *baldi* family origins (De Montety 1973

[1940]). By 1937, incapable of controlling street demonstrations, the *baldi*-based Destour lost out to a broader-based middle stratum of French-educated professionals, predominantly from village families in the Sahel.

This third generation of Tunisian nationalists led by Habib Bourguiba effectively assimilated modern French values and political techniques to mobilize their fellow villagers against the Old Destour's traditional elites as well as the French occupation. Bourguiba pitted *le pays réel* versus *le pays legal*, that is to say, civil society in opposition to the colonial state. As the nationalist struggle intensified after World War II, organized Tunisian labor also broke away from French trade unions to create the *Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail* (UGTT), the strongest labor movement in the Arab world and a close ally of the Neo-Destour.

Habib Bourguiba's Neo-Destour Party numbered about one fifth of Tunisia's adult male population by independence in 1956 (Moore 1965, p. 151), after 22 years of political struggle (including Bourguiba's accumulation of ten years in colonial prisons). The gestation period offered the postcolonial regime a decade of political legitimacy but excluded "archaic" Tunisians, including traditional religious ulama, from its vision of a modern Tunisian society. Reflecting the duration and penetration of its colonial situation, the Tunisian postcolonial elite was relatively differentiated yet integrated by the consensus of modernizing nationalists. But the consensus was fragile, being subject to the challenges of new elites appealing to populations excluded from official visions of modernity. Although the personality cults of the postcolonial state eventually turned the ruling party into a used-up cheer leader, the legacy of anti-colonial struggle embedded society with latent associative skills—social capital for civil society.[6]

To the east, the closest comparison to the Tunisian postcolonial political infrastructure lay in parts of Palestine appropriated by Israel, despite a much less lengthy colonial occupation (1920–1948). European immigrants to Palestine did not need a long gestation period to create a strong mass party in the 1930s, just when the Tunisians created the Neo-Destour. The Israeli Labor Party, consisting of educated, upwardly mobile immigrants, became the dominant ruling party for the first three decades of independence. Eventually, in 1977, however, it lost its monopoly to ultra-nationalist former terrorists and other extremists who manipulated religion after the "miracle" of capturing East Jerusalem in Israel's surprise attack of 1967. The Labor Party failed to attract new immigrants, mainly from Russia, who instead gravitated toward the Zionist Revisionists. Their political use of religion of course had its Islamic counterpart.

Broadly shared religious sentiments offered opportunities for political entrepreneurs who felt excluded from their postcolonial elite to engage in a new dialectic.[7] "Islamism" as a political ideology took different forms depending, again, on the postcolonial situation. In Tunisia Rached Ghannoushi was Bourguiba's "illegitimate" offspring (Zghal 1991, p. 205), but offspring nonetheless, being far more progressive than the leadership of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which reacted within the narrower social bases of Egyptian nationalism. A liberal Egyptian sociologist, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, who has studied various Egyptian Islamist movements since the 1970s, estimated Ghannoushi in 2011 to be not one but two generations ahead of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership.[8] Their different histories help to explain why Tunisia has succeeded to date in making a transition to multi-party democracy, whereas the Egyptian Revolution of January 25, 2011, has so far failed to reconcile the political adversaries and bring the military under civilian control.

Despite very parallel experiences in nineteenth-century state building, culminating in French and British occupations, respectively, in 1881 and 1882, the French presence in Tunisia consisted of a far more intrusive colonial settler presence than that of the "veiled" British protectorate (Milner 1892). During Egypt's nominal independence from 1922 to 1952 under a liberal constitution, the nationalist Wafd Party easily won elections whenever they were fair and free. But it was a party of large landowners, quite unlike the Tunisian Neo-Destour. The Wafd never needed to develop a mass party organization because the landowners simply ordered their tenants and other dependents to vote for them. Until 1952, a succession of parliaments rejected every attempt at land reform.

After the Revolution of 1952, Gamal Abdul Nasser's new regime finally enacted land reform and indeed mobilized lower strata of landholders as well as a new middle class of salaried workers. The functional equivalents of the Tunisian Neo-Destour party activists, however, were Nasser's Free Officers, not a political party rooted in urban and village branches and cells. Reforms in 1936 had permitted Egyptians like Nasser of modest background to enter Egypt's Military Academy and become the nucleus of the Free Officers Movement. But their subsequent efforts, after seizing power, failed to form modern instruments of political mobilization. Leonard Binder (1978, pp. 12, 16, 156–157, 406) observed that after the agrarian reform, up to one million landowners of more modest holdings of 20–50 feddans (1 feddan=1.038 acres) were a sort of "second stratum" or "instrument without which the rulers cannot rule." They constituted some 3 percent of the population but had no way of holding the military rulers accountable. And eventually, under Husni Mubarak (1981–2011), the regime simply reversed

the agrarian reform and suppressed peasant opposition. By contrast, in 1969, the Sahel peasant base of the Neo-Destour (renamed the Destour Socialist Party) reversed efforts of the government to tie them to state cooperatives.

In less protracted colonial situations, independence came before new Western-educated middle strata displaced traditional elites. In Syria and Lebanon, for instance, politics remained in the hands of old families of notables for almost three decades. In Iraq, these included large absentee landowners, the beneficiaries, as in Syria, of Ottoman efforts to encourage the consolidation of private property in land. As in Egypt, the major source of social mobility in Syria and Iraq was the army, and a succession of coups culminated in the more durable military dictatorships of Hafez al-Assad in Syria (1970–2000) and Saddam Hussein (1982–2003) in Iraq. Each ruled in the name of the Baath Party founded in Syria in 1947 and merged with the Arab Socialist Party in 1952. The party originally had a rural village as well as urban base and won 22 out of 140 seats in the famously "free" 1954 elections to the Syrian parliament, but its Military Committee seized power in both Syria and Iraq in the 1960s, terminating this potential civilian equivalent of the Tunisian Neo-Destour. Consequently, as in Egypt, the top political elite consisted of upwardly mobile military officers (and the friends and kin of Saddam Hussein, a villager who became a party activist, not a military officer) who largely displaced the traditional urban elites.

Comparisons with Algeria

Tunisia's struggle for independence gave rise to a mass party and trade union that rooted its new and relatively differentiated elite in an extensive civil society. By contrast, France's more protracted, extensive colonial presence in Algeria virtually eliminated traditional elites and constructive dialogue between generations, and the French settlers permitted far less French education enabling the rise of new Algerian elites. With three times the population of Tunisia, Algeria counted about half as many university graduates at independence in the mid-1950s. Moreover, the revolutionary armed struggle needed to liberate Algeria from its status as a set of French departments and territories undercut efforts of -French-educated Algerian politicians to engage in organized political opposition.

Algeria's Front of National Liberation (FLN) that launched the armed uprising in 1954 required all aspiring members to renounce any previous political affiliations. Yet efforts by a part of the FLN leadership to establish political control over the military failed, and the ruling elite at independence

consisted of the General Staff of Algeria's standing army allied temporarily with a faction of the fragmented FLN. The army's chief, Houari Boumedienne, seized power in 1965 and recruited some of the French university elite to positions of power, but they remained dependent upon him until his death in 1978, when dominant coalitions of military officers, including former officers of the French military as well as guerrilla leaders, took charge. Deprived of autonomous civilian structures, the French-educated elite remained fragmented and disconnected from civil society.

Regional ties tempered the distrust of less-educated guerrilla leaders for French trained intellectuals. For instance, Algeria's first president, Ahmed Ben Bella, recruited Mohammed Khemisti, his fellow villager from Maghnia, to serve as foreign minister. A former medical student active in student politics, Khemisti was permitted, despite Ben Bella's distrust of more educated Algerians, to recruit substantial numbers of university graduates to serve as diplomats. Educated Algerians came disproportionately from Kabylia, where their maternal language was a Berber dialect rather than Arabic. But they could not play roles comparable to those of Tunisians from Sahel villages. As independent Algeria attempted to recover its Arabic culture, divisions between Kabyles and other Algerians intensified. Already in 1964, Ben Bella's minister of education "Arabized" an extra year of primary school education normally taught in French by an Algerian teaching staff that was predominantly Kabyle. He ordered poorly qualified Egyptian teachers to staff the public schools, thereby generating considerable resentment among non-Kabyle as well as Kabyle parents.

Poorly executed Arabization programs resulted, by the 1980s, in major divisions between French- and Arabic-educated graduates, with the latter unable to find good jobs in industry, finance, or even in most public administrations. But the resented "French party," as it came to be called, was certainly not exclusively Kabyle. Indeed, the various grievances expressed by Kabyles, whether in 1962 or five decades later, were national, not regional, much like those of Bourguiba's Sahel. Algeria's elite remains highly fragmented, however, despite a multi-party system since 1989 that supplements the disconnected FLN. Neither parties nor formal institutions carry weight; without durable intermediaries the political elite is reduced to a small number of "deciders," not fully known to the public but consisting principally of active and retired top military officers, coupled with their extensive patronage networks serviced by oil revenues and ill-gotten gains (Werenfels 2007). Since the election of President Bouteflika to a fourth term of office, the inner core of "deciders" has tipped toward the president's personal entourage.

The other countries that also experienced the most extensive destruction at the hands of the colonizer, Palestine and Libya, have equally fragmented elites. In the case of Libya, Mussolini's defeat in World War II rendered unnecessary any national liberation struggle that might have knit social forces into political networks; as for Palestine, the occupier managed in 1967 to prevent Yasser Arafat from organizing resistance on the ground in the West Bank, much as the French had outlawed political activity in French Algeria. Palestinian elites remain geographically and ideologically divided; they also at this writing seem increasingly unable to control angry, humiliated people in the Occupied Territories. The Israeli occupation repressed *Fatah*, an acronym standing for the Movement for the Liberation of Palestine, and fostered divisions by supporting the rise of Hamas in the mid-1980s as a rival. Like the French in Algeria until 1962, the Israelis continue to subvert any sustained anti-colonial opposition.

Comparisons with Morocco

As Fig 14.1 suggests, Morocco experienced only two, not three generations of colonial occupation; no time, in other words, for a third generation of modernizers to incorporate earlier generations of nationalist resistance. The colonial dialectic could not play beyond a second generation consisting mainly of traditional urban elites associated with the Istiqlal Party, the Moroccan equivalent of Tunisia's old Destour Party. The monarchy, regaining power with independence in 1956, never permitted a third (Bourguiba-style) generation, exemplified by Mehdi Ben Barka, to achieve hegemony. By encouraging political pluralism, however, the monarchy enabled a more vibrant civil society than in many of the theoretically more monolithic republics.

The most important legacy of the anti-colonial struggle was the monarchy itself. The French deposed and expelled Sultan Mohammed V to Madagascar in 1954 for refusing to sign decrees granting political rights to French settlers in Morocco. Overnight he became the beacon of national unity that all Moroccans—Berber and Arab, in the mountains, plains, and cities—shared as they gazed into the moon and claimed to see him and his children watching over them. Returned to Morocco in 1955, he was the principal hero and beneficiary of independence in 1956. While sharing credit and power with the Istiqlal Party, he and his son, Crown Prince Hassan, deftly encouraged divisions within the party between conservative urban elites and a rising "third generation" of lower and middle Western-educated strata, between

the political and labor wings of the progressive forces, and between his rural Berber followers and the urban politicians.

By the mid-1970s, after brutal but selective repression, King Hassan II managed to corral all these forces into a parliamentary regime that he and his successor Mohammed VI would continue to reform but control. Hassan obliged the urban radicals elected to parliament, for instance, to wear the traditional white *djellaba* out of deference to their similarly clad ruler. Postcolonial Morocco was subsequently able to effectively neutralize the Islamist backlashes of the 1980s and 1990s by the king controlling the religious field as Commander of the Faithful while taming and coopting some of the Islamists, who were finally permitted to organize the Justice and Development Party (PJD).

The Moroccan monarchy may invite comparison with other monarchies in the region, but the horizontal axis of Fig. 14.1 displays differences that would be even greater if penetration were measured on a standard interval scale. Jordan is the only other serious contender, but the somewhat briefer colonial presence there was substantially less intrusive, coming under a League of Nations Mandate whose borders were finally fixed only in 1922. While King Abdullah II, like Mohammed VI, has a lineage traced back to the Prophet, his dynasty owes its existence to the British, not to any Jordanian nationalists. The fragile postcolonial monarchy was propped up by Britain and the United States and by secret understandings with Israel. It withstood the Islamist backlash of the 1980s only because its relatively tame Muslim Brotherhood had enjoyed royal favor in the 1960s as a counterweight to Nasser's Arab nationalism.

Morocco's other possible comparator is Saudi Arabia, but this kingdom, like Yemen, never experienced formal colonial rule and consequently never became a battleground for emerging nationalist elites. The Saudi dynasty has a history dating back to 1744, only a century less than Morocco's, and it also enjoys legitimacy, albeit based on a much harsher and simplistic understanding of Islam than Morocco's. Political parties do not exist, and the principal cleavages that the king must balance are the segments within the ruling family. The royals coopt Western, typically American-educated commoners to high position, but their authority rests on connections within the ruling family. Because of their strategic importance and protection by the king (Hertog 2010), some specialized agencies, such as Saudi Aramco and the Saudi Monetary Authority, retain a high degree of autonomy from an otherwise voracious multitude of princes. However, there are many turf battles between royals and commoners as well as within the royal family, and serious signs of corruption since the 1970s (Holden and Johns 1981) have put the monarchy

at increasing risk. As Ibn Khaldun observed of dynasties in the fourteenth century, the third generation tends to be overthrown by less corrupt, religiously inspired rivals from the desert. In 1979 descendants of the original Saudi-led *Ikhwan* occupied a key mosque and were dislodged with many casualties when the Saudis called upon French military assistance. In 2003 and again in 2015 the Saudi authorities have defended themselves, so far successfully, against al-Qaeda and ISIS.

The other monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council have even less legitimacy than the Saudis, as they are simply local families originally set up by British-Indian administrators and diplomats. Bahrain and Kuwait perhaps enjoy a slight edge over the others in the arts of association, having longer histories of parliamentary opposition and modern education. In response to threats from Iraq, Kuwait's ruling Sabah family has coexisted with a parliament that contains some opposition like Jordan's. But neither in Jordan nor Kuwait have "the individuals and small groups" in parliament developed "the *organized capacity* to make major and sustained political trouble if they choose" (Higley, infra). In Morocco, by contrast, the Justice and Development Party (PJD) gained some bargaining power after 2011 as the monarchy responded constructively with modest constitutional reforms to the popular uprisings associated with the Arab Spring.

Civil Versus Military Elite Integration

Apart from Morocco and Tunisia, Turkey is the only other country in the MENA to have absorbed and integrated its Islamist backlash into a pluralist political framework. Under Ottoman rule until 1918, Turkey never experienced a formal colonial presence, although it became bankrupt in 1876 and its state monopolies fell under multilateral European management after 1881. Turkey did, however, engage in an organized military uprising led by General Mustapha Kemal in 1919 against the French, Italian, British, and Greek victors of World War I and prevented their efforts to seize parts of what became the Republic of Turkey in 1924. The young Republic's modernizing elites, much like Bourguiba's Neo-Destour 30 years later, also went on the offensive against the traditional religious authorities. The Turks abolished the caliphate and established the Republican People's Party to control local authorities. In 1946, an opposition Democrat Party broke away from the one-party system and was permitted to win elections and come to power in 1950. The Turkish military intervened in 1960, 1972, 1980, and 1997 to protect the secular Republic from Islamist backlashes. Finally, the Islamist AK

Party consolidated a majority in parliament, winning elections in 2002, 2007, 2011, 2014, and 2015. After decades of military interventions taming the Islamists, these civilians have apparently brought the military under their control. However, President Erdogan's efforts to buttress his personal rule in new constitutional reform threatens peaceful coexistence and elite integration between Islamists and secularists, Turks and Kurds, Sunnis and Alevis, and various business conglomerates.

Although Turkey has not yet consolidated its civilian democracy, its relatively autonomous military contributed to elite integration by obliging the Islamists to respect the Republic's secular foundations. Renegotiating these foundations is a work in progress, in which Tunisia and Moroccan civilians are similarly engaged. But elsewhere in the region, postcolonial military regimes led to intensified ethnic and political cleavages. In Syria, it was a core faction of predominantly Alawi (heterodox Shi'i) officers who consolidated power in 1970 after a protracted series of military coups and attempted coups beginning in 1949, with backing from the American CIA, when most of the young officers were Sunni. Based in some 12 percent of an ethnically heterogeneous Syrian population, the Alawi officers brought to power with Hafiz al-Asad ruled over a Sunni majority. In Iraq, the situation is the reverse: a Sunni Arab minority, 20 percent of the population, ruled over a Shi'i majority.

It is tempting to argue that these Arab military regimes exacerbated sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shi'is. But just because 19 of Syria's top 33 military commanders between 1970 and 1998 were Alawite does not mean that the regime discriminated against other sects.[9] As for Iraq, Amazia Baram was hard pressed to discover sectarian identities, much less differences, within top political command posts of the ruling Baath Party: "The way to distinguish between Sunni and Shi'i Arabs is through indirect information, such as birthplace, name, family name, and the location in which a man's career as party functionary has been pursued (most Shi'i Arab party activists pursue their careers in Shi'i areas)" (1989, p. 448). In other words, this outside Israeli observer simply assumed that these differences had political significance and therefore needed to be identified within a staunchly secular Arab nationalist regime that denied their significance. His meticulous research also revealed, however, that after 1977, Saddam Hussein recruited increasing numbers of Shi'is to high positions, exercising real influence on government policies. Further, the social origins of the top military elite gradually shifted from urban to rural lower strata.

In a subsequent study (1997), Baram showed how the rural political infrastructure broke down in the 1980s, leading the regime to rely increasingly on traditional tribal leaders loyal to Saddam, Shi'i as well as Sunni. Sunni

versus Shi'i sectarian strife would seem to be at least as much the product of the American-led invasion of 2003 as of Saddam's rule. New, predominantly *Shi'i* Iraqi exiles such as the late Ahmed Chalabi were parachuted into occupied Iraq. Phoebe Marr (2007) noted that the "outsiders" dominated the political elite of "liberated" Iraq after elections in 2006. Subsequent violence and the emergence of ISIS throws into question the very concept of an "Iraqi" political elite. Imagined communities of Muslim sects have reversed Benedict Anderson's projections of nationhood. Libya, Syria, and Yemen also continue to disintegrate, as if to confirm Muammar Qaddafi's rejection in his classic *Green Book* of the very concept of political elite.

Challenges from the Peripheries

Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey have been the most successful of the postcolonial MENA states in integrating ever more differentiated elites into their respective political systems. Post-revolutionary Iran deserves to be added to the list because periodic elections under its complex constitution of checks and balances offer some controlled political spaces for liberal reformists, comparable to Morocco's. Since 2013, however, Turkey has backtracked as President Erdogan tightened his conservative coalition and subsequently appealed to narrow Turkish nationalism by resuming war against the Kurds. The North African regimes also still have extensive peripheries of impoverished populations.

   In the wake of the Arab uprisings of 2011, it is possible to examine how Arab public opinion views its respective political elites. The Arab Barometer completed three waves of surveys in 2008, 2011, and 2013 of representative samples in 13 countries, with countries like Egypt and Tunisia opening up to permit survey research in 2011. Trust in the political elite is indicated by the respondents' attitudes toward the government or prime minister, the parliament or judiciary, the police, and the army, combined into a simple index.[10]

   Amplified by surprisingly allegiant Saudis,[11] scoring some 16 percentage points above the average, the wave of surveys taken a few months after the overthrow of the Tunisian and Egyptian presidents in 2011 displayed a high point of trust in Arab elites, with an average ten points higher than in 2013 for a slightly different set of countries. In Egypt, trust plummeted as Egypt's first elected president, Mohammed Morsi, clearly failed to transcend his status as a second-string leader of the Muslim Brotherhood to serve all Egyptians. In Tunisia, too, bitter conflicts raged between liberals, old-regime politicians, and
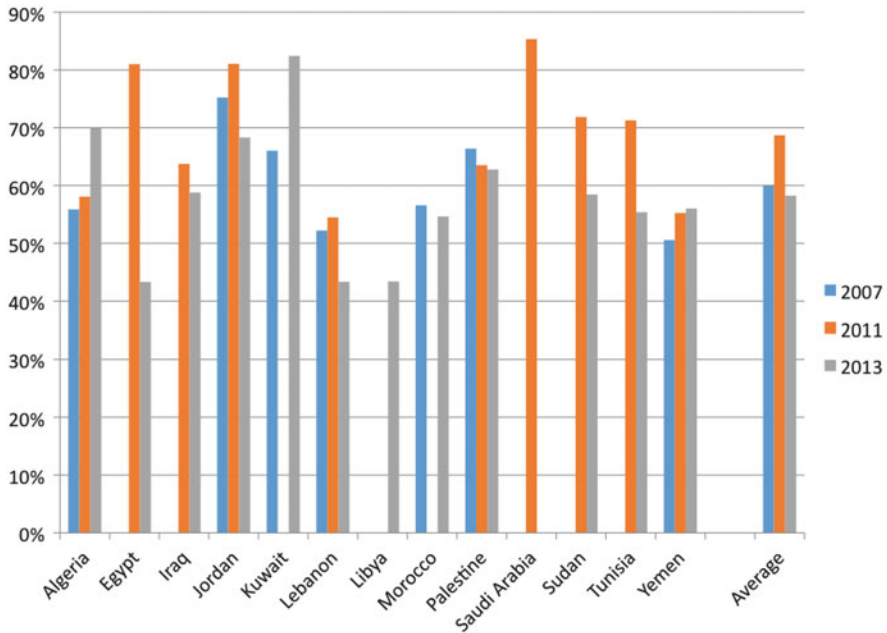
Fig. 14.2 Trust in the political elite, 2007–2013

the Nahda, itself divided over how to handle more extreme Salafists. Indeed, the only publics that seemed more trusting of their elites were the oil-rich Algerians and Kuwaitis, and—in very small, statistically insignificant measure—the Yemenis. But plummeting oil revenues and political paralysis have surely altered Algerian public opinion since 2013, while Yemen disintegrates in a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran (Fig. 14.2).

Despite its reverses, the greatest hope for consolidated democracy in the Arab region of the MENA lies in beleaguered Tunisia. Its biggest challenges are the security threats posed by long borders with Libya and the lack of integration of its peripheral regions—places like Sidi Bou Zid where the Revolution of January 14, 2011, originated—into the national economy. Recently available data about Tunisia's political elite offer some hope for the future. Buehler and Ayari (2015) have assembled a database of the 389 ministers serving in the governments of Presidents Bourguiba (1956–1987), Ben Ali (1987–2011), Mbaza (2011), Marzouki (2011–2014), and Caid Sebsi (2014–). They show steady increases in the percentages of ministers coming from Tunisia's interior provinces, as well as their continuing high levels of French university education, except in the Islamist-led governments of 2011–2014.[12] But just because ministers come from the interior provinces, rather than Tunis

or the Sahel, does not mean that their governments will devise policies responding to the grievances from the interior that sparked the Revolution of January 14, 2011. In fact, more ministers since 2014 have bourgeois origins than those serving in any previous Tunisian governments, not that class origins necessarily impact upon policy.[13]

Conclusion

As Tunisia illustrates, the colonial presences in the MENA decisively affected their postcolonial elites, offering varying degrees of nationalist consciousness and built-in associational capacities. The longer and more intrusive presences enabled new Western- educated villagers and lower urban strata to lead nationalist movements. Their postcolonial elites tended to be more broadly based than those of states that had experienced a less intrusive foreign presence and were simply granted independence without a struggle. In these situations, the postcolonial elite largely consisted of traditional notables and religious leaders, and their newly educated villagers and lower urban strata only achieved power through subsequent military coups.

   In varying degree, the postcolonial MENA elites became vulnerable to resurgent Islamist forces in the 1970s and 1980s. Those countries that had experienced political mobilization before independence tended to be better situated than the others to confront the new challenges. A new postcolonial dialectic led to the shattering of some of the more fragile new elites. This new dialectic consisted of the responses of national elites to the forces of globalization. Reminiscent of the ineffective first generation of reformists in colonial times, they typically first engaged in crony capitalism, twisting to their benefit neo-liberal reforms exacted from Western creditors. They became vulnerable to a variety of oppositions that independence had excluded, from secular leftists and nationalists to Islamists of all sorts. Catalyzed by the American-led invasion of Iraq, sectarian Islamists deepened the negative second generation of the new dialectic, which has spread across much of the region, destroying regimes and their political elites. The survivors struggle for new syntheses deepening their social bases, exemplified by Tunisia's Revolution of January 14, 2011, and, at least until 2014, Turkey under the rule of the AK Party incorporating the Anatolian hinterlands.

   Elsewhere, the struggles for new syntheses continue. In Palestine, anger in the face of continuing land theft and daily humiliations at checkpoints rages out of elite control. In the face of Israeli occupation, Palestinian identity is reinforced but the very concept of a political elite is at risk, so also in the

disintegrating states of Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen, where political elites may be subject to new definitions of their jurisdictions.

It must be noted in conclusion that external interventions, notably of the United States in Iraq and indirectly as an accomplice of Saudi Arabia in Bahrain and Yemen, made major contributions to the new political disorder. Similarly, various outside forces are making use of the conflict in Syria to engage in proxy wars, in some ways reminiscent of the parties to the Lebanese Civil War between 1975 and 1990. As states disintegrate, the US military industrial complex is seen in the region as an integral partner of its corrupt elites (Kadri 2015, pp. 9, 228–236).

Notes

1. In addition to Iran, Israel, and Turkey, the Arab states included in the World Bank's definition of MENA are Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates, to which I add Sudan and Djibouti but exclude Arab League members Comoros and Somalia. The most populated states, in descending order from 90 to 11 million, are Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, and Tunisia.
2. Colonialism was virtually coextensive with Islam. The only colonized parts of the world that were not Muslim were parts of India and China, Indochina, Myanmar, Philippines, southern parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, and many islands. The only parts of the Muslim world that were not occupied or under some sorts of foreign control in 1920 were Iran, Saudi Arabia, and North Yemen. The Russian and British spheres of influence established in Iran in 1907 were in temporary disarray.
3. The *makhzen* is literally a granary or 'magazine' in English.
4. One interesting exception verging on sultanism was the Hammam family's tax farming monopoly established in Upper Egypt from the 1720s to 1769, but inevitable opposition to the monopoly facilitated the forced unification of Upper and Lower Egypt in 1773 (Abul-Magd, 2013, pp. 29–40).
5. Sultan Kaboos, however, fostered a sense of Omani nationhood by annually celebrating independence not from the British in 1971 but from Portugal in 1651. See his manipulation of Omani historiography in Valeri (2007).
6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, celebrating India's 'special relationship' with Britain in Wembley Stadium on November 13, 2015, was making a similar point about 'the soil of London' giving birth to India's 'freedom struggle'.

British India was one of the few other colonial situations to have given rise to mass parties organizing protracted struggles for independence.

7. Yahd Ben Achour (2008) argued that the Sunni masses, constituting 80 percent of the world's Muslim population, have a coherent world-view that rejects all imposed modernization from above. Ben Achour was rector of the Faculty of Law, University of Tunis, until Ben Ali dismissed him. He subsequently was one of three key players in orchestrating the Tunisian transition to democratic elections in 2011, but he is also the grandson of Tahar Ben Achour, a leading conservative Tunisian cleric whose family was associated with Bourguiba's political adversaries.

8. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, public lecture at the American University in Cairo Forum, March 25, 2012: http://schools.aucegypt.edu/research/forum/events/Pages/2012Events.aspx

9. Hanna Batatu (1999, pp. 215–226), cited by Hicham Bou Nassif (2015, p. 2), points out that 61.3 percent of the officers appointed to top command positions between 1970 and 1998 were Alawite. Nassif documents recent various forms of discrimination perceived by his sample of 24 Sunni officer defectors from the Syrian army since 2011, but government policies generally protected other ethnic and religious minorities as well as Alawis.

10. In 2013, the respondents were asked how much, on a four point scale, they trusted the government, the parliament or other elected body of representatives, the police, and the armed forces. In the first and second waves of 2008 and 2011 the judiciary respectively replaced the armed forces and parliament. In all three waves the responses were sufficiently interrelated to be averaged into a single index, with coefficients of reliability, Alpha, exceeding 0.8. The most trusting could score up to 4 points. The points are converted into percentages in Fig. 14.2. A score of 50 percent would correspond to a half-way position between trust 'to a limited extent' and 'to a medium (rather than great) extent'.

11. The Saudi questionnaires were administered between 5 January and 6 February 2011, during the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions of January 14 and January 25, months before Saudi King Abdullah announced major give away programs to his people. See the Arab Barometer Saudi country report http://www.arabbarometer.org/sites/default/files/countyreportysaudi2.pdf

12. In the Nahda-led governments of 2011 to 2014 only 39 percent of the ministers had a French university education, compared to over 67 percent in all previous and subsequent governments. Ministers from interior provinces steadily increased from 22.6 and 17.4 percent respectively in Bourguiba's and Ben Ali's ministries to 37.5, 39, 22.7, and 37.5 percent in subsequent ministries from 2011 to 2016. These data and those of the following footnote were not included in Buehler and Ayari (2015) but were kindly provided by Mehdi Ayari in a personal email.

13. Ministers of bourgeois origins comprised only 16.5 and 18.3 percent respectively in Bourguiba's and Ben Ali's ministries, but they increased to 36.7 percent in the first transitional government, 29.3 percent in the Nahda-led governments, then to a full 77.3 percent in the second transitional government of 2014–2015 and 50 percent in that of 2015–2016 coalition under Beji Caid Sebsi.

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15

Political Elites in South Asia

Philip Oldenburg

The countries of South Asia are huge. Virtually all of them are luxuriously diverse in terms of language, religion, ethnic communities, and geography. Political elites are similarly diverse, often divided along linguistic and other lines, albeit with cross-cutting cleavages and linkages. At each political level—national, provincial, and local—elites are "intimate" in the sense that members know each other, or at least know how to connect formally or informally with each other through one or two intermediaries (Bayart 1986, p. 114).

India, with 1.2 billion people, has an array of states—29 at present—that are largely linguistically defined, with 12 languages spoken by more than ten million people. Pakistan, with 200 million people, has a province, Punjab, containing 56 percent of its population but with significantly populated other provinces or administered areas. Bangladesh, with 170 million people, apart from the small percentage of tribal people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, are speakers of Bengali living in regions mainly defined by the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers that cut through what is almost entirely a vast delta. Bangladeshi political elites are mainly national or local. Half of Nepal's 32 million people live in the hills between the plains of India and the high Himalaya; the other half live on the strip of the Gangetic plain that stretches from west to east below the foothills. Nepal has adopted a federal structure in a constitution ratified in 2015. Sri Lanka, with 22 million people, has emerged

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from a civil war that ended only in 2009. Its mainly Buddhist Sinhala majority displays distinct regional differences reflected in elected Provincial Councils, though national Sinhalese elites are more significant. Tamil speakers are divided into three groups: the largest resident in the Northeast, a second in the central highlands, and Muslims who are scattered throughout the country. Elites at each level of a South Asian polity are linked vertically through formal structures of government or political parties, and they are linked both vertically and horizontally through informal networks of school and college classmates ("batch mates" for those in government service, identified by their year of entry). Many are literally members of the same club, and golf or "civil services" clubs are where links to senior management levels of business are forged. Family connections, which were impressively extensive in the past, have been somewhat weakened by moves away from arranged marriages and extended family living. Smaller nuclear families, often with members working abroad, are now quite common. Elite networks also involve generational links between superiors and subordinates who have worked together. While political elite members communicate with each other in their national language, many members are fluent in English, which was the cross-provincial language of colonial rule, nurtured by English-medium schools and colleges.

The State in South Asian countries is divided into political and administrative wings that look much the same in all of them due to the common British colonial heritage. All have geographic districts, national civil services recruited by examination, and local public officials. All have a significant military, with the army far and away the most important service, one that retains the bureaucratic structure created by the British for a force designed to keep them in power in India and Ceylon, with regiments of Nepali Gurkhas in both the Indian and British armies today. The major political parties of the countries that comprised British India have roots in a more than century-long nationalist movement, while parties in Sri Lanka emerged far later without first needing to confront colonial rulers.

Nepal has a very different history. A unified kingdom in the mid-eighteenth century, it was ruled by a dynastic family, the Ranas, from the mid-nineteenth century until 1951, when the earlier monarchy was restored in the guise of constitutional democracy that was soon overthrown by the King. A popular movement led to the restoration of democracy in 1990, but starting in 1996, a major Maoist revolutionary movement engulfed a large part of Nepal for more than a decade. It took another decade and two freely elected Constituent Assemblies to write and ratify the present constitution (the monarchy having been abolished). The party system consists of groups with roots in the 1950s, in the democracy movement of 1990, in the Maoist movement, and in the

post-2006 Constituent Assembly maneuvering. Compared to the other South Asian countries, the government's administrative wing is under-developed.

The societal landscape of South Asia and the cultural, religious, economic, and social structures in each country are even more diverse than the political landscape. All of the countries have been, and to a great extent remain, agrarian subsistence economies, with local elites comprising large landowners, and scattered cities with traditional social and economic elites. Historically, South Asia's agricultural riches (pepper and other spices, cotton) and handcraft manufactures (particularly cotton cloth) attracted invaders and traders continuously for thousands of years, many of them settling. What developed might be called "nested civilizations" with differing languages, religious beliefs and practices, and refined artistic cultures. There were certainly conflicts, invasions, and even wars of great magnitude, but there was also much tolerance and cross-fertilization. Only a few empires covered the whole region, and they did not last long. The basic pattern was one of many kingdoms—very large ones by European standards—interrupted by empires, the last being the British.

Accompanying this pattern was a radical decentralization of religious institutions. No Hindu or Buddhist or Muslim "Church" structure encompassing the entirety of believers or practitioners existed. Local religious beliefs and practices were privileged, but their resonances with other beliefs and practices in the next kingdom over, or even far away on the subcontinent were understood. Accordingly, there is no such thing today as *a* religious elite embedded in an institutional structure at a national level, though there are religious figures who command followings, as well as religion-based political parties whose leaders sometimes play important parts in national (and provincial) decisions. At the local level, temples, mosques, monasteries, shrines to saints, or ashrams have important leaders with political power and influence, some of whom gain national prominence from time to time. Certain religious groups do look more like Western church organizations: the Sikhs in North India, for example, have developed a state-sanctioned institution that controls *Gurudwaras* (temples), and there are similarly centralized and powerful groups among Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh and among Buddhists in Sri Lanka. Hindu sects headed by "saints" have mobilized followers for particular political purposes, but the sects rarely come together in any substantial way, and their leaders cannot be said to constitute a religious elite of broad scope.

Society, particularly the Hindu society, but extending into the Buddhist areas of Sri Lanka and, in modified form, Muslim lands as well, is distinguished by the system of castes (see Manor 2010). It is important to recognize,

however, that while they are ubiquitous, castes are invariably local and, generally, *very* local. Characteristics include, for some castes, a specified occupation, and for most, location on a purity/pollution scale. Arranged marriages between families that belong to the same caste have been, and still are, a fundamental feature. The caste system has changed significantly in the modern era under the influence of modern democratic politics (beginning with nationalist movements) so that "caste" and "community" or "sect" are stretched to include clusters of marriage circle units (called, e.g., *jati* in North India) in order to improve social standings or construct political alliances and develop electoral support.

Elite Relations

Each South Asian country has a clearly visible and powerful political elite facing no other comparably powerful societal elite, whether in business, trade unions, religion, media, or civil society. Political elite members are, of course, often closely connected to persons in other elite sectors through family, shared education, or roles in social institutions, as well as with elite persons in each country's significant diaspora population. There is a general congruence of political rank and social rank, whether indicated by caste (including the caste-like groups among Muslims) or religion. At every government level, political elites are disproportionately composed of persons belonging to higher castes, more prestigious Muslim communities, and richer social classes. But in particular places and times, the extent to which these persons wield authority and power because of their high social position in society or because their political position gives them high social rank is seldom clear. Claims that South Asian polities are in this respect moving from tradition to modernity have been effectively challenged (Rudolph and Rudolph 1967).

Two very important common elements affect all organizations outside government (and sometimes in government): the prevalence of large, if not "joint," families and the decentralized nature of the religious and cultural landscape. All sorts of enterprises, from business to politics to the professions—not just farming or artisans or lineages of artists—comprise families, many of them linked to each other within their respective occupational strata. A great deal of day-to-day religious practice for Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims (there are comparatively few Christians in percentage terms) takes place in the home and family: daily worshiping of gods, saying of prayers, or practicing meditation. But as noted, there are few centralized religious

organizations. A handful of religious figures in each country have had an impact on politics, but only a few have taken explicit political elite positions.

There is no doubt that the national political elite in each country has a great deal of autonomy when it comes to actions in the international arena. Efforts by India's political elite to demonstrate what it sees as its natural position of pre-eminence, if not dominance, in the region have not gotten far. Pakistan is too large, too well armed, and too connected to the Middle East, China, and, at times, the United States to be pushed around. The Bangladeshi elite made sure that the Indian army that invaded to liberate the country from Pakistan left within months, making it clear that the elite had no intention of trading Pakistan's economic exploitation for economic subordination to India. Quickly established relations with the United States helped, but most of all, the Bangladeshi elite has never doubted the correctness of Pakistan's separation from India in 1947. In the 1980s, India did try to actively direct Sri Lanka's policy toward Tamil insurgents by giving them a safe haven and then by intervening militarily. But that effort ended in disaster, and India has not managed to make its power felt since.

In contrast, India is a force to be reckoned with by Nepal's political elite. India has not hesitated to exercise its power over trade and transit with Nepal and interfere in its domestic politics. India has significant economic leverage by maintaining an open border, which has meant a large number of jobs for Nepalis in India and a major source of remittance income. India has also exercised soft power by welcoming Nepalis into its higher education institutions, by giving political opponents of the former king sanctuary, and by particular Indian politicians giving guidance to their Nepali counterparts from time to time. Yet India has never controlled political change in Nepal or even exerted an oppressive influence on particular parties or leaders for anything but short periods and at certain critical junctures in Nepal's politics.

It is worth noting the role of influential South Asians who live and work outside their countries, many of them in the professions. As sources of significant funds for domestic political movements and parties, expatriates are visited when political leaders travel abroad, and they are brought in as expert advisors when they come to the home country. Many have developed links with party and government officials who have been posted abroad or who find themselves in formal or informal exile, and they preserve those links when officials go home. All South Asian governments woo "non-residents" for the investments they might make, and remittance income from migrant workers in the Gulf states is a major source of economic improvement. On the other side of the ledger, the Kashmiri diaspora and the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora have been major contributors of funds, advice, and political pressure

supporting insurrections and civil warfare, though not many of their members came home to fight. Not a few accomplished expatriate professionals have been given temporary high positions in South Asian governments, and in this internet age, even somewhat less well-placed professionals—many of them foreign citizens—can claim to be influential members of the political elite of their home country, even when they seldom visit it.

The intelligentsia—broadly academics, independent scholars, and public intellectuals—are a very small part of the population in each country, but they influence public opinion through books, op-ed pieces, and TV appearances. They are closely linked to the political elite, typically through school and college ties. An important sub-group consists of administrator-scholars, who build on the colonial tradition of serious research and writing while doing government duty.

In India, at national and provincial levels, business elites are clearly close to those who exercise power, often in a familial way. It is common for a father to "place" his sons and, more recently, daughters in government administration or a political party. Sons and daughters go to the same expensive schools and colleges, and they join clubs frequented by the politically powerful. The government has a large influence on economic activity in India, so businessmen, especially the most wealthy, are anxious to have links that gain them benefits and avoid troubles (how much of this is "corrupt" is impossible to say). These connections also come into play at election time when amounts of money spent by campaigns are many times those officially allowed. Business leaders have formed national- and state-level associations such as the Confederation of Indian Industries through which they interact formally with the highest level of government; they also often serve on government committees of experts. Rarely do businessmen take explicit political roles, however. Trade unions were once far more powerful than they now are, but they have typically been creatures of political parties. In earlier times, some union leaders—typically not workers themselves, but professionals, especially lawyers—were at the core of the political elite.

The erstwhile "feudals" of Pakistan, who got their wealth from the land and dependent workers they control, have moved into towns and cities, and the next generation is entering the professions and business. Large business families—at one point, it was alleged that 22 of them controlled the economy—have receded in importance, though they are hardly unimportant when parties need funds. In Pakistan, as well, sons are sent into politics. The professions are noticeably family enterprises, as are the political parties. Bangladesh, more than any other South Asian country, displays a direct link between the political elite and business, but it is politicians' family members

who move into business. In Sri Lanka and Nepal, business elites do not seem to be as significant politically.

Bangladesh is unique in the size and reach of civil society organizations. The Grameen Bank, BRAC, and Proshika, for example, are gigantic and have, arguably, done a great deal to empower women at the grass-roots level. Their leaders can be clearly heard in the government even though they have not been able to move into explicitly political roles. India, too, has a rich array of NGOs and social movements, some of which have had a significant impact on government policy, directly through agitations or indirectly by being included in committees of experts. Almost all have shied away from forming explicit ties with a political party, and in this respect, their leaders form more of a counter-elite (though many have familial or classmate ties with those in power). The leading lawyers of Pakistan have certainly been prominent at crucial times—some advising the military dictator of the moment, others organizing national and provincial bar associations to agitate for political goals, as in the movement to have the Chief Justice restored to his position in 2007. In Nepal, there have been significant numbers of international NGOs who have drawn on the professional and academic elite to help shape government policy and certainly to influence democratic beliefs, but they have been as often an elite of demonstrators rather than holders of governmental roles. Sri Lankan academics and other intellectuals have played an important role in formulating peace initiatives (some were assassinated by the LTTE as a result), but it remains to be seen whether they will be able to influence a post-conflict Sri Lanka by, for example, encouraging reconciliation with the Tamils.

The media has been a "fourth estate" (a term they like to use) in all South Asian countries, which are, by global standards, startlingly open, particularly in the private realm. One can hear strong opinions quite freely expressed even when there is a "dictatorship" in power. In recent decades, TV channels have multiplied, some in 24-hour news format, but English language and national language newspapers have also flourished. In India, after Mrs. Gandhi's defeat in 1977, the media was galvanized into investigative journalism, going after politicians with great vigor, and this has since increased greatly, with huge circulation numbers for vernacular newspapers that have a central space in political contests. Not a few editors have entered politics, and some have been selected by the party leadership for seats in the upper houses of legislatures. Many in the media have close contacts in the bureaucracy and political parties and often wind up as formal or informal advisors. Political parties or large businesses control some media enterprises, but many are independent and make enough money to stay that way.

The media in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal—decreasing in this order—mirror India's in strength and linkages to the political elites. There are fewer big media enterprises in Pakistan, but TV features a great deal of political debate (in contrast to the little that seems to occur in parliament), and editors have in several cases ended up as ambassadors, advisors to the prime minister, and holders of government positions. Sri Lanka's press was severely restricted, while Mahinda Rajapaksa was president, with a very prominent editor and an intimate friend of Rajapaksa undoubtedly murdered by the government. It has since returned to its earlier vigorous health. Bangladesh and Nepal are poorly endowed with broad-ranging and independent media, except that Nepal has pioneered a vigorous FM radio network. Neither country, however, has had significant media figures as part of its political elite.

India's Political Elite

National Elite

Since independence in 1947, India's pre-eminent political leaders have come to power as the result of free and fair elections. Although Indira Gandhi imposed authoritarian (Emergency) rule for 20 months starting in 1975, it ended spectacularly with her defeat in the 1977 election. Politicians are almost all members of parties in which a varying degree of power is shared by groups of leaders, many of whom are not elected representatives but who help choose candidates for office, mobilize followers, collect campaign funds, and make government policy. At present, only two parties have national reach—the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—but in the 2014 election, and for some time before, the two together won only about half of all votes. The remaining votes have gone largely to state-based parties. Many of these, but arguably the two national parties as well, are linked to (and often named for) a particular politician. In popular usage, these leaders are often viewed as belonging to "dynasties,"—the widows, daughters, sons, or other close relatives of pre-eminent leaders. Very large numbers of elected representatives at all levels of the polity have similar links. However, it is not obvious that "dynasty" is the appropriate term because it suggests an inherited *right* (acknowledged by the citizenry) to rule. It is perhaps better to speak of political family firms, in which skills of politics and government are learned through apprenticeship and first-hand observation. Most political elite persons come from the upper social strata, though in recent decades, leaders of lower castes, including a handful of ex-untouchables (now called *dalits*), who comprise

some 15 percent of the population, and a few leaders of Muslims (14 percent), have gained government office. While there has only been one woman Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, she was in office for 17 years, and there are a number of women who have been Chief Ministers of states and have, *ipso facto,* played important roles in national governance.

The balance of power between party organizations and elected government leaders (or defeated ex-leaders and presumptive leaders) varies from party to party. The structure of the Congress Party was inherited from the Congress nationalist movement, which had a decision-making "Working Committee" elected by committees at the apex of British-ruled provinces, and this committee has continued to set policy and choose candidates since independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi had powerful "kitchen cabinets" of close advisors, bolstered, from Indira Gandhi's time, by a Prime Minister's Office (PMO) composed largely of senior civil servants. The party organization and its formal head, though not without power, were clearly subordinate to those Congress prime ministers, until Sonia Gandhi became President of the party in 1998.

The other major national party, the BJP, began after independence as a party focused on the Hindu nationalism promoted by a "cultural" organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The BJP's first electoral success came as part of the hastily assembled coalition of opposition parties that soundly defeated Mrs. Gandhi in 1977 and ended her Emergency rule. After being reduced to a handful of seats in the 1984 election, the BJP adopted a greater emphasis on Hindu nationalist issues, and it finally won power, as the largest party in a disparate coalition, in 1998. Defeated by a Congress-led coalition in 2004 and again in 2009, the BJP, led by Narendra Modi, won a landslide victory in 2014. A lifetime worker in the RSS, Modi moved into the electoral sphere as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, and as the Prime Minister, he masterfully sidelined many of the BJP's earlier generation of leaders. BJP policies and, to some extent, its personnel in government and party are influenced significantly by the RSS, especially in electoral contests when RSS' full-time workers are core operatives in BJP campaigns. The party has had success in many northern and western states by emphasizing a "good governance" program, and it has developed a core leadership not entirely dependent on the RSS or the more general Hindu nationalist movement.

Formally subordinate to cabinet ministers, the administrative wing of the national state engages in a subtle sharing of power with political parties and their leaders. Some of the all-India civil services, most importantly the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), consist of officers (selected by a nation-wide examination) who are assigned to serve for longer or shorter periods in

particular states or in the central government until their seniority earns them a permanent posting in Delhi. A significant proportion is assigned to a state other than their home state, and they must then learn the language of that state while developing strong ties to its administrative cadre. Members of the Indian Police Service (IPS) serve almost entirely in their state of assignment, while Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers serve abroad or in Delhi. Senior figures of other services—for example, the audits and accounts service—help constitute the administrative segment of the national political elite.

As is common in parliamentary systems, for the bulk of government activity, officers of the all-India civil services are the actual executives in departments and ministries. The final say on policy and personnel is of course the prerogative of Ministers, but they rely heavily on the advice of civil service officers. Routine functioning of government depends on these officers, who, in turn, rely on networks of batch mates, former superiors, and former subordinates. These links are particularly important for facilitating information flows, as well as decisions, between Delhi and the various states and across ministries and departments. The PMO is at the apex of power and consists mainly of IAS officers who often are favored officials from the Prime Minister's previous position as a Chief Minister of a state or as a Minister in the central government. The National Security Adviser sits in the PMO, with a somewhat ambiguous position vis-à-vis the Defense Minister. He—so far, all have been men—heads a National Security Council, in which the Defense Minister is but one of four senior Ministers. The heads of the three military branches are under the NSC in a "Strategic Policy Group" containing a large number of senior civilian bureaucrats.

Civil servants retire around the age of 60, and many of the most senior and influential find employment, for at least a few years, in large business establishments, NGOs, think tanks, and the media. Some continue to serve as informal consultants to the government, and a very few have gone into politics. But by and large, while they can continue to solve personal problems for themselves, family, and friends through their knowledge of government operations and their links to former subordinates, they cease, quite suddenly, to matter politically.

The military wing of the state has since independence been kept subordinate to the political wing, both symbolically and actually. While the Chief of the Army Staff (and to a lesser extent his counterparts in the Navy and Air Force) are certainly influential and have a presence in the public sphere, civilian officers in the Ministry of Defense control expenditures. The senior military officers are also part of networks of business or landed families, elite college graduates, and the like, and military-run social and golf clubs admit

selected members of local elites. Armed police and paramilitary units now deal with most violent uprisings, and the army is called in only as a last resort. However, the army has had a central role combating long-lasting uprisings in Kashmir and some states of northeast India.

There has never been anything even close to a military coup in India, though whether that has been due, in part, to deliberate "coup-proofing" measures is not clear (Wilkinson 2015; Oldenburg 2010). As devoted and, at times, vocally active participants in the colonial state—and thus opponents of the nationalist movement—military officers were in a weak position at Independence, underscored by their ceremonial demotion and a minimal supply of up-to-date equipment until the India-China border war of 1962. That there has not been a coup is probably due mainly to the political and administrative wings of the state functioning as well as they have since 1947, including their provision of adequate military resources to meet threats from Pakistan and China.

The judicial branch has a great deal of power and autonomy at the level of state High Courts as well as the Supreme Court, which has a significant role in the appointment of judges. Judges, especially Chief Justices, frequently challenge government decisions and policies, and have from time to time issued orders mandating important administrative tasks. They have not hesitated—except during Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency regime—to put powerful politicians in jail. After they retire, senior judges may be appointed to commissions of inquiry, some of which have been very influential (though fewer and fewer have been constituted in recent years). But once retired, judges mostly disappear from the public arena.

There are other national administrative officers that exercise significant authority with considerable autonomy. The most important are the Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Comptroller and Auditor General, and the Chief Election Commissioner. The bodies they direct operate in carefully circumscribed domains, but their influence is considerable. With few exceptions, these officials have not been controversial and have claimed much respect. Governors of the states are, like the President of India, largely ceremonial figures, whose powers are very limited. Governors are often superannuated politicians, retired bureaucrats, or occasionally retired military officers, all of whom have connections to those in authority, though not much leverage.

In general, the governing of India at the national level is a matter of law-making and administering by elected representatives and civil or military servants acting in institutional settings of great complexity and considerable historical depth. As found in files and records, precedents count for a great

deal. The national political elite is, on the whole, a set of persons in offices with powers defined by law and regulations that, while often bent (and occasionally bent out of shape), are seldom evaded or ignored. The courts and, more recently, a Right to Information law, plus a vigorous press make officials and politicians accountable, and the electorate does the same for even the most powerful political leaders.

State-Level Political Elites

Each state of India replicates in miniature (not a good word, given that the largest state has some 200 million people) the constitutional structure of India: legislatures, an administrative wing, and a judicial system. The states have sole or predominant responsibilities for law and order, education, health, and rural development, among other subjects. While state legislatures and cabinets headed by a Chief Minister consider policy issues, their scope for initiatives is comparatively small. Compared with Members of Parliament, however, Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) are more significant channels of influence and power, linking local elites with state governments (if they are the party in power), but more importantly "nursing" their constituencies by dealing with concerns at the local level (e.g., police troubles, entries into educational institutions and good hospitals, obtaining loans). Because politicians in state cabinets are likely to have much longer tenures than the average civil service official serving under them—and indeed, more experience in state government than even the most senior civil servants—they are more able to ensure (or manipulate) the delivery of services in the interests of their party or constituency than can MPs in Delhi.

States have their own civil services, with separate entrance examinations and training. Some of these officers, relatively late in their careers, can be promoted into the all-India services. But most of them serve, when they reach the higher positions, alongside much younger IAS officers, many of whom are ill equipped to deal with the intricacies of local practices, let alone with local notables who often use a difficult-to-learn language or dialect. Because most politicians also spend the bulk of their careers at the state level, and thus have long-standing relationships with senior bureaucrats of the state services, the quality of day-to-day governance is less "professional" than in Delhi. While it is possible that the extent of corruption in state governments has been exaggerated (Oldenburg 1987), politicians and bureaucrats have significant opportunities to divert resources from programs funded by the national government and to procure "commissions" from businesses with contracts

for supplying state government units. Although members of the IPS spend most of their careers in the state to which they have been assigned, they must deal with a lower level of police competence across the state, and they only rarely rise to higher levels in the service. There are also significant numbers of senior civil servants posted in facilities operated by states (usually in the state capital), such as the audits and accounts service, the forest service, and the postal service. As evidenced by their presence in clubs where senior government figures, local businessmen, and professionals form the bulk of members, and by their attendance at functions such as grand wedding receptions, these civil servants clearly form part of a state's political elite.

Local Elites

Sixty percent of Indians still live in the countryside, though the most developed states are also the most urban. There are perhaps 100 million "circular migrants" in India—men and women who leave their village for temporary work in other locales, leaving children with wives or grandparents in the village, and returning after a few weeks or a season, or just once a year (Deshingkar and Farrington 2009). The majority of India's urban residents live in slums, often in shacks. There is thus a large gap in status and power between perhaps three-quarters of India's citizens and even local political elites.

In 1994, a third level of local self-government was embedded in the constitution, covering both rural and urban areas but, most significantly, the countryside. The village council head—one-third must be women—wields considerable power over the delivery of government benefits, from subsidized construction to the allocation of services. Rural politicians are almost entirely part-time, and they rarely move up the political ladder. All urban areas, from small market towns to regional cities to metropolises with tens of millions of inhabitants like Delhi, are growing rapidly. Social and political networks form in urban neighborhoods, and through them, local leaders wield considerable power and serve as links to government and as brokers for services, most importantly water, electricity, education, and health. Parties or wider area politicians seeking to mobilize voters tend to politicize these local leaders.

Looked at "from above," the networks of leaders at the local level are very large; there are literally millions of elected village and urban-area councilors. Local leaders and some associated local government workers do not make big policy decisions. But looked at from the average citizen's point of view, they control or influence the character and amount of government services citizens usually care most about, and they should be included in India's political elite.

Pakistan's Political Elite

When Pakistan gained independence in 1947, the majority of its population lived in what is now Bangladesh, which gained its independence after a military ruler refused to accept the outcome of the first free and fair election in Pakistan, held in 1970. Defeat of the Pakistani state by Bangladeshi guerrillas and the Indian military temporarily kept the army out of power in Islamabad. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, leader of the recently founded Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), which had won a majority in western Pakistan, presided over the writing of a constitution in 1973. He ruled, in an increasingly dictatorial fashion, until a probably rigged election in 1977, and Pakistan's third army coup occurred shortly thereafter. The army gradually released its direct hold on power through a series of elections between 1985 and 1996, but it then took power directly again in General Pervez Musharraf's coup of 1999. All of Pakistan's coups have brought the serving Chief of the Army Staff to power, typically through a consensus of the Corps Commanders. The Air Force and Navy have played only very secondary roles. Ayub Khan, Zia ul Haq, and Pervez Musharraf all became civilian Presidents midway through their rules, but they preserved their personal control of the military. Musharraf's rule ended formally in 2008, and the PPP government that was then elected was defeated in the regularly scheduled election of 2013, the first time a civilian government was replaced by another civilian government. However, the military has not relinquished what it sees as its prerogative to have the last word on security policy (including a segment of foreign policy), and its Inter-Services Intelligence directorate operates without civilian oversight.

The civil services, successors to those of the British colonial state, worked in partnership with the government that gained independence in 1947 and subsequently with the military governments that began in 1958. Prime Minister Bhutto slightly reduced the services' power and pre-eminence in the 1970s, in part, by allowing "lateral entry" into a cadre almost entirely chosen through national examinations. But senior bureaucrats continued to mold and administer much government policy. Shortly after taking power, each military ruler introduced a system of elected but weak local government, and each carefully controlled elections to national and provincial legislatures by sponsoring new political parties. After the assassination of Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan in 1951, only Bhutto (1972–1977) presided over a balance of power that unambiguously favored the political wing of government over its administrative wing. During the post-Musharraf civilian government after 2008, the

political wing has had more influence than at any time since Bhutto's term of office, yet the military has maintained autonomy in the fields it considers its own—and the military decides where the boundaries lie (Oldenburg 2010).

The military's position of strength is undergirded by significant control of its own economic base (Siddiqa 2007). Using its rights over huge swaths of real estate and by establishing literally dozens of enterprises, as well as benefiting from decades of military aid from the United States and other countries, the military has generated revenues to support in-house educational, health, and pension systems. Along with the belief, dating from independence in 1947, that a strong military is the only thing that keeps India at bay, these systems help to maintain institutional coherence and discipline, with military elite's internal structure mirroring the command structure. Paramilitary forces are controlled by the military, and although there are civilian police-linked intelligence services, the military's ISI does not hesitate to deal with what it sees as threats from Pakistani civilians.

Pakistan's national political elite is thus significantly clad in military uniforms, but, except in the special cases of coup leaders, the rank of members and their place in the command structure is what matters most, not their personal qualifications, connections, or character. Politicians, even those who have been elected with clear majorities, do not wield decisive power, nor do they preside over political parties with any real strength beyond the ability to mobilize followers at election time. Parties have no power or public support when the military chooses to act. The two most recent political rulers, President Zardari and Nawaz Sharif, gained power via their political families. Political families are also common at provincial and local levels, and it is not too much of an exaggeration to treat the Army high command as a "political family."

Cabinet ministers are often so weak that the public doesn't know their names, and, in any case, they rarely have significant public roles. On the whole, ministry bureaucrats are the people who run things in the government. For a relatively brief period, a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Chaudhry, brought the higher judiciary into the spotlight and a peak of power previously seen. Supreme Courts had meekly ratified the legitimacy of each military coup. But when General Musharraf, worried about the Chief Justice's activism in challenging his government in several areas, including inquiries into the military's role in civilian government, attempted to dismiss the Chief Justice in 2007, a lawyers' movement succeeded in getting the Chief Justice reinstated. Musharraf dismissed Chaudhry a second time and declared martial law, but Chaudhry was again restored to office. Since Chaudhry's retirement, however, the Supreme Court has been in retreat. It is likely that, apart from his personal character, Chaudhry benefited from having an unusually long term of

office, which no Chief Justice will have in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, a handful of judges in the higher judiciary, including Chief Justices of the High Courts of the provinces, do exercise significant power.

Although there are political party systems in the four major provinces of Pakistan, plus in the frontier areas and the "Northern Areas" of Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad ("Free") Kashmir, the only province that really matters is Punjab. Beside party leaders, the other major members of the political elite in Punjab are mainly bureaucrats. Religious leaders of several Islamic movements (some not incorrectly labeled "terrorist"), mainly based in Punjab, are a political elite group in the sense that they set limits to government policy.

At the local level, there are fragmented political elites that have an outsized impact on the lives of ordinary citizens. Nearly all of the large landowners in Punjab and Sind, on whose lands wheat and cotton and fruits are grown, have, at a minimum, a second home in a nearby town or metropolis. Many have other occupations as professionals or businessmen or in government, while taking care to keep political control of their countryside lands and dependent workers. Challenges to their authority are rare. Some are members of the provincial or national legislature and cement their control by brokering benefits for constituents. The situation in urban areas is rather different, with local notables organized in religious institutions and movements, traders' and professional associations, media and educational establishments, and other groups exercising influence in the administration of governments programs.

Many in the political elite at all levels are linked through shared experience in a handful of elite schools, colleges, and clubs. The elite is "intimate" in these respects. Many members have had at least part of their education abroad. The army and civil service have separate sets of batch mates, but elite families readily distribute sons (and also some daughters-in-law) into government, professional, and business careers.

Bangladesh's Political Elite

All but a very small number of Bangladeshis live on or at the edges of the vast Ganges (Padma) and Brahmaputra (Jamuna) delta. It is a dense rural population, with scattered towns and only a few large cities, notably the capital, Dhaka, a city containing around ten percent of the country's population. The national political party elite is neatly divided into two broad camps. The Awami League camp agitated originally for Bengali rights when Pakistan was united, and under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, it won a majority of seats in the 1970 election (though none in West Pakistan). It launched a civil disobedience

movement in 1971 that was crushed by the Pakistan Army, followed by ethnic cleansing.

At the end of the ensuing civil war, in which many in the Awami League, some of them trained in India, fought as guerillas, Sheikh Mujib formed a government, but it was overthrown and he was killed by army officers in 1975, along with almost all his family. Several coups and assassinations later, General Zia ur Rahman and then General Ershad established military governments that lasted until a popular movement forced a free election in 1991. It was won by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), which General Zia founded and which is still led by his widow, Khaleda Zia. A surviving daughter of Sheikh Mujib, Sheikh Hasina, took control of the Awami League and won the 1996 election. These two women, and their children, remain the unquestioned leaders of their respective parties, both parties notable for their lack of internal democracy, and they have (until the 2013 election, boycotted by the BNP) alternated in power roughly every five years. The two leaders' lack of mutual respect, even to the point of enmity, extends to significant numbers of their followers, though neither side has succeeded in permanently repressing the other. But the political system in recent years has become increasingly undemocratic, with the Awami League firmly in power.

There are two additional parties of significance. General Ershad, who came to power in a coup in 1982, formed the Jatiyo Party to contest sham elections. He relinquished power to a caretaker government in 1991, and although he was promptly jailed until 1997, he has remained active politically ever since. The Islamist Jamaat-i-Islami party played a significant role in Khaleda Zia's government, but recently, several of its leaders from 1971 were hanged for war crimes, convicted under the Awami League government.

There were a small number of civil servants in 1971—and significant numbers of Bengalis in the foreign service—who were able to escape the Pakistani crackdown in 1971, along with Awami League members, but as the result of discrimination against them in united Pakistan (a grievance that helped fuel the Awami League movement), the civil service has not had the pre-eminent role it has had in Pakistan. The judicial system is similar in structure to India's and Pakistan's, with a Supreme Court at its apex. That the three "Chief Advisors" of the caretaker governments of 1991, 1996, and 2001, who were designated to control the government in a non-partisan way prior to elections, were Chief Justices of the Supreme Court suggests that the higher judiciary has a significant position in the political elite.

The most recent caretaker governments, appointed during the 2007–2008 interregnum, were controlled by the military, which had staged a behind-the-scenes coup. The governments followed the Army's agenda of attempting to

cleanse the political system by correcting electoral rolls and mounting a "sweeping anti-corruption drive" during which an attempt to exile "hundreds of politicians" (Hagerty 2008, p. 178), including both Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia (and members of their families), failed. But once elections were held in 2008, the Army retreated to the unstable political regime's shadows.

Sri Lanka's Political Elite

When the 25-year long civil war ended in 2009 with a massacre of the remaining LTTE leaders and followers, the Army and a militant President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, emerged triumphant. They had literally wiped out the LTTE problem at the cost of a huge number of civilian deaths, including Tamils forced by the LTTE to act as human shields. Rajapaksa set about building a dynastic structure of rule unprecedented in Sri Lanka (or perhaps anywhere). The commander of the victorious Army, Sarath Fonseka, lost the 2010 presidential election and was soon sentenced to three years in jail. He was pardoned and raised to Field Marshal rank in 2015, after Rajapaksa's defeat in the early election he called in January 2015. In 2013, Rajapaksa had the inconvenient Chief Justice of the Supreme Court impeached, and controlling some 80 agencies of government as Prime Minister, he formed a cabinet with one brother as Secretary of Defense and of other departments; another brother was put in charge of economic development, and a third was made Speaker of Parliament. His MP son headed the Freedom Party's youth wing.

Rajapaksa was ousted, in a free and fair election, when his previously obedient colleague, Maithripala Sirisena, chose to run against him with the encouragement of a previous President, Chandrika Kumaratunga, scion of one of the founding "dynastic" political families, the Bandaranaikes (DeVotta 2016). Sirisena was supported by the leader of the United National Party (UNP), Ranil Wickremesinghe, a nephew of a previous President and arch rival of the Bandaranaikes, J R Jayawardene. With the exception of two Presidents (Premadasa [1989–1993] and Rajapaksa [2005–2015]), someone either of the Bandaranaike family or of J. R. Jayawardene's family has been the elected ruler of Sri Lanka from 1956 to the present.

All of these leaders drew their support almost entirely from the Sinhala Buddhist community, which constitutes some 70 percent of the population. Leaders of the three Tamil-speaking communities also had long tenures presiding, more often than not, in personalist fashion over a party. Left-wing parties had a significant role in the first decades after independence, with the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP) (People's Liberation Front) emerging as the

successor to a revolutionary movement. There is also a party of Buddhist monks. Personalist or not, the major parties reached down to the country-side—Sri Lanka is still more than 80 percent rural—with organized local leaderships.

The state apparatus—civil services, military, judiciary—has been clearly controlled by the political wing of the state. Under British rule and for a while thereafter, the Tamils—coming largely from an area with poor agricul-ture—made progress by gaining higher education and a disproportionate share of senior civil service and army positions. This had a role in stimulating Sinhala linguistic nationalism, enforced after Bandaranaike's victory in 1956, and quite possibly, in turn, Tamil separatism. The tragedy was that some sort of guarantees for non-Sinhala communities, if not a strong federalism, could not be agreed to. There was a very minor attempted army coup in 1962, after which the government's wariness kept the army weak, but not so weak that it had much of a problem suppressing the JVP's 1971 "revolution," in which scores of police stations were seized, but which was ended in three weeks with several thousand casualties.

The army was greatly enlarged after 1983 to fight the civil war, and since the war's end, it has remained not just large, but in control of significant areas of land. However, the army has so far been firmly under civilian control. It remains to be seen to what extent the judicial system can reassert its autonomy after its decapitation by President Rajapaksa. As in most of South Asia, there are elite networks of "old boys" from a handful of schools and colleges, many at least originally Christian run, in which English is the medium of instruction.

Nepal's Political Elite

Nepal's king and most of the royal family were massacred in 2001, and, the new king, Gyanendra, dismissed the elected parliament in 2005. But an agreement with the Maoists to elect a Constituent Assembly in 2008 was reached. Because it could not agree on a constitution, another Constituent Assembly was elected in 2013, and it finally managed, two years later, to ratify a constitution—explicitly noting that amendments to it would be needed—establishing a federal republic. The Constituent Assembly, which had been chosen in free and fair elections, with an innovative mixed proportional representation and first-past-the-post constituency system, doubled as the parliament. After the first Constituent Assembly election, the Maoists were the largest party, and they worked with other "democratic" parties to run the government. In the second Constituent Assembly election, the Maoists lost to

a coalition of the moderate Communist Party and the Nepali Congress party. Significant other parties included those representing interests of the "Madhes" plains next to India, many of whose people have close linguistic and ethnic links to those across the border.

Due to a most difficult geography and a highly under-developed economy, political parties centered in the Kathmandu valley had comparatively little organization elsewhere in the country. The Maoists had been organized to fight a revolution, and control "liberated" areas, rather than run a civilian government. Indeed, their major violence against the state took the form of killing police, teachers, and other low-level government servants posted in the countryside. Traditional social structures, with attendant political leadership, have been severely disrupted by the Maoist revolution and the constant movement of people to India, seeking jobs, but also involving a tragic trafficking of women. The Kathmandu valley and a few other valleys with relatively small urban centers, plus parts of the Madhes area, were less disrupted. Still the national political elite is largely confined to Kathmandu itself and is as fragmented as the party structure. This is, in part, a reflection of the enormously large number of ethnic communities, divided broadly into those in the hills—the elite "Bahun-Chhetri" group, and the "indigenous nationalities" (*janjati*), each often regionally defined—and the castes of the Madhes. There are, as well, significant numbers of Muslims and Hindu *dalits* throughout the country.

The state apparatus has also been quite undeveloped. Even the Army did not have a major presence except as a force used by the King to remove the elected parliament. This was not because of a lack of experience. As noted, "Gurkha" Nepalis still constitute regiments in the British and Indian armies, and as part of the agreement with the Maoists to end the civil war, some of their fighters were ultimately integrated into the erstwhile "Royal" army. But the military remains still a relatively minor part of the state. The civil service also has not been well developed: there is a total of less than 20,000 officers, and its structure is rudimentary (Government of Nepal and UNDP 2014), and while some individuals in government positions are influential, it is not clear that they have had a decisive say in any political matter. Many members of the elite have been educated in India and further abroad, but those living in Nepal, while often in each other's company on ceremonial and other occasions, do not seem to have as significant a classmate network as in the other South Asian political elites.

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16

Political Elites in Southeast Asia

William Case

Southeast Asia comprises 11 sovereign states: Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and East Timor. With one exception, Thailand, these states were, from various points in their modern histories, colonies or protectorates of Britain (Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, and Brunei), France (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), the Netherlands (Indonesia), the United States and Spain (the Philippines), and Portugal (East Timor). Because it was treated as a buffer between British Malaya and French Indochina, Thailand escaped formal colonial rule. But to keep foreign domination at bay, Thailand mimicked a European bureaucratic apparatus and acceded to British and French claims on its borderlands. In these respects, Thailand had a colonial hue.

Except in Thailand, political elites in Southeast Asia formed under and were heavily conditioned by varying degrees and forms of colonial tutelage, and characteristics of post-colonial elites and regimes have often been attributed to the colonial experience. Thus, where political elites had been exposed to electoral procedures and independence was obtained peacefully, they might have been expected to remain relatively restrained in their inter-relations and their regimes to remain stable and at least semi-democratic. On this count, country cases include the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Myanmar. By contrast, where violent struggles led to independence, victorious

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elite factions subsequently created unstable democracies or outright authoritarian regimes: Indonesia after ousting the Dutch; Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos after the French were defeated; and, eventually, East Timor after Portugal was driven out. It is reasonable, then, to hypothesize that Southeast Asia's colonial experiences determined regime types after independence. This chapter begins by sketching colonial patterns of rule and their post-independence political consequences in the Philippines (current population 100 million), Myanmar (55 million), Indonesia (255 million), Singapore (5.5 million), and Malaysia (30 million). However, these sketches suggest that even where colonial tutelage was favorable for post-independence elite cooperation and regime stability, tutelage was far from determinative. Deep-seated crises that soon followed independence did more to shape lasting elite and regime characteristics. The chapter focuses on ruptures in the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia to show that crises propelled elites and regimes in different directions. Special attention is paid to Malaysia, a country which, in its colonial experience, serial political crises, and societal and institutional features, deepens an understanding of political elites and regime trajectories in Southeast Asia.

Colonial "Tutelage" and Elite Convergence

Some forms of colonial rule provided a relatively peaceful path to the elite cohesion and consensus that is conducive to stable democratic regimes (Higley and Burton 1989, 2006). In particular, where a colonial power oversaw progress in its colonies toward home rule, and where it allowed the rise of parties and movements agitating for independence, political elites tended to possess considerable cohesion and political consensus upon obtaining independence. To explain this pattern, a "tutelary model" of colonial rule has been advanced (Weiner 1987). It stresses the colonial-era introduction of bureaucratic agencies and regulations as a way of instilling among local, subordinate elites norms of rule-bound behavior. In addition, an incremental exposure to electoral contestation, graduating from local to colony-wide councils, accustomed elites to vigorous, albeit restrained partisanship. Among European colonial powers, however, only Britain was able to apply the tutelary model in a sustained way, for "not a single newly independent country that lived under French, Dutch, American, or Portuguese rule has continually remained democratic" (Weiner 1987, p. 20). According to the tutelary model, rule-bound elite behavior and restrained partisanship should have persisted in states

that were formerly British colonies. I checked this expectation against the record in Southeast Asia and show that tutelage just as readily gave rise to, or at least constituted a serious barrier to, elite divisions instead of cohesion and consensus.

Although shaped by American colonial rule, political elites in the Philippines are a relevant case. The Nationalist Party formed in the early 1900s, shortly after American conquest. Comprised mainly of large land-owners, the Nationalists regularly contested legislative elections against a succession of other parties and movements. In 1935, the colony was formally designated a US commonwealth, which amounted to de facto home rule. Between 1935 and Japanese invasion and occupation at the end of 1941, tutelary conditions for inculcating restrained partisanship between competing elite factions were in place, albeit briefly. When the United States granted full independence in 1946, a stable, although oligarchic, two-party system took shape with leaders from the Nationalist Party and new Liberal Party rotating in the presidency and in control of Congress during the next 20 years.

Despite this initial persistence of relations and practices formed under colonial rule, the Filipino political elite's cohesion and consensus eventually unraveled. Ferdinand Marcos, an ambitious "interloper," wrested the presidency from the old landed elites in an election held in 1965. Seeking to prolong his presidential power, Marcos breeched tacit understandings about elite power sharing and overcame resistance from elite groups by declaring martial law in 1972. Marcos centralized patronage flows and shifted business concessions enjoyed by established elites into the hands of cronies. As elite divisions deepened, Marcos jailed the scion of the powerful Lopez family. And Marcos's wife, Imelda, along with his top military commander, evidently plotted the assassination of arch rival Senator Benigno Aquino, who belonged to another prominent landowning family. Opposing elite groups responded by orchestrating campaigns of low-level urban violence and by funding street actions by a "People Power" movement that, with US backing, ousted Marcos in 1986, driving him into exile and restoring democratic politics (Thompson 1995).

Marcos's ouster did not, however, restore elite cohesion and consensus or a stable two-party system. Instead, landed elite groups began to clash viciously. Marcos's successor as president, Corazon Aquino, the widow of Benigno Aquino, initiated mild land reform programs, but in doing so, she triggered a series of attempted military coups that ended only when she abandoned her reform efforts. Political elite relations were then roiled by the rise of a "black sheep" member of another elite family, Joseph Estrada. Once associated with Marcos, Estrada succeeded in galvanizing the rural poor through populist

promises and winning the presidency in 1998. Three years later, he, too, was ousted by street actions of middle-class protesters that were sanctioned by the military and judiciary (Lande 2001). Estrada's vice-president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, daughter of a former president and large landowner, ascended to the presidency and jailed Estrada on charges of corruption while president. Corazon Aquino's son, "Noynoy" Aquino, then won the presidency but soon jailed Arroyo on charges of corruption. When "Noynoy" purged a Supreme Court justice and other officials appointed by Arroyo, he was widely perceived to be waging a "personal vendetta" (*Bangkok Post*, May 22, 2012). We must wait to see whether the new president-elect, Rodrigo Duterte, a former strongman mayor of Davao who resorted frequently to death squad activity will perpetuate these patterns.

Thus, in the Philippines, while colonial tutelage instilled initial political elite restraint, it did not prevent deep divisions from opening later. Although American oversight of the Philippines constrained landed elites by formally enshrining democracy, it failed to modernize the social structure that underpinned elite-dominated parties or insulate the state apparatus from rent seekers. By insisting on parties and elections when elite game rules were not deeply embedded, American colonialism opened the door to corruption and predation (Pye 1985, pp. 121–127).

Where it was applied by Britain in Southeast Asia, the tutelary model fared little better. Its application provided no immunity against, and it may even have fueled elite divisions and democratic breakdowns. Myanmar's (Burma's) father of independence, Aung San, was assassinated a year after independence was gained in 1948. His murder ushered in a decade and a half of political turbulence that eventuated in a military coup in 1962 and an authoritarian regime that lasted for 50 years. In Singapore, after its expulsion from the Malaysian Federation in 1963, socialist leaders in the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) were purged by British-educated elites, led by Lee Kuan Yew. After the socialists regrouped in opposition to the PAP, they were rounded up in a security action known as Operation Cold Store and jailed without trial for long periods. This cleared the way for the PAP's uninterrupted electoral victories and stranglehold on parliament down to the present (Wade 2010). In Brunei Darussalam, the Sultan mounted an executive coup in 1962, shutting the Legislative Council after a leftist party won district elections decisively. At present, the Sultan's son is simultaneously Sultan, unelected prime minister, first finance minister, and defense minister. Only in Britain's Malayan colonies, which achieved independence as the Federation of Malaysia in 1957, did political elite cohesion and consensus, born of British tutelage, persist for any length of time. But as we shall see, the terms of cohesion and

consensus were sharply recalibrated after 1969, and democratic practices consequently edged toward electoral authoritarianism.

Unsettling Crises: Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia

More than colonial-era tutelage, a galvanizing crisis may sometimes open the way to a basic settlement among warring elite factions (Higley and Burton 2006, pp. 55–106). On the other hand, an abrupt and brutal crisis may tear away such elite cohesion and consensus as has previously been attained, thereby creating deep divisions (Pepinsky 2010). An example is Indonesia at the time of the East Asian economic crisis in 1997–98. The crisis greatly unsettled the authoritarian regime headed by Suharto and dominated by top military officers, indigenous business tycoons, and ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs. Under the Suharto regime, Chinese property and business owners routinely paid military officers a portion of their profits in order to facilitate their accumulation of lucrative business holdings (Pepinsky 2010, p. 53). In addition, the Suharto coalition had important allies in organized labor.

Indonesia was struck in 1997–98 by twin currency and banking crises that rapidly eroded business valuations and holdings. Chinese entrepreneurs became unable to generate the rents with which to placate leading generals or to subsidize indigenous business tycoons. To the chagrin of military officers in the regime, Chinese entrepreneurs scurried abroad to protect what wealth they could. Fully exploiting Indonesia's open capital account, a condition they had earlier demanded as a price for supporting the Suharto coalition, the Chinese fled to safe financial havens in Singapore and Hong Kong. Leading generals who, like most indigenous business tycoons, controlled only fixed assets, retaliated by instigating street attacks on Chinese-owned business premises and residences, which culminated in lethal riots in Jakarta during May 1998. Relations across concentric rings of elites represented in Suharto's cabinet, in his electoral vehicle, Golkar, and in sundry other bodies unraveled. Suharto was forced to resign the presidency, and his departure ushered in a swift transition to democracy, though no basic elite settlement conducive to a durable liberal democracy appeared to occur.

In Malaysia, by contrast, the 1997–98 financial crisis initially appeared to strengthen political elite cohesion and consensus. The crisis that struck Indonesia hit Malaysia even harder, especially in the banking sector. But a quasi-authoritarian elite coalition in Malaysia (discussed below) differed from

Suharto's authoritarian coalition. It consisted of top party officials and indigenous tycoons, both of whom had sunk their capital in fixed local assets that could not be readily moved to safe havens in Hong Kong and Singapore. The Malaysian coalition also had a resilient societal base among ordinary Malays, who had been nurtured by affirmative action policies during the previous several decades. Moreover, Chinese entrepreneurs, who were so crucial for creating wealth in Indonesia, were far less integral to the ruling coalition in Malaysia. What financial mobility the Chinese possessed was easily squelched through draconian controls on capital movements. Thus, the limited elite cohesion and consensus manifested in the governing National Front coalition survived, in large measure because Chinese entrepreneurs had ceased since the late 1960s to fully be part of it.

Yet the financial crisis took a large toll on the Malaysian coalition. The standing of Mahathir Mohamad, then prime minister, was so eroded by the crisis that Anwar Ibrahim, his popular deputy, proposed alternative adjustment policies for the crisis, denounced Mahathir's collusive dealings with Malay millionaires, and openly mounted a leadership challenge to Mahathir (Case 1999). Only one day after capital controls were imposed, Anwar was arrested on charges of corruption and sexual misconduct, which led to a tawdry show trial and a lengthy jail sentence for him. The dramatic assault on Anwar was a vivid indicator of serious elite divisions. Although few elite persons defected from the dominant coalition to join Anwar in confronting Mahathir, Anwar's plight induced large numbers of voters to support a newly formed opposition coalition that made significant gains in the ensuing 1999 election. Furthermore, after being released from prison in 2004, Anwar strengthened his ties to other opposition elite persons and groups, enabling their coalition to make still greater electoral gains in 2008 and again in 2013 when it even won a popular majority of votes in that year's elections. But rather than enabling the opposition to capture the government, elite divisions triggered an authoritarian backlash to which I will return later.

Let us turn to Thailand, where a different kind of crisis tested limited political elite cohesion and consensus. The crisis in Thailand lay not in exogenous economic shocks, but in growing demands for economic redistribution, to which entrenched elites reacted by forging and hunkering under a protective pact. After a military coup in 1991 was followed by re-democratization a year later, military and bureaucratic elites retreated to their respective domains, and top politicians again contested elections, rotated cabinets, and dispensed patronage. Indeed, so regularized did these procedures become that, although the 1997–98 financial crisis struck first in Thailand, in 1997, Thai elites avoided the political traumas experienced by their Indonesia

and Malaysia counterparts. Instead, a mildly reformist constitution was ratified by Thailand's legislature and peaceful elections again took place.

Political elite accommodation and economic recovery after the crisis overlooked ordinary citizens, however. As social class and sub-national regional inequalities widened, the rural and urban poor were concentrated in constituencies ready-made for popular mobilizations by ambitious leaders and elite factions. Thaksin Shinawatra, who was esteemed as the country's leading business tycoon after the financial crisis passed, recognized that he might best protect his wealth by directly wielding state power. Thaksin drew upon his corporate resources and mastery of market survey techniques to align the Thai Rak Thai (Thai Loves Thai) party he formed with redistributive demands by the rural poor, especially in the country's northern regions (Pasuk and Baker 2004). Becoming prime minister after a sweeping Thai Rak Thai election victory in early 2001, Thaksin pursued populist welfare programs while further enriching himself (Kuhonta 2011).

Using welfare reforms to solidify his electoral and social base among the poor, Thaksin went beyond the existing party system to encroach on other institutions of state power. His actions tested elite relations sorely. He intervened in the military's promotion processes and inserted some family relatives in top command positions (Mutebi 2003, pp. 108–09). He tampered with the state bureaucracy by imposing a new stratum of "governor CEOs." Although many business tycoons who had been stunned by the economic crisis flocked initially to support Thaksin, they more and more resented his family company, Shin Corp, for hoarding government contracts. In 2005, for example, Sondhi Limthongkul, a major media owner, broke with Thaksin after several of his actions threatened Sondhi's business interests. In addition, Thaksin's boundless acquisitiveness, his costly welfare programs, and his trampling on civil liberties in order to quell media criticisms grated on the urban middle class, which organized as the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD).

With divisions deepening, entrenched elites struck back. The military elite allied more closely with top bureaucrats, royal officials, and old-money tycoons. Seeking its own social base, the military appealed to the urban middle class, and it tolerated increasingly disruptive street actions in the center of Bangkok. Dressed in royalist yellow shirts, PAD's middle-class activists abandoned the democratic politics they had previously championed in favor of a "new politics" involving a National Assembly appointed mainly by the military and the bureaucracy (Thitinan 2008). Political elite divisions crystallized in an open split, with Thaksin mobilizing mass supporters by decrying their class enemies. Most notably, he referred obliquely to General Prem Tinsulanonda, head of the king's Privy Council, as a "meritorious person outside the

constitution" who was trying to oust him. Three months later, the military conducted a coup. The judiciary then duly convicted Thaksin of corruption, forcing him into exile, while de-registering Thai Rak Thai and banning its top politicians. But Thaksin had uncorked such potent social grievances that, even in his exiled absence, rural and urban poor people rose to counter the PAD. Mobilizing as "Red Shirts" and formalizing their movement as the United Front Against Dictatorship, they engaged the "Yellow Shirts" in an extended cycle of violent street confrontations. In 2009, Sondhi, the tycoon who had defected from Thaksin, suffered an attempted assassination that left him badly wounded.

To summarize, in a context of rapid but uneven economic expansion, the availability of rural and urban poor for populist mobilization, and the scope for shrill electoral appeals facilitated by democratic politics, Thaksin defected from Thailand's established political elite. He pitted a class coalition against an amalgam of generals, royalist notables, bureaucrats, and the middle class. The resulting crisis did not percolate spontaneously up from below. Even less did it spring from any currency or banking crisis, because a robust economic recovery was well underway. Rather, Thaksin instigated a deep political elite division by giving voice and organization to redistributive desires. Instead of spurring elite factions to band together, the division became a yawning split, with the most entrenched elite groups finally encouraging and supporting military intervention, Thaksin's exile, the confiscation of significant amounts of his wealth, and the persecution of his sister, Yingluck, who was democratically elected to the prime ministership in 2011, but deposed through yet another coup three years later. In these circumstances, any elite cohesion and consensus that may eventually form in Thailand involves no protective pact. It derives, instead, from an epic battle of elimination, with Thaksin and his loyalists probably being conclusively vanquished.

Disruptive Patronage: Malaysia Revisited

Despite its formidable social base in Thailand's northern and urban poor, Thai Rak Thai in no way acquired the organizational scaffolding, let alone the historical moorings that in neighboring Malaysia enabled the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) to sustain political elite cohesion, if not wide elite consensus. By capturing patronage resources that gushed from Malaysia's porous state apparatus, and by cultivating a potent Malay ethnic image, UMNO was the only commercial game in town for most ambitious Malays to play. But when patronage ran short, the dominant single party that had long

perpetuated elite cohesion became the locus of elite division. Even if ample patronage flows are restored, elite division may persist or even worsen.

The mid-1980s were a period of deep economic recession in Malaysia, with diminished patronage for the UMNO elite to dispense (Brownlee 2007). A split between Mahathir, the prime minister, and his deputy, Musa Hitam, triggered the formation of a larger anti-Mahathir faction whose leader, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, challenged Mahathir for the presidency of UMNO at the party election in 1987. UMNO elite groups then formed two distinct camps: what were popularly known as "Team A," led by Mahathir, and "Team B, led by Razaleigh and Musa. Involving more than a competition for factional primacy, the "teams" were egged on by competing camps of businessmen holding capital that was largely immobile (Khoo 1992). Mahathir championed indigenous tycoons, often locally labeled "Malay Millionaires," and showered them with state assets and contracts. Razaleigh was associated with small- and medium-sized Malay businessmen, who were lesser beneficiaries of government largess. Amid economic recession, some Malay millionaires were rescued with government bailouts, whereas small contractors for government projects suffered when their patronage was suspended. The disparity encouraged distinct constituencies that became available for mobilization by leaders of the rival elite teams.

Mahathir prevailed in the 1987 party election and purged his cabinet of Team B members. But the conflict between him and Razaleigh over the UMNO's "name and assets" continued and spread to other institutions, reverberating through parliament, the monarchy, the judiciary, and civil society. Mahathir ordered the arrest of opposition leaders and activists under the dreaded Internal Security Act. Unable to make headway, Razaleigh and Team B supporters finally defected from the UMNO and registered a new political party, Semangat '46 (Spirit of '46), named after the year in which UMNO had been founded. Thus, amid shortfalls in patronage, UMNO's storehouse of raw spoils and foundational lore, which had long facilitated elite cohesion, became objects of struggle. Although the conflict threatened to tear UMNO apart, Team B supporters gradually returned to the party fold (Brownlee 2007, p. 139). When Semangat '46 fared only modestly in the 1990 elections, even Razaleigh rejoined UMNO. Yet this merely obscured the deep currents of elite division that had set in, currents made manifest in the furious team-based rivalries, purges, defections, and jail sentences. During the late 1990s, when UMNO's patronage resources again ran short as a consequence of the 1997–98 financial crisis, elite divisions over the party's name and assets resumed, this time between Mahathir and his former deputy, Anwar Ibrahim.

With Anwar ousted from UMNO and imprisoned in 1999, his supporters formed a new social movement that, in targeting corruption, called for *reformasi* (reform). Mahathir's ferocity deterred most elite groups from joining Anwar's supporters in "political exile." Indeed, one regularly heard the chilling refrain, "If it can happen to Anwar, it can happen to anyone." As Jason Brownlee observes,

> While thousands of [UMNO] members went over to PAS [an Islamic opposition party], the leadership remained steadfastly allied with Mahathir. Lacking defectors who could otherwise shift influence from the ruling party to *reformasi*, Anwar was unable to leverage an insider position in an effective push for systemic change. (2007, p. 154)

Other close observers of Malaysian politics agree that Anwar's reform movement "had virtually no elite backing whatsoever—most crucially from communal elites, who remained firmly in the maw of Malaysia's cohesive and capable authoritarian Leviathan" (Slater 2010, p. 221). After the 1999 elections, in which PAS made gains, "the crisis having passed, Malaysian politics under Mahathir returned to its usual state of UMNO dominance" (Pepinsky 2010, p. 222).

By considering the mere sizes of competing factions in the electoral time frame, however, observers too quickly dismissed Anwar as down for the count. Mahathir retired in 2003, and under his successor, Abdullah Badawi, the UMNO-led National Front won its greatest electoral victory in 2004. But then, in a context of economic recovery, UMNO elites grew so emboldened by their enhanced dominance that they audaciously began to consume and dispense still greater amounts of patronage. They justified this by more loudly proclaiming ethnic Malay supremacy, which alienated many ordinary citizens. Even many Malays, although benefiting from government largess, expressed resentments about widespread corruption. In polling conducted a month before the next elections, in 2008, more than 60 percent of Malay respondents agreed that while "UMNO and [the National Front] say that they are fighting for Malay rights, they spend more time making money for themselves and giving contracts to friends and family members" (Merdeka Center 2008).

After being released from prison when his final appeal to the High Court was granted in September 2004, Anwar was free to advance his *reformasi* campaign atop this new wave of discontent. A decade after his split with Mahathir, Anwar thus led the opposition to stunning gains in the 2008 election, even denying the National Front its customary two-thirds majority in parliament. This splintered UNMO elites and led to Prime Minister

Abdullah Badawi's ouster. Still deeper inroads by Anwar and his opposition groups in the 2013 election broke what elite linkages remained, perhaps irreparably, between UMNO elites and their National Front partners.

Whereas single-party dominance, which connotes a monopoly of patronage, is often viewed by students of elites as integral to elite cohesion, when patronage dries up, control of the single party itself becomes the prize and precipitates more or less unchecked elite division. Even if patronage resources are eventually replenished, disaffected elite groups may persist in divisive pursuits. In Malaysia, elite division began to center less on the control of the party and on the spoils of office than on segmental ethnic pillars led by clashing elites.

Pillars of Clay: Malaysia's Torment

Segmental ethnic pillars, molded from societal pluralism, have been regarded as the foundations of elite coalescence and consociational democracy (Lijphart 1977). But in Malaysia, segmented ethnic pillars have instead motivated elites to behave in ways that alienated constituents, weakened pillars of support, deepened elite tensions, and triggered an authoritarian backlash.

As mentioned, the terms of elite-level cohesion in Malaysia were sharply adjusted after ethnic rioting in 1969. But with UMNO elites and in some measure their National Front partners clinging to segmental ethnic pillars, they were able, despite new divisions, to sustain elite accommodation during ensuing decades. When preparing for the 2004 election, Abdullah Badawi pledged to be a "prime minister to all Malaysians," and by resonating with ordinary citizens, he led the National Front to its greatest electoral victory. But some UMNO elites, enthralled with their having recaptured Malay voters from PAS, drew away from their National Front partners, recklessly consuming and dispensing state patronage and loudly proclaiming Malay ethnic supremacy and UMNO dominance.

Malaysia's political record after the 2004 elections, marked by an aggressive insistence on Malay—and increasingly Islamic—supremacy, has been documented extensively. Yet one vignette is worth rehearsing. At UMNO's assembly meeting in 2006, the party's youth leader, Hishammuddin Hussein, concluded his speech by drawing a *keris*, a traditional long-bladed Malay dagger, and waving it over his head in triumph, delighting the delegates in attendance. At the 2007 party meeting, Hishammuddin, now education minister, repeated this action, this time unnerving non-Malay audiences who viewed the spectacle on television. What is more, Abdullah Badawi defended

Hishammuddin's display, stating that "the *keris* is a weapon, but it is a weapon to protect yourself and your friends" (*Malaysiakini*, November 7, 2007).

Lijphart's thesis of segmental pillars and coalescent elites was turned on its head in Malaysia. The pillarization that had encouraged UMNO elites to foster an accommodative hegemony was so heightened by their ambitions that they now grew exclusionary. Meanwhile, the rising ethnic discontents of ordinary Chinese began to intersect with those of the many middle-class Malays who resented corrupt practices by governing elites. As UMNO elites distanced themselves from National Front partners, ordinary Chinese and Malay citizens began to join hands. In the 2008 election, a vast majority of Chinese voted against the UMNO-led National Front, while Malay voters registered a swing of five percent against the National Front. UMNO elites thus confronted a resurgent Anwar and a buoyed opposition, soon named *Pakatan Rakyat* (People's Alliance). Elites were stunned when the Pakatan won more than a third of the seats in parliament and gained control of five of the federation's thirteen state assemblies. Abdullah Badawi was ousted by UMNO elites as party president and prime minister, while their National Front partners became more marginalized.

Najib Razak, Abdullah Badawi's successor, sought initially to reach out to the Chinese. But UMNO's "warlords" and new "nativist" Malay NGOs stymied Najib's advances. In the 2013 election, Chinese voters nearly completed their swing to Pakatan. However, many ordinary Malays took commensurate fright, which drove significant numbers back into the arms of UMNO. Pakatan made additional gains overall, even winning a small popular majority. But it was prevented from taking power by extensive manipulations, of which sharply mal-apportioned electoral districts were the most glaring (Ostwald 2013). After the election, embittered UMNO elites castigated Chinese voters for their "betrayal" while reissuing supremacist appeals and fresh affirmative action programs to Malay voters (Case 2013). In this way, UMNO elites began to rebuild their segmental pillar, but with little coalescent and consociational effect. Far from gaining access to an oversized cabinet and mutual vetoes, Chinese parties in the National Front were utterly frozen out. To curb electoral competition, Anwar was re-imprisoned, and many opposition leaders and dissidents were charged with sedition.

In these circumstances, Najib appeared able during 2015–16 to weather yet another crisis. In mid-2015, international media outlets reported that some US$700 million appeared to have been siphoned from a state development vehicle called One Malaysian Development Ltd. (known as "1MDB") into the prime minister's personal bank accounts. 1MDB, bereft of funds, was forced to sell down its assets, many to state entities in China, in order to repay

creditors. Accusations of corruption surged among opposition parties, civil society organizations, and even within UMNO. The sheer scale of the scandal gave 1MDB international notoriety. But while opposition leaders howled complaints, they remained divided and ineffective so long as Anwar was in jail. Political activists were constrained by a further application of sedition laws and sundry other punitive measures. UMNO's non-Malay partners in the National Front remained quite mute. This enabled Najib to focus his powers of patronage and coercion on those within UMNO and the state apparatus who dared oppose him.

As the scandal continued to unfold, Mahathir, still influential in UMNO, excoriated Najib for his mismanagement of government and UMNO resources. So did the deputy prime minister and deputy UMNO president, Muhyiddin Yassin, and the minister of rural and regional development and UMNO vice-president, Shafie Apdal. With the drumbeat of criticisms quickening, the Police Special Branch, Anti-Corruption Agency (MACC), central bank (Bank Negara), and Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) all opened investigations. The attorney general, Ghani Patail, may even have prepared corruption charges against Najib. But Najib retaliated ruthlessly in a systematic way. He engineered the ouster of Mahathir's son as chief minister of the northern state of Kedah and mounted an investigation of Mahathir himself. He removed Yassin and Apdal from their ministerial posts and cashiered a top officer in the Police Special Branch along with key MACC officials. Leading parliamentarians in the PAC were given snap entries to the cabinet, which effectively removed them from parliament's investigating committee. The investigation begun by the Governor of Bank Negara, Zeti Akhtar Aziz, lost steam as her retirement approached in mid-2016. And Ghani Patail, despite years of political service for UMNO, was purged and replaced by a far more pliable attorney general, who duly declared that the funds in Najib's account had been donated by the Saudi Royal Family and were thus legal under Malaysian law. To deter the leaking of information about 1MDB to the media and civil society, the new attorney general proposed that penalties under the Official Secrets Act be extended to life imprisonment and caning. Meanwhile, Najib quelled dissent among others in UMNO by reminding them that much of the funding in his account had been allocated to them for campaigning in the 2013 election. Hence, in this and other ways, they had all benefited. Accordingly, the UMNO "warlords," as well as most of its cadres remained in harness. At the time of this writing (early 2016), it appeared that Najib would survive the crisis.

Even so, the 1MDB crisis should in no way be seen as restoring elite cohesion, as crises can sometimes do. Najib's heavy-handed recourse to

intimidation and purges ensured the persistence of serious elite divisions, but it prevented outright elite warfare from occurring. At the societal level, his actions worsened tensions between Malaysia's ethnic pillars. If most ordinary Malays overlooked the 1MDB scandal, they did so in hopes of perpetuating their communal privileges, leaving a resentful Chinese community to look on sullenly.

Summarizing, I have revisited factors that can foster political elite cohesion, but I have also showed how an evolving elite milieu can as readily instigate fractiousness and splits. The colonial-era tutelage that nurtured elite cohesion in Malaysia contained seeds that later motivated elites to depart from it. The negotiations intrinsic to elite pacts that are spawned by crises may beget subsequent crises, triggering defections that undermine what cohesion had earlier been attained. In practice, single-party dominance may encourage patronage abuses that alienate ordinary citizens, producing new opportunities that tempt defecting elites to confront the single dominant party. A strong ethnic segmental pillar may encourage some elites to tighten their hegemony, causing other pillars to erode and societal grievances to clash more openly. Finally, the crisis over 1MDB suggests that an avoidance of outright elite warfare and a national leader's political resilience should not be mistaken for cohesion. Indeed, political elite relations in Malaysia cannot now be seen as other than fraught.

Conclusions

Ever since Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (1986) dispatched structural determinacy in the study of democratic transitions, voluntarist splits in authoritarian coalitions have featured prominently in the literature on comparative democratization. As Jan Teorell (2010, p. 21) observes, "[T]he generalization that democratic transitions always originate from above through a split in the authoritarian regime is still high on the research agenda." However, elite splits, and the divisions from which they spring, are as likely to shunt democratic transitions sideways or trigger authoritarian backlashes. Hence, we need not only to account for elite splits that lead to democratization but also for those that lead elsewhere.

One way to do this is to locate political elite relations, often viewed as a stand-alone causal variable, in a longer trajectory. Tracing the origins of elite divisions can better inform debates about the impacts of splits in political elites. Scholars regard divisions and disunity as the "modal pattern" of political elite relations (Higley and Burton 1989), but their study has mostly been

neglected. They are treated as the default pattern among elites who fail to reach a compelling cohesion. But if divisions and splits precipitate *both* democratization and authoritarian backlashes, they deserve much more study.

To uncover the tinder in which elite divisions may combust and generate splits, I have revisited in the context of Southeast Asia the much more studied incubators of political elite cohesion, including colonial-era tutelage, revolutionary violence, abrupt crises, redistributive pressures, elite pacts, institutional anchoring of single-party dominance, and structurally rooted consociationalism. My survey has had the character of a probe analysis that cannot show how it leads to better predictions of the timing, dynamics, and directionalities of political elite relations and consequent regime types and changes. I hope, however, that the analysis has shed some light on how splits between elite factions and groups take place. With its bounded diversity offering vivid illustrations and possibilities, Southeast Asia is a useful laboratory for testing these ideas about political elites and advancing new propositions.

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17

Political Elites in Sub-Saharan Africa

Jean-Pascal Daloz

Elite perspectives have never been given a high priority in African studies. In so far as the subject has been touched upon, what can mainly be found are normative writings aimed at stigmatizing rulers held to be responsible for ills that afflict their countries, and, conversely, hagiographic biographies of individual rulers. Even among academic works with "scientific" ambitions, analyses of African rulers and elites have long suffered from having to fit reductive schematic molds full of dogmatic assumptions. Although a kind of "empirical reaction" that pays more attention to the specificities of sub-Saharan political elites points toward more convincing interpretations, elites in the region remain under-studied.

To talk of political elites across what is almost an entire continent immediately raises questions about generalizing. Especially when considering the diversity of pre-colonial territories that ranged from quasi-headless communities to large kingdoms, the various forms and impacts of colonization and political evolutions, since independence was obtained, plausible generalizations may seem beyond reach. However, features such as the very weak institutionalization of political systems and the enduring predominance of informal political relations can be found nearly everywhere in sub-Saharan Africa. Other general features include the long tenures and limited circulation of top-level political leaders and the imperative of particularistic economic

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redistributions, in which political legitimacy derives to a large extent from the ability to provide for the clienteles on which a leader's power rests.

Dogmatic Perspectives

Before canvassing what might be viewed as key characteristics of political elites south of the Sahara, it will be useful to encapsulate how political elites have been treated conceptually, and sometimes empirically, since the end of colonial rule. I will start with political development and socioeconomic modernization treatments during the 1960s, then move to the neo-Marxist dependency theories of the 1970s and finally the so-called third wave of African political studies since the 1980s.

Political Development and the Hypothesis of Modernizing Elites

Early studies of post-colonial African politics and societies were mostly written from a developmental perspective. Theories emanated principally from American political scientists who assumed that a transformation from "traditional" to "modern" societies would conform to a general theory of political development (Almond and Coleman 1960). Many challenges to modernization regarding identity, participation, integration, mobilization, and so forth were recognized, yet it was generally assumed that modernization would occur, and it would do so under the leadership of elites.

   A clear distinction was drawn between "traditional" and "modern" elites.[1] According to many scholars, the latter would quickly form national elites, while the former would undergo a rapid diminution in prestige. The idea was that nationalist ideologies would eventually muffle traditionalist cleavages. A common thesis was that modernizing elites would be committed to performance and be legitimized by their success in building the new states. Scholars believed that the post-independence generation of leaders would be impatient with traditional leaders who resisted social and political change. Leaders and others exposed to advanced education would follow the course of Western intellectual culture and become modern. This was considered to be vital, because it carried with it a process of individualization and a changed relationship to authority. Consequently, the educated and, later, the rest of sub-Saharan populations would be progressively "detribalized." Moreover,

use of the foreign language imposed by the colonizer would strengthen each country's national identity and unity.

A book edited by Peter C. Lloyd and titled *The New Elites of Tropical Africa* (1966) was symptomatic of this train of thought. To identify post-independence elites, Lloyd and his colleagues considered several factors, notably wealth and Western education. One conclusion was that "In a few years a larger proportion of the African population will have received a substantial primary education and their values will no longer be those of traditional society," and another was that "The children of the present elite, growing up in the residential areas designed for [colonial] civil servants, will in turn be divorced from traditional society as their parents never were" (1966, introduction, p. 27).

Development and modernization theory had a universalistic and teleological character. It posited that sub-Saharan societies would develop inexorably along lines that Western societies had. In a cumulative process, they would follow the path trodden by those which were "more advanced." Progress might be gradual, but its course was clearly charted. The theory was also ahistorical. Most exponents neglected Africa's colonial and pre-colonial history. Political scientists and sociologists analyzed the politics of independent Africa as though antecedents mattered little.[2]

The development and modernization school, whose main scholarly leaders were not Africanists, evolved and eventually spawned more sophisticated models. Exponents became more skeptical about linear development schemes, and some began to show that political development was not as obvious and inexorable as predecessors had believed.[3] Yet a continuing problem (which today draws impetus from the process of globalization) was more interest in how new African nations fitted into a general theory than understanding their politics *per se*. This interest was ideological, full of preconceptions, and it rested on little serious empirical research. The conceptual framework led scholars to analyze post-colonial political systems at an excessively abstract level. By ignoring the specificities of local cultures, analyses failed to account for many dynamics that were at work (notably in relation to political representation and ethnicity). For scholars tied to a theory of universal political progress and to the idea that African political systems would eventually conform to it, setbacks, and deviations could only be viewed as "temporary dysfunctions."

Viewed in retrospect, early development and modernization theory did provide a foundation for the analysis of post-colonial African politics. Its merit lay in the attempt to build a conceptual framework for comparing the politics of the sub-continent with those of the rest of the world. In this comparative effort, the theory repudiated the exotic, often racist conceptions

that had marked colonial accounts of Africa. Furthermore, the theory helped identify some of the principal problems faced by African political systems, and it nurtured a series of baseline studies. Yet it soon became painfully apparent that the theory's evolutionary and teleological assumptions, centered as they were on ideal Western goals and on the hypothesis of westernizing political elites, could not cope with the rapid onset of problematic events and situations in the sub-continent.

Dependency and the Vision of a "Cohesive Bourgeoisie"

Neo-Marxist theories of dependency came into vogue as a reaction to the ideas of development and modernization theory. Dependency theories were based on an assumption opposite to that on which development and modernization theory rested. This was that forces bent on exploiting Africa's natural resources were impeding progress. Specifically, the continuing economic development and dominance of "core" capitalist countries in the West was accomplished by keeping the "peripheral" countries of Africa, Latin America and other world regions under-developed.

For neo-Marxists, decolonization was not seen as the prelude to economic self-determination but, rather, a process by which the political control of economies moved from metropolitan powers and expatriate groups to dependent African intermediaries within a system of "neo-colonialism." Research focused on class formation and class conflict was proposed. It was argued that in Africa and elsewhere local bourgeoisies, reduced to "auxiliary" statuses and incapable of becoming classes independent of foreign capital, had come to dominate countries.[4] According to exponents of dependency theories, what mattered was the process of embourgeoisement among leaders of nationalist movements and their entourages, who were said to be increasingly obsessed with acquiring wealth and power. Their obsession involved kleptocracy and collusion with exploitative foreign business concerns. As an essentially non-productive class removed from direct ownership of the means of production, which continued to lie in foreign hands, the new bourgeoisie would be compelled to capture the state apparatus as its primary means of class formation and consolidation. Dependency theorists therefore expected that after a few years of fractious, ethnic-centered politics, an upper class would emerge as a cohesive stratum pursuing its class interests against the interests of subaltern strata. A simple dichotomy was thus proposed between a privileged bourgeoisie and the bulk of a population living hand to mouth in urban slums and impoverished rural villages.[5]

This theoretical framework became predominant during the 1970s. None-theless, important criticisms of dependency theory were soon voiced. A first set of criticisms was that dependency theory gave too much attention to economic factors. The dependency model was over-determined by the influence of general macro-economic theory. Consequently, it neglected important aspects of politics, such as the supremacy of vertical patron-client links that transcended boundaries between social strata.[6] Likewise, it paid insufficient attention to the question of ethnicity, which it too readily depicted as an instrument manipulated by the new bourgeoisies to lure lower strata into submission. For neo-Marxists, the intensification of conflicts was not due to the multi-ethnic nature of African polities, but to the fact that such conflicts were artificially generated and magnified by political leaders anxious to carve up spheres of influence and wealth for themselves. Dependency theorists were accused of not recognizing that politics in Africa could hardly be reduced to a superstructure shaped by basic economic relations. On the contrary, critics argued, more often than not economic relations were enmeshed in complex social relations.

A second set of critics argued that analyses sparked by dependency theory were too abstract and too removed from actual, on-going events and trends. Other critics assailed dependency theory for being exaggeratedly teleological. Whereas development and modernization theory posited that African societies would move inexorably along the line of Western capitalist development, neo-Marxist analysis posited that socialism was the way forward and the end goal for Africa. "Dependency" became a slogan, an emotional political concept with anti-imperialist social functions. For years, leftist Western intellectuals, disillusioned by conservative political dominance in their own countries, believed that they could simply transfer their "revolutionary" fervor and analytical categories to Africa. A final set of criticisms was that dependency theory suffered from an excessive emphasis on external dynamics. The social structures of "neo-colonialism" were not viewed as the result of autonomous historical development, but as structures determined by foreign hegemony and exploitation.

The dependency school undoubtedly raised significant issues. But it failed to advance an understanding of the complexities of Africa's political systems. A number of Africanists, many of whom were anthropologists, highlighted the degree to which the school's analytical framework rested on Western concepts of productive accumulation and class formation that hardly made sense in an African context.

The Third Wave of African Political Studies

If the 1960s had been dominated by development and modernization theories and the 1970s by dependency approaches, the 1980s and 1990s largely rejected both perspectives, albeit without articulating a new grand theory. Third-wave studies claimed that African politics should not be perceived as a simple consequence of external determinants and that specificities of African societies should be brought to the fore. However, the third wave involved little reflection about elites; its main focus was the African state and the issue of hybridization.

One third-wave approach emphasized "politics from below." What mainly interested its proponents was the political behavior of subordinate political actors and hidden aspects of their situations. Religious, artistic, and other phenomena not usually regarded as political in nature should, in fact, be studied as political in their effects. The aim was to extend domains of investigation to a very large spectrum of implicitly political expressions. Scholars studying "politics from below" contended that African elites were gradually gaining hegemony in their societies. Jean-François Bayart (1994 [1989]) proposed a typology of elite cleavages to highlight several scenarios. Nigeria, in which the northern aristocracy had been able to preserve its dominance under the British system of indirect colonial rule and then play an outsized role in politics after independence, exemplified "conservative modernism." Rwanda, in which Hutu elites nurtured under colonial rule eventually led a slaughter of ruling Tutsi elites, exemplified a scenario opposite to the Nigerian one. Senegal, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, and several other countries exemplified a third scenario involving the fusion of modern and traditional elites, along with a co-optation of potential counter-elites. These and similar models and scenarios employed in the third wave of African studies constituted a rupture with development and modernization theory's simplistic distinction between modernizing elites and backward populations, and with dependency theory's depiction of a new post-colonial bourgeoisie defending its class interests at the expense of suffering masses. But the third-wave focus on politics from below and civil society did not foster analyses of elites.

"Neo-patrimonialism" was another third-wave approach that did much to bolster the study of African politics *per se*. The neo-patrimonial approach tried to make sense of contradictions found in sub-Saharan African states. In this perspective, African states were viewed as somewhat illusory but nevertheless substantial. They are illusory because their *modus operandi* is essentially

informal: the rule of law is feebly enforced, and capacities for implementing public policies are very limited. But the states are substantial in the sense that gaining control of them is the ultimate prize for African political elites. The neo-patrimonial model accounts for the undeniable fact that the public and the private spheres are largely overlapped in Africa. Within a neo-patrimonial system, the public sector is in reality appropriated by private interests. In a post-colonial context, political legitimacy derives from a creatively imprecise interaction between "ancestral norms" and the logic of modern states. The state edifice conforms to the Western template, but its workings are those of patrimonial dynamics.[7]

Neo-patrimonial approaches are primarily interested in questions about the state. However, one finds references to elites' issues in them, especially in the "Big Man" model. This anthropological model, proposed originally by Marshall Sahlins in his work on Melanesia, is relatively transposable to the behavior of African political elites. Without presenting the model here, what is central in the logic of the Big Man is a symbolic exchange that allows the conversion of resources of one kind into resources of another kind. More precisely, the Big Man accumulates wealth in order to redistribute and exchange it for political support. This political capital allows him, in turn, to accumulate still more wealth and undertake further redistributions and exchanges. What is important from a theoretical point of view are the interactions of resources in settings where political, economic, and social spheres are not much differentiated. Elite persons at the top are simultaneously politicians, community leaders, and businessmen—a hybrid of roles that is even more obvious when the extended families of top elite persons are taken into account.[8]

The trend in third-wave theories and studies of African politics has thus been toward more subtle interpretations, many utilizing biological metaphors: hybridity, graft, phagocytosis (foreign matter engulfed and destroyed by aggressive blood cells), and so forth. These interpretations improve on the earlier development modernization and dependency frameworks of analysis that portrayed governmental institutions in African countries as Western transplantations or unwelcome bourgeois devices. However, third-wave studies have too often failed to clarify and explain important imbalances, in which the receiving African "organ" is far more influential in shaping outcomes than are the "organs" transplanted into or imposed on it. To extend the biological metaphor, it can be said that dominant "genes" issue from the local African habitat, while recessive "genes" emanate from the West. But it is debatable whether knowledge of African political elites has seriously progressed during the third wave. It must be admitted that, apart from a few scattered studies,[9]

reflections about elites have been made on the outskirts of wide syntheses focused on other topics and dynamics.

The Need for a "Fourth Wave" Focused on Elites

Due to the fact that in sub-Saharan Africa, political power remains weakly institutionalized, it can be argued that moving away from highly abstract or normative discussions and looking at situations from the more concrete angle of elites should be given priority. They are likely to provide more convincing pictures of local political realities. For example, against assumptions about sharp dichotomies between state and civil society, or between tradition and modernity, studies of elites can show how political actors who hold ministerial positions in governments also control NGOs or how leaders awarded traditional titles of rule also speculate on the New York Stock Exchange. I now want to consider recurrent themes and trends in studies of sub-Saharan political elites. Although the relevance of these themes and trends to highly diverse African polities might have to be qualified in some instances, I will argue that they apply to most locales and situations in today's Africa.

Elite Legitimation in Informal Contexts

South of the Sahara, the nature of relations between political elites and publics is determined by practices that have little to do with official structures. It is crucial to understand that the foundations of political accountability are both collective and extra-institutional: they rest on informal links between patrons and their respective networks. This may be considered nefarious for the macro-development of African countries, because it makes political and economic actions and outcomes unpredictable. However, there are good reasons for believing that the ubiquity of informal relations is likely to persist. Indeed, profoundly uncertain and opaque relations that depend on subtle and constantly fluctuating ties of loyalty provide ample opportunities for the instrumental use of properly cultivated links. African political systems would undoubtedly benefit from more regulated relations, but elites are quite able to use their absence as a major advantage and resource. Such is the efficacy of the existing informal system that it has survived elite generational and regime changes.[10]

In spite of "democratic transitions" in much of the continent, it is far from obvious that they have modified the complexion of politics in any serious way.

For instance, voting in elections remains linked to the anticipation of the direct and particularistic benefits that will flow as soon as an election is over. Contrary to teleological suppositions about democracy effects, political life in post-colonial Africa is essentially a matter of catering to infra-national identities. Elites, intermediaries and ordinary inhabitants think of themselves first and foremost according to ethno-regional and sometimes religious identities, or to factional ones in the likely event of needing to enter into governing coalitions, whether local or national. There is no reliable evidence that this type of particularistic leadership, based as it is on clientelistic transactions, is waning or even weakened by the scarcity of resources from which governing elites in the region regularly suffer. On the contrary, economic crises and scarcities reinforce, rather than undermine, practices of vertical, personalized patronage.

Across the continent, the prestige and influence of elite persons are linked directly to the number of supporters they can plausibly claim to have. The pressures of electoral competitions compel political leaders to continuously widen their support base by dispensing patronage. Their legitimacy depends heavily on the ability to maximize the assets delivered to followers, who, in turn, must often satisfy their own power bases. Political elites try to establish principles of reciprocity based on kin and family relations, but these principles are infirm in practice and depend almost entirely on the extent to which patronage networks are properly resourced.[11] In the absence of institutionally autonomous and relatively impartial states, it is imperative for ordinary people to maintain links with those who have power by playing on ties of loyalty. This entrenched aspect of politics in Africa prevents the development of more neutral and impersonally organized relations. Deeply particularistic ties that are evanescent, uncertain and open to instrumentalism are pervasive in the region.

Although there are strong inequalities within clientelistic relations, elites also suffer constraints. In fact, the maintenance of their status is largely dependent on their capacity to meet the expectations of their dependents. The acuteness of apparent inequalities is reduced by the need to be seen as a redistributor on a scale appropriate to one's standing. When rooted in clientelistic ties, social relations are inevitably based on personalized bonds of mutually beneficial reciprocity. That is why leaders are never wholly dissociated from their supporters. They remain directly bound to them through myriad networks peopled by brokers. A powerful figure will see his authority reinforced if supporters see him as incarnating all their hopes. One would be wrong to view this relationship as simple manipulation, for the evidence shows that it embodies a common heritage within complex networks that are

interwoven from the top to the bottom. The exercise of power rests firmly on common recognitions between leaders and followers. Even if patron-client relations are unequal, patrons can easily be subjected to blackmail by their clienteles. They must submit to an obligation of personalized and vertical redistribution in order to anchor their position across the different social communities or factions backing them.

As a consequence, solidarities, mobilizations, and political linkages tend to be more vertical than horizontal. Although African socio-political systems are far from egalitarian, most political actors are simultaneously dominant and dominated and serve as links in chains of lesser and greater dependence. Often torn by internal disputes, faction leaders are forced to cultivate relationships with those below them in order to gain support in their power struggles with each other. Taking advantage of power is quite permissible, but it is necessary to live up to the expectations of one's supporters in a satisfactory way as regards patronage.

The Limited Circulation of Elites

One of the most obvious signs of a disregard for formal politics is the lack of consideration for constitutional primacy in African countries. As is well known, it is quite common south of the Sahara to see last minute modifications extend a president's tenure. The inclination and capacity of African leaders to wield executive power in self-interested and arbitrary ways is central. It is true that the authoritarian nature of the African post-colonial order, with its concentration of power at the very top, is not conducive to political elite circulation.[12] Classical analyses of elites, such as Pareto's theory of elite circulation, held that societal crises often lead to significant changes in the makeup of ruling elites. However, the post-colonial African political record accords more Harold Lasswell's portrayal of elites as flexible and adaptive.

Empirically, even the most cursory examination of post-colonial Africa confirms that there has been a very limited circulation of major political actors. Detailed studies of various countries have often revealed high degrees of elite continuity, including in those countries that have undergone several changes of political regimes (Daloz 1999). New leaders tend to be experienced politicians with durable careers in the higher echelons of government. It is striking to observe how few genuinely new top political figures have emerged in ways other than through military coups. Such coups, which often propel young military officers to the top, seem to be nearly the only way in which a new generation of leaders obtains power. Heads of state who have held their

position for decades are common, and gerontocracies are widespread. At present, more than one-third of African rulers are beyond their 70th birthdays. Robert Mugabe, who seized power in Zimbabwe in 1990, is at this writing 92 years old. Family "dynasties" of rulers, in which sons eventually succeed their fathers, as in the cases of Ali Bongo in Gabon, Faure Gnassingbé Eyadema in Togo, Joseph Kabila in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uhuru Kenyatta in Kenya are not hard to find in post-colonial Africa.

Cultural explanations for the longevity of political elites, with their emphasis on the importance of experience and respect for the aged, make some sense of this pattern. Most African societies continue to subscribe to what might be called a system of deference vis-à-vis elders, and advanced age matters socially and politically. Moreover, and more practically, what is involved for rulers (and entourages) who have been enjoying lavish commodities and palatial living for years is merely a question of survival. So long as one holds supreme power, there are limited risks of trials related to accusations of embezzlement and retaliations for crimes in office.[13] Yet it is important to stress access to resources. Aspirants to political office require both credibility and the means to fulfill their ambitions. They must be rich enough to become convincing. Inevitably, it is their accumulation of wealth that gives older leaders the edge over younger ones. Except in the specific case of heirs, newcomers have little to offer except promise to "change" the political system. Young and aspiring leaders do not easily appear to be credible patrons, even if their objectives point to a desire to address the most pressing ills of a country. In the end, populations want to know whether a potential leader will be able to call upon and dispense significant resources in neo-patrimonial ways.

Needed research on African elites will doubtless emphasize additional features. These include the lasting importance of the occult and witchcraft in upper social and political circles, the widespread use of violence, extensive corruption, nepotism, and ostentation, as well as the secondary importance of ideologies and types of regimes. Obviously, some of these features are not specific to sub-Saharan political elites; they can be found in political elites the world over. Yet comparisons of differences in degree and explanations of them matter.[14] As regards sub-Saharan political elites, this is very much an unfinished undertaking. It is hoped that more research will be carried on these aspects but also on more standard elite analysis, regarding recruitment and co-optation for instance.

Notes

1. See, for example, Smythe and Smythe (1960) on the Nigerian case.
2. Historians, however, have been more sensitive to developments regarding elites. See, for example, Ajayi (1965) about the role of Christian missions in the development of a new Nigerian elite; Cole (1975) on the case of Lagos; Caplan (1970) about the evolutions of elites in Barotseland (now a Zambian province).
3. For instance, after having conducted research in Ghana, David Apter (1972) realized that the transitional phase from the traditional to the modern implied social tensions that could lead to dictatorship.
4. See, for example, Leys (1975) regarding Kenya.
5. In response to criticisms about the reductionism of their model, dependency scholars spawned a literature on various kinds of bourgeoisie (subclasses, class fractions, petty bourgeoisie, etc.), and of pre-capitalist, capitalist and mixed modes of production. However, this often looked artificial and contrived.
6. See Göran Hyden's (1980) study of Tanzania as an "economy of affection" denoting the supremacy of a communitarian ethos.
7. A main proponent of this approach was Jean-François Médard (1982) who, furthering pioneering studies such as Shmuel N. Eisenstadt's (1973), applied this concept to sub-Saharan Africa. Many students of African politics adopted this approach, for example, Bratton and Van de Waal in their study of African democratic transitions (1997).
8. Médard (1992).
9. See, for example, the bibliography provided by Tessy Bakary (1990).
10. On the thesis of an "instrumentalization of disorder," see my discussion of "the informalization of politics" in Chabal and Daloz (1999), a standard reference on African politics.
11. See my Nigerian case study (Daloz 2002, Part II).
12. See Mazrui (1967) on the local and external roots of "monarchical tendencies" in contemporary Africa, as well as Jackson and Rosberg (1982) on the logics of "personal rule."
13. For an analysis on the fate of former African presidents after they left power, see Perrot (1996).
14. As was attempted regarding several of these themes in Chabal and Daloz (1999).

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18

Political Elites in Latin America

Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser

Latin America is a world region consisting of 21 sovereign states, covering an area that stretches from the southern limit of the United States to the southern tip of Argentina and Chile, including the Caribbean. Based on cultural, geographical, and political criteria, the region is normally divided in three units: (1) Mexico and Central America, (2) the Caribbean, and (3) South America. Given that this is a vast territory, encompassing societies with very diverse historical backgrounds, it is unsurprising that countries in the region have followed different routes of economic and political development. Whereas independent states such as Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay have a long history of political stability and have experienced relatively successful processes of economic modernization, nations such as Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru have been characterized by periods of political turmoil and erratic economic development. Moreover, while countries such as Argentina and Venezuela have experienced the rise (and fall) of populist leaders, who have fostered major reorganizations of their party system, countries such as Colombia and Mexico are distinguished by the existence of well-established political parties that have undergone rather gradual and small changes over time. How can we understand variations between Latin American nations? Part of an

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understanding pertains to patterns of political elite relations among them. By analyzing the evolution of political elites and their conflicts, it is possible to understand much of the divergence between Latin American countries. Although this holds true for many countries in the world, an examination of Latin American elite patterns can provide new insights into the roles played by political elites in state formation and democratization.

It is important at the outset to clarify the political elite concept. This is especially necessary when analyzing Latin America because of Marxism's significant influence in the region and because, consequently, not a few Latin American scholars and specialists are inclined to equate the concept of "political elite" with that of "the ruling class." But these are quite different concepts, each with its own analytical tradition. The political elite concept alludes to a small number of actors who hold key positions in powerful organizations and who consequently exert disproportionate influence on major political decisions. The ruling class concept refers to a much larger number of persons who, by virtue of their economic capital, control directly and indirectly not only the state but also a society's cultural reproduction. The difference between the two concepts is obvious: the former assumes that it is an open, empirical question if the most powerful organizations are controlled by the rich, the latter takes it as given that those who have large amounts of economic capital invariably rule society.

It is worth noting that the progenitors of the elite concept were particularly keen to make this distinction. Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, and Robert Michels were skeptical about Marxism's economic determinism and its promise of societies without hierarchies (Rovira Kaltwasser 2009). They contended that all societies are characterized by the existence of elites with disproportionate powers and relations that shape political and social outcomes. In contrast to the Marxist emphasis on class struggle, elite theory holds that the main conflicts in societies are power struggles among competing and diverse individuals and groups comprising political elites. Normally, political elites are divided into warring and mutually mistrustful camps and factions. Instead of looking at the ways in which the ruling class supposedly exploits the proletariat, elite theory invites an examination of those who hold strategic positions in powerful organizations—where they come from, which ideas they profess, what interests they defend, and so on—and the extent to which major social transformations can eventually lead to changes in political elite composition.

If one employs the political elite concept, it is important to analyze long historical periods and search for structural developments that trigger the rise of counter-elites. The focus must be on contests and struggles between elites and counter-elites to guide and command societies. Because all societies experience modifications to their economic, cultural, military, and political structures

over time, it is logical to expect that these modifications pose challenges to entrenched elite persons and groups. Normally, these persons and groups prevail, but in certain circumstances, new groups gain influence and sometimes even displace those who have been entrenched.

The political elite concept is particularly helpful for understanding different political trajectories in Latin America's modern history. However, because the region is so diverse and large, this chapter focuses principally on four countries that have together exemplified the region's size and heterogeneity: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. The chapter proceeds as follows. It begins by analyzing the formation of independent states at the beginning of the nineteenth century to show how the demarcation of their territorial boundaries was closely related to the ways in which political elites established patterns of relations after emancipation from European colonizers. The chapter next examines the rise and fall of political elites and oligarchic regimes during the twentieth century. The consolidation of closed cartels of elites increased political stability, but the cartels were unable to incorporate new groups that were becoming steadily more influential, especially after the Great Depression of the 1930s. Analysis of the so-called double transition from authoritarianism to democracy and from import substitution to neo-liberal economic policies that almost all Latin American countries underwent near the twentieth century's end is highlighted in the chapter's last main section. It shows how the double transition impelled a process of elite circulation and renovation that unfolded in different ways across the region and led to different patterns of political elite relations at present. The chapter concludes by summarizing its main arguments and proposing some aspects of elites that one must consider when thinking about Latin America's political future.

Political Elites in New National States

Latin America's processes of political independence were driven by struggles for elite circulation and renovation. To understand this, it is crucial to consider attempts by the Bourbon dynasty in Spain during the second half of the eighteenth century to increase its control of colonies in Latin America. This involved the imposition of increased taxes, a growing monopolization of trade, and the erection of new barriers to the exercise of power by locally born people of confirmed European ancestry, that is, the Creoles. Although Creoles contributed to the colonies' economic and political stability, they were excluded from the most important positions of power. Mexico illustrated this imbalance. At the end of the eighteenth century, its six million inhabitants had the

following ethnic composition: 60 percent Natives, 22 percent Mestizos, 17.8 percent Creoles, and 0.8 percent born in Spain and dubbed *Peninsulares* (Anna 1987, p. 52).

While it is true that conflicts between Creoles and *Peninsulares* increased steadily during the eighteenth century, the independence movements in which the conflicts culminated were neither well planned nor long premeditated. Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1808 and his unseating of King Charles IV created a power vacuum in the colonies, because Spanish authority came from the king and the formation of a provisional junta (in the name of the king) created a crisis of political legitimacy. This provided Creoles with a singular opportunity to repudiate their disadvantaged positions in the colonies and demand political emancipation. The resulting independence struggles and their outcomes amounted to a "critical juncture" that began with Napoleon's invasion and ended with the Spanish colonies' declarations of independence.

Historians often characterize the period that followed independence as an "era of strong men" (Carmagnani 2004, pp. 173–74). The label refers to the thesis that the displacement of Spanish imperial elites favored groups in the former colonies who seized control of the territories through military force. However, the power of strong men was not the same across the region: where post-colonial elites were able to maintain a high degree of horizontal integration, strong men did not flourish, and territories remained intact. While some newly independent countries suffered long periods of strong-man rule that fragmented their territories, horizontal integration of elites in other countries helped to expand national boundaries. Developments in post-colonial Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Brazil (after 1884) illustrated these two main trajectories.

Argentina arose from the Viceroyalty of the River Plate, which had been a late product of the Bourbon dynasty and was divided into four colonial governments and two major centers of power—Buenos Aires and Montevideo. The Viceroyalty was poorly consolidated administratively, and, despite having two important seaports, it had little capacity to exert power over its entire territory. Emancipation from Spain aggravated this situation in two ways. On the one hand, the elites of Buenos Aires and Montevideo were rivals. The latter were favored by international powers, and the rivalry ended with the formation of the Republic of Uruguay in 1828. In Argentina, however, strong men began to build their own military forces in order to pursue local interests. In Argentina, the critical juncture that began with Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula fostered the rise of Creole elites, who won influence through an increasing militarization of power. The elites associated themselves with

warlords enriched by control of large-scale landed properties, and they together opposed any effort to build a centralized state (Lynch 1992). It was only near the end of the nineteenth century that post-independence elite factions aligned against the power of strong men and concluded a federal pact that paved the way for a centralized national state.

During Spanish colonial rule, Chilean territory was part of the Viceroyalty of Peru. It was a "General Captaincy" that had clear natural frontiers to the west (the Pacific Ocean) and the east (the Andes mountain range). The north was an area with practically no population, and in the south, the Bio-Bio River was a firm territorial border that was successfully defended by indigenous peoples, the Mapuche, until 1850. Compared with Argentina, this was an uncomplicated geopolitical situation. Moreover, one factor that contributed to a relatively easy transition from colonial rule to an independent order was that Peninsular and Creole elites were strongly connected through blood relationships (Jocelyn-Holt 1999). Following independence, Chile experienced only a short era of strong-man rule, between 1823 and 1829. A political order controlled by conservative elites quickly consolidated and promoted both economic growth and political stability. During the nineteenth century, Chile underwent a peaceful political development compared with the violent conflicts between elite factions, led predominantly by strong men, in Argentina.

Mexico's emancipation from Spanish rule involved both a revolution against the *Peninsulares* and a bitter civil war to control its territory (Anna 1987). The specter of an uprising by the large indigenous population endangered Creoles and *Peninsulares* alike. The two camps of elites banded together and tried to rebuild the old colonial order under the figure of Agustín de Iturbide. But the indigenous uprising against *Peninsulares* created a vacuum in various parts of the territory, in which strong men and their forces emerged in what amounted to civil warfare. This patchwork of violent conflicts was further exacerbated by incursions of French, Spanish, and US military forces that made consolidation of a centralized state practically impossible. Only eventually did military forces led by Benito Juárez (after 1858) and Porfirio Díaz (after 1884) build a stable regime by subduing regional strong men and at least partly integrating regional elites at the national level.

The Brazilian case shows the extent to which the action of elites in the Portuguese empire brought about a trajectory quite different from the rapid formation of usually unstable republics in formerly Spanish America (Carvalho 1980). Brazil comprised not only a huge and extremely rich territory but also a socially and economically heterogeneous one. How was it possible to sustain territorial unity? To answer this question, one has to recall that the Portuguese

empire followed a different governing strategy than the Spanish empire. Upon Napoleon's invasion in 1808, the Portuguese royal house opted to go into exile in its Brazilian colony. The Portuguese king, Dom João, emigrated to Brazil in 1807 and settled in Rio de Janeiro during the following year with a court of approximately 15,000 people. This made the formerly dependent Brazilian colony an equal and integral part of the Portuguese empire. When Dom João returned to his throne in Portugal in 1821, his son Pedro was declared the constitutional monarch of Brazil. Pedro abdicated ten years later and transferred the crown to his son Pedro II. The latter governed until 1889, and through strategic co-optations of diverse elite factions, he created a significant degree of political stability and kept a relatively tight rein on the military. Elite persons who controlled significant parts of Brazil's territory or who excelled in administrative careers were incorporated into the nobility. Increasing numbers of Creoles gained power and the interests of regional elites gained voice in the monarchical regime, so that, all in all, Brazil's transition from colonial status to independence was relatively peaceful.

In sum, two historical trajectories, which rested on distinctly different patterns of political elite relations, unfolded in these four Latin American countries. A weak horizontal integration of elites characterized the Argentine and Mexican trajectories, with a difficult process of nation-state consolidation, involving a loss of territory, being the principal result. The Viceroyalty of the River Plate consisted of approximately 5 million square kilometers, whereas the Republic of Argentina encompasses approximately 2.8 million square kilometers (Fausto and Devoto 2004, pp. 29–30). Between its declaration of independence in 1810 and 1853, Mexico lost more than 2 million square kilometers to the United States. In both countries, sub-national regional forces became ascendant following independence, and Creole elites could not reach agreement about creating an effective national government. This facilitated secessionist movements led by strong men, aided and abetted by international incursions in the Mexican case.

In contrast, Brazil and Chile experienced smoother territorial and national state consolidations after independence. Neither country experienced a long era of strong-man rule because elites, in spite of conflicts, had sufficient integration to build a new political order and defend their territories. Due to this elite pattern, both countries expanded their national boundaries. In the case of Brazil, there were several secessionist movements, but a clever system of elite co-optation by the emperor, seated in Rio de Janeiro, enabled sub-national regional elites to participate increasingly in the national government. Although Brazil lost some territory when Uruguay successfully declared its independence from Argentina in 1830, additional territory in the north and

west was conquered, so that Brazil expanded by 600,000 square kilometers overall. In the case of Chile, the absence of powerful sub-national regional elites facilitated the formation of a centralized state that was controlled by a relatively well-integrated national elite. At the end of the nineteenth century, Chile entered into war with Bolivia and Peru in an attempt to annex mineral-rich domains in the north. In addition, the entrenched Chilean elites colonized the southern region, previously controlled by indigenous peoples.

Political Elites and Oligarchic Regimes

At the beginning of the twentieth century, virtually all Latin American countries displayed relatively stable oligarchic regimes. Stability stemmed from two main factors (Oszlak 1981). First, centralization of power became possible due to increasing control over regional forces and a diminution of conflicts with neighboring countries and international powers. Second, economic and political progress was achieved by a generation of Creole elites that had no direct relationship to the independence processes and displayed relatively high degrees of horizontal integration.

The development of oligarchic regimes involved the expansion of national state powers. By exporting abundant commodities and securing international capital to develop commodity resources, political elites had the means to expand and shape the state without modifying their relationships with society (Cardoso and Faletto 1976). There is little doubt that at the end of the nineteenth century, rent-seeking cartels of elites took charge across Latin America. This meant that the "extraction-coercion cycle" so decisive in the constitution of autonomous states in Western Europe and the United States, did not unfold in Latin America (Centeno 2002; Mann 1988; Tilly 1990). Apart from patronage systems maintained by elites, no strong links with wider population segments were created. So long as Latin American economies were based mainly on the export of commodities and most economic activity was agrarian, there was no major challenge to oligarchic regimes operated by cartels of elites. However, these regimes and cartels were challenged increasingly by widening social cleavages and the rise of groups demanding democratization.

The paradoxical character of oligarchic regimes became steadily more evident. Elite cartels operating them encouraged processes of economic modernization that activated the emergence of groups beginning to demand political inclusion. In this respect, the economic successes of oligarchic regimes paved the way for their eventual collapse. Entrenched elite cartels were uninterested in economic and political reforms. But while elites clung to power, steadily

growing and more urbanized middle classes were gaining influence through labor unions, the military, and political parties.

The Depression of the 1930s contributed greatly to the decay of oligarchic regimes and the cartels presiding over them. Middle-class groups and military factions came to view an expansion of the state as the only solution to the economic crisis, and this eroded the rationale for narrow oligarchic regimes. Economic miseries translated into popular support for groups fighting the oligarchic order. But while economic depression fueled power struggles throughout Latin America, the extent and pattern of elite and regime alteration varied considerably from country to country.

The Depression had a drastic impact on Argentina's economy, and it is not obvious why the country's oligarchic regime did not rapidly collapse. Historians of Argentine politics refer to the period between 1930 and 1943 as the "infamous decade" during which entrenched elite groups sustained their hold on government through massive electoral fraud and an opportunistic alliance with the military. However, a putsch in 1930 could not safeguard a simple continuation of the commodity export model, and the oligarchic regime was forced to undertake a gradual and state-promoted industrialization, which entailed a pact between agrarian and industrial elites (Murmis and Portantiero 2004). The incipient industrial working class and growing urban white-collar strata were the main losers, because the elite pact led neither to economic redistribution nor to increased space for political participation. With their hold on power under threat, elites collaborated with the military to retain power. This was, however, a dangerous game, in which the armed forces more and more became the decisive player. A so-called Grupo de Oficiales Unidos, composed mainly of career officers from the middle class, formed in the army. One of the *Grupo's* principal leaders was Colonel Juan Domingo Perón.

Perón won the presidential election of 1946, and his rise to power signified a large-scale elite circulation favoring middle-class and military leaders and groups opposing the oligarchic regime (de Imaz 1965). The populist Perón regime generated a deep cleavage not only among elites but also in the society. The oligarchic regime's breakdown in Argentina thus went hand in hand with a political game marked by social polarization and political instability (O'Donnell 1972). The military elite itself split and factions in it became key political actors to the point of imposing a brutal military dictatorship in 1976 that lasted until the military was defeated by British forces in the Falkland Islands War in 1982.

In Chile, the Depression fostered formation of a new political order. Under the command of Colonel Carlos Ibañez del Campo, the military had intervened in 1927 to contain escalating social tensions by promoting policies that

benefited the disgruntled middle class. The Depression unleashed popular support for groups fighting the oligarchic regime, in particular, a new generation of German-trained military officers critical of the regime (Loveman 1999, pp. 82–5). Despite the hostility of military officers, however, the peculiarity of Chile's political development after the Depression lay in an arrangement that facilitated a step-by-step elite renewal and the exclusion of political actors located at both extremes of the left-right political spectrum.

One might hypothesize that what amounted to a partial elite settlement occurred in Chile during and after the Depression. It underpinned a relatively stable political regime during the next four decades. Until the military's *coup d'etat* in 1973, the conduct of free elections was respected. The partial elite settlement rested on two pillars: an extended use of patronage, particularly in rural areas, and a co-optation of elites anchored in the middle class through marriages and state appointments (Correa 2004, pp. 93–100). Yet the long period of elite restraint ended, in part, due to Cold War fears and, in part, because of increasing divisions within the political elite. The election of Socialist leader Salvador Allende in 1970 represented a sort of death foretold. Allende and his party obtained only 36 percent of the popular vote, but because the political system was presidential, not parliamentary, Allende governed without a sustainable political coalition that could guarantee the democratic order and cope with the society's increasing polarization.

When the Depression arrived in Brazil, the military intervened in order to set a new political course and back the leadership of Getúlio Vargas. Vargas's rise occurred in the context of an alliance between elites of northern states and elites in the increasingly powerful state of Rio Grande do Sul (Camargo 1993). Once in the presidency, Vargas initiated a gradual elite circulation, implemented policies in favor of industrialization, and proclaimed an "Estado Novo"—a new political order that was somewhat similar to the fascist and corporatist experiments of the period in Europe. However, Vargas came to a tragic end by committing suicide in 1954 during a growing dispute with leaders of the armed forces. Subsequent governments continued policies pursued by Vargas, notably import substitution industrialization financed by the state, corporative arrangements involving state control of labor unions, and a limited expansion of political and social rights.

But as in Chile, what looked like a partial elite settlement facilitating economic development and managed political participation proved unsustainable amid Cold War fears and increasing left-wing agitation. Successive governments became more and more precarious, as struggles for political control intensified, propelled, in part, by a new generation of US-trained military officers (Carvalho 1981). Large parts of the population clamored for

greater economic support by the state. The result was not conducive to democratic politics, and from 1964 to 1984, Brazil was governed by a military junta.

Finally, Mexico's trajectory was quite different because it involved a sudden and deliberate elite settlement, which led to the establishment of a stable political system. To understand this, it is important to recall the Mexican Revolution between 1910 and 1920 and the Cristero War between 1926 and 1929. The outbreak of revolution terminated the oligarchic regime that had long been headed by Porfirio Diaz, and the Cristero War paved the way for a new constellation of elites (Camp 1992, 2006). Embodied in the "Partido Revolucionario Institutional" (PRI) that was formed initially amid behind-the-scenes elite negotiations engineered by Plutarco Elias Calles, the president, in late 1928 and early 1929, the principal forces that had been contending violently for power were apportioned influence through participation in the newly omnibus PRI (Knight 1992). This inaugurated a systematic co-optation of rising elite groups that proved central to a durable and solidly hegemonic political regime until the Mexican state was forced to declare itself bankrupt in 1982.

The Double Transition

Military elites played the dominant role in patterns of political elite relations in Latin America's twentieth-century politics until the 1980s, when a severe economic crisis afflicted almost every country in the region and forced governments to implement harsh austerity measures. Not without reason, the 1980s are frequently called "the lost decade" because of greatly increased poverty and unemployment across the region. During the 1970s, the import substitution model for industrialization started to show signs of decay, but it was continued thanks to the financial support of international lenders. At the beginning of the 1980s, however, international financial markets realized that Latin American countries would not be able to pay back their loans. Once Mexico defaulted on its debt in 1982, the entire region slipped into an economic crisis, which paved the way for the implementation of neo-liberal reforms demanded by the International Monetary Fund and its main contributor—the United States.

The economic crisis of the 1980s in Latin America had major political consequences. Elite groups who oversaw and profited from the import substitution model resisted its abandonment. Waves of mass protests against austerity measures gathered force. New elite groups became influential, especially

technocratic experts with economic skills and connections necessary for dealing with international financial institutions and for designing and implementing market-based reforms (Dezalay and Garth 2002). A process of economic liberalization unfolded in nearly every Latin American country, albeit in varying depths and with differing speeds. The economic reforms facilitated the formation of business elites whose members became exceedingly wealthy by profiting from the privatization of state-owned enterprises and creating enterprises tied into the global economy.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the 1980s were a decade of marked political change. Authoritarian regimes faced increasing external and internal pressures. Externally, foreign governments and international organizations castigated the regimes' human rights records and the dictatorial figures heading them. Internally, there was a resurrection of civil society groups and political parties demanding an end to authoritarian rule. Consequently, almost every Latin American country underwent a transition to democracy in the 1980s. This implied a significant amount of elite circulation and renovation: military elites lost much of their previous political power, and civilian elites became more influential. However, patterns of elite change were not uniform across the region. While some countries experienced elite settlements that facilitated a rapid consolidation of democratic regimes, others experienced difficult negotiations and adaptations between elite sectors that hindered the consolidation of democracy (Higley and Gunther 1992).

Argentina's transition to democracy was rapid. The military's defeat by the British in the Falklands caused the junta's abrupt collapse and led forthwith to free and fair elections in which Raul Alfonsín, leader of the Radical Party, won the presidency. But because the authoritarian regime collapsed so abruptly, conditions were not ripe for a basic settlement between opposing elite camps (Cavarozzi 1992). Alfonsín had to struggle with resentful military leaders and groups of officers who feared reprisals for authoritarian practices by the junta, as well as Peronist elites bent on again capturing the state. Despite this pincer-like situation, Alfonsín served a full presidential term, and Carlos Menem, the Peronist party leader, won the presidency in 1989. This symbolized an important step in the consolidation of Argentine democracy, because competing elite factions signaled their acceptance of peaceful and relatively restrained electoral contests for government power. Civilian control of the military has been unchallenged since the 1980s, and a democratic political order has persisted despite conflicts sparked by recurrent economic crises.

Carlos Menem was the key figure in Argentina's transition to a more market-based economy. Menem established a pragmatic alliance with labor union and regional elites that facilitated economic liberalization and

privatization, which induced business and political elites to support his government. The process of economic reform was relatively successful in terms of generating growth and stability until the end of the 1990s. It became clear, however, that Argentina had a large amount of debt and insufficient revenues to pay it. Rising bond yields forced the country to implement austerity measures that were loudly resisted by the public and forced a default on loan repayments in December 2001. After two years of economic and political turmoil, President Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007) and later on his wife Cristina Fernández (2007–2015) restored economic stability, but the relationship of their governments with rival elites, particularly those in the farming sector, was fragile. The horizontal integration of Argentine elites remains limited and precarious, but respect for democratic rules of the game appears to be uniform in the political elite.

A transition to democracy took longer in Chile. It began with the rise of protest movements against the Pinochet military regime during the 1980s, and it ended with the holding of free and fair elections in 1989. During the decade, behind-the-scenes meetings of rival elite leaders and factions facilitated a basic settlement among all important elite groups, apart from the military elite itself (Cavarozzi 1992). The Christian Democrats and an important faction of the Socialist Left formed an anti-authoritarian Grand Coalition that negotiated with civilian elite groups supporting the Pinochet regime to orchestrate the regime's relinquishing of government office. On the basis of an elite settlement, Chilean democracy became consolidated in the early 1990s, albeit at a high price. The military elite and Pinochet demanded and obtained immunity from prosecution for actions during the period of military rule. Eventually, moreover, the anti-authoritarian Grand Coalition lost its political coherence when many voters shifted their allegiance from the Coalition's component parties to new and more dissident parties and movements.

If Chile's political transition to democracy was somewhat lengthy, its transition to a liberalized economy was extremely rapid. With the help of a cadre of technocratic elites trained under Milton Friedman's direction at the University of Chicago, the Pinochet regime implemented major neo-liberal economic reforms. Education, health, and pension systems were privatized; labor unions were dismantled; the labor market was de-regulated; and trade relations were liberalized. As in Argentina, the economic transformation created a cohort of business elites, who supported a continuation of the neo-liberal project after the transition to democracy in 1989 (Correa 2004). However, much of the business elite opposes egalitarian reforms, and it is an open question if elites will re-define their earlier settlement to incorporate

influential groups that have emerged since its settlement was hammered out three decades ago.

Brazil's transition to democracy was marked by growing pressure from civil society sectors and the military elite's consequent readiness to negotiate the terms of his withdrawal from government office. On its face, this looked like another deliberate elite settlement, but elections in 1989 showed that the political elite was still substantially divided, and the victory of a populist leader with few democratic credentials, Fernando Collor de Mello, did little to consolidate a new democratic order. Despite Brazil's fragmented party system, a succession of strong leaders have practiced a model of "coalitional presidentialism" that hinges on ladling out cabinet positions and pork barrel emoluments to govern in concert with a multiparty legislature, in which the clashing ideas and interests of different elite factions at national and sub-national levels are articulated but assuaged (Kingston and Power 2008). Civilian control of the military appears to be no longer in doubt, but the methods employed by the executive to win support from the fragmented legislature tarnishes the quality of Brazil's democracy. As illustrated by a massive scandal about huge amounts of money paid illicitly by the state-owned Petrobras oil conglomerate to construction companies and recycled into politicians' pockets, corrupt practices are widespread.

Although Brazil was hit hard by the 1980s economic recession, important free market reforms did not occur until the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–2003). The Cardoso government continued the privatization program that Collor de Mello's government initiated at the start of the 1990s while successfully controlling inflation, a chronic problem in Brazil's economy. These policies helped Cardoso to establish alliances with business elites who profited from neo-liberal reforms and with a technocratic elite intent on diminishing the power of elites associated with state-led development. The election of a left-leaning Worker Party government led by Lula da Silva in 2003 did not lead to a retreat from free market reforms and practices. Instead, the "Lula" government pursued a pragmatic economic program aimed at sustaining collaborative relations with business elites and financial markets. It also pursued social policies favoring disadvantaged population segments and retained the support of elites representing the interests of labor unions and civil society organizations. Embroiled in the aforementioned Petrobras scandal, in April 2016, Dilma Rousseff, Lula's Worker Party successor in the presidency, was impeached by a cabal of political opponents in Congress, many of whom were ensnared in the Petrobras scandal and other instances of corruption, with accusations of a "coup" against Rousseff signifying an ominous political crisis.

Finally, Mexico carried out a relatively rapid transition from the import substitution model of industrialization to a neo-liberal one. After defaulting on debts in 1982, the government had little room for resisting pressure from international financial institutions to undertake major free market reforms. Reforms duly undertaken were not solely the product of foreign pressures, however. To a great extent, they resulted from the emergence of new elite factions inside the PRI, who had been trained in economics at leading US universities and had not only the intellectual capacity but also the party political wherewithal to transform the Mexican economy (Centeno 1994; Camp 2006). Neo-liberal reforms were resisted by elites to the point where an important faction of the PRI decided in 1986 to defect and create a more clearly leftist party, the "Partido de la Revolución Democrática" (PRD). But de-regulation and privatization of the Mexican economy facilitated a consolidation of reformist views among established business elites who had been key supporters of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which took effect in 1994 and has since contributed to a marked internationalization of Mexican business elite assets.

Mexico's economic transformation had an important impact on the political system. Formation of the PRD challenged the once mighty PRI, which had held uninterrupted government power since 1929, albeit without indulging much in free and fair elections. During and after the economic crisis of the 1980s, elites, large parts of the public, and US actors pushed increasingly for a more genuine democracy. The 2000 election marked a watershed when Vicente Fox, leader of the center-right "Partido Acción Nacional" (PAN), won the presidential election and ended the PRI's 70-year domination of executive power. Because the PAN elite was well connected to a variety of elite groups at regional and national levels, its political triumph did not lead to a major restructuring of the country's economic and political system. But like the Cardoso government in Brazil in the same period, the Fox government adopted a pragmatic stance and continued many of the policies implemented by preceding PRI governments. The Mexican political elite has expanded the original 1928–29 elite settlement by incorporating new groups that have gained power during the last several decades, not least in the wake of the 1982 economic crisis. Political elite divisions do not threaten democratic rules of the game in Mexico; the major challenge comes, instead, from savage drug cartels that intimidate politicians, murder government officials, and have enough money, garnered from the huge US market for illegal narcotics, to corrupt the country's politics.

Conclusions

This chapter has canvassed the role of political elites in four of the most important Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. By examining patterns of elite relations in these countries, I have tried to show how their political trajectories have been deeply influenced by two main factors: the extent of horizontal integration among elite individuals and factions, and the readiness of entrenched elites to incorporate elites that have headed ascending political forces. The most important lesson to be drawn from this is that, over long periods of time, Latin American countries like those examined have experienced significant processes of elite circulation and persistence. A second lesson is the difficult relationship that elites have had with mass populations in Latin America. Because the welfare of most countries in the region has always depended heavily on extracting and exporting natural resources, elite groups and factions have battled each other for control of this extraction and export in order to use the proceeds for their own benefit rather than for developing autonomous state institutions and creating panoplies of public goods. In short, the political economy of Latin American countries has fostered rent-seeking elites. This observation remains relevant. The commodity boom of the 2000s facilitated the rise of elites in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela that have used the high global prices of natural resource exports—mainly petroleum and natural gas in those three countries—to implement social policies that have helped win political support in marginalized societal sectors. But commodity booms normally end in busts, as has happened in the present century's second decade. Consequently, observers of Latin America should not be surprised if many countries in the region experience heightened political turmoil.

While not all Latin American countries exhibit the same dependence on natural resources and commodity exports, most have economies that are diversified and technologically sophisticated only in limited degrees. This is a basic reason why rent-seeking elites are such a prominent feature, and it helps to explain why high levels of socioeconomic inequality are prevalent. Countries like Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, and Peru have experienced significant economic growth in the last decade or two, but levels of inequality remain nearly unchanged. Their political elites display limited capacities to pursue equity-enhancing reforms. But the power of these elites is perhaps more precarious than many believe. Growing public dissatisfactions with grossly unequal economic orders may well lead to the formation of counter-elites that lead major struggles against those who are advantaged by

those orders. If that happens, Vilfredo Pareto's axiom about history being "the graveyard of aristocracies" will apply to Latin American political elites.

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19

The Political Elite in Post-Soviet Russia

Peter Rutland

Vladimir Putin established himself as one of the most widely respected—and despised—leaders in the contemporary world. In the 15 years after he became president in 2000, living standards tripled, and Russia again became a force to be reckoned with on the world stage, deploying military force from Ukraine to Syria. Observers were divided over how to explain Putin's success in rebuilding Russia after the chaos of the 1990s and over whether Russia would slip back into disorder when Putin vacates the Kremlin. Putin's personal authority was clear, but it was less obvious to what extent he had managed to forge a stable, unified political elite, capable of implanting his ambitious program to modernize Russia. To some observers, Putin has headed a kleptocratic regime that ruthlessly suppressed opposition while looting the country of its natural resources (Dawisha 2014). To others, Putin has restored Russia's sovereignty and international standing, earning the adulation of ordinary Russians (Sakwa 2007).

However, beneath the apparent success of the Putin regime, there are grave doubts about the stability of the ruling elite. As Gudkov (2015) notes, "In the past century, there wasn't a single generation of Russian elites that left power voluntarily, that wasn't killed, supplanted, exiled, or—at best—marginalized with contempt. The elite basically resets to zero every 20–25 years."

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Russia has had a unique political trajectory during its 1000-year history. The country's vast size and its vulnerability to foreign attack led to the emergence of a highly centralized state, focused on the extraction of resources in order to maintain a powerful military, which forged the world's largest contiguous empire. This is what Yurii Pivovarov has called "the Russian system" (Pivovarov and Fursov 2002). Periods of stagnation were interrupted by energetic bursts of top-down reform carried out by autocratic modernizers, under pressure to compete with the outside world. Richard Hellie (2005) has argued that innovative Russian rulers, from Ivan the Terrible through Peter the Great to Joseph Stalin, each forged a new "service class" to carry out their goals of social transformation. The Tsarist model succeeded in fending off enemies and expanding Russia's territory, but the system was unstable due to rebellions from below or factionalism within the service class. In contrast, Edward Keenan (1986) argues for the persistence of a distinctive Russian political culture rooted in traditional village society: risk averse and oriented toward consensus. In his view, Russia's ruling elite has been more of an oligarchy than a service class, and it usually constrained tsars. Such arguments resonate with conservative Russian historians, such as Akhiezer and I'lin (1997), who stress the collectivism (*sobornost'*) of Russian society.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 seemed to mark a new beginning, a radical break with Russia's authoritarian past. The 1990s saw the appearance of a nascent market economy and some fragile democratic institutions that together signaled a decisive departure from Communist Party rule. US political scientists assumed that Russia and the other newly independent post-Soviet states were in "transition" to Western-style capitalism and liberal democracy. The collapse of communism spawned a host of democracies in Eastern Europe, from Poland to Bulgaria, most of which went on to join the European Union (EU), during the next 20 years. The emergence of a personal autocratic regime under Vladimir Putin thus caught most Western observers by surprise, and it confounded the expectation that Russia would join the ranks of liberal democracies. Some blamed the failed transition in Russia on errors of leadership by President Boris Yeltsin, others on the West's unwillingness to offer Russia more economic aid and political partnership. Fish (2005) points to structural factors such as the dependence on oil and gas, corruption, and the weakness of civil society.

Of the 15 states that emerged from the USSR, only the small Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became stable democracies and joined the EU. Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine became unstable democracies, and all the rest slipped into autocratic rule, with power in the hands of a small oligarchic

elite or a single autocrat. This chapter deals with Russia alone, which accounts for half the population of the former Soviet Union.

From Soviet to Post-Soviet Rule

During the Cold War, "Sovietologists" treated the USSR as a sui generis system, which had cloned itself in East Asia and in Eastern Europe. It was an obvious candidate for the application of elite theory, given the highly structured and centralized character of Soviet political institutions, based on an elitist theory of rule—Lenin's concept of the revolutionary vanguard. The Communist Party had lists of strategic positions throughout society (the *nomenklatura*) and a reserve of cadres to fill them. It would be hard to imagine a more explicit instantiation of elite theory in practice.

After Stalin's death in 1953, the mass terror apparatus was dismantled, and under Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev the state turned to improving living standards—while also maintaining its military rivalry with the West. Some scholars continued to look at the post-Stalin USSR through the lens of totalitarianism, grouping it with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Others searched for signs of institutional pluralism and convergence with Western industrial society. But the collapse of the USSR as a result of Mikhail Gorbachev's abortive reforms suggested that the system was incapable of serious structural reform (Kotkin 2008).

The Soviet collapse opened the door to a more plural and open political regime in Russia. The fall of the Berlin Wall triggered a surge in democratization in Eastern Europe and beyond: across Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. A paradigm of "transitology" emerged (critiqued by Gans-Morse 2004), building on the study of the transition to democracy in Latin America in the 1980s. However, much of the work on the post-Soviet transition was predicated on liberal assumptions about the possibility and, indeed, the inevitability of progress: change is inevitable, change is accelerating (now driven by the information revolution), and change is headed in the direction of a better tomorrow. In contrast, elite theory is built on contrary premises: political life is cyclical, not linear; important changes are likely to be gradual and hard to discern; and change, especially violent and disruptive change, entails unintended consequences that are just as likely to set back the course of human progress as to advance it.

Faith in a global transition to democracy ebbed over time. In Russia, disillusion with democracy was symbolized by the replacement of Boris Yeltsin

by Vladimir Putin, a 17-year KGB veteran, in 2000, with Freedom House downgrading Russia from "partly free" to "unfree" in 2005. Democratic hopes were revived by the "color revolutions" that began in Yugoslavia (2000) and spread to Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005). Mass protests in these countries forced regimes to hold free and fair elections that drove incumbent rulers from office. Putin feared a similar protest movement could engulf Russia, and he responded by clamping down on political opposition. In 2004, using the excuse of the Chechen terrorist attack on a school in Beslan, he abolished the direct election of regional governors. The closest Moscow came to a color revolution was December 2011, when tens of thousands took to the streets to protest the rigged State Duma elections. However, Putin won election as president in March 2012 and subsequently crushed the opposition through selective repression and a nationalist propaganda campaign.

Apart from the teleological character of transitology, another difference between it and elite theory is the former's stress on the importance of formal rules and constitutions to bind future rulers. Transitologists view politicians as self-interested, not altruistic, but they also view politics as a positive-sum game in which all participants can benefit from cooperation. In contrast, and in the tradition of Thomas Hobbes, elite theory assumes that the interests of political elites and mass populations often diverge, and that it is always difficult for a political elite to overcome its internal differences and create institutions to sustain a consensus that enables the elite to persist over time (Field and Higley 1980). This kind of change in political elites does not happen spontaneously; it has to be engineered by far-sighted leaders. Elite theory is, in addition, skeptical about the robustness of democracy and the importance of formal institutions in general, stressing, instead, the inevitability of elites and their capacity to pursue interests separate from those of mass public.

Arguably, Putin has *not* succeeded in creating a consensual, unified elite that would be a viable successor to the Soviet and Tsarist service class. Rather, he has presided over a fractious and disjointed elite, keeping its individual members and factions in their place through a mixture of carrots and sticks, patronage and coercion. The elite has realized that it lacks legitimacy in the eyes of the public, so Putin has used his own popular appeal to keep members and components of the elite in their place. This system has required constant "hands-on management" (*ruchnoe upravlenie*) by the Boss. As a result, "Putinism" has staggered from crisis to crisis. Indeed, Putin has been at his best when responding to a crisis—such as the worker unrest in Pikalevo in

June 2009 or the annexation of Crimea in March 2014. In matters of routine public policy, however, the actions of the state have slowed to a crawl with battling factions in the elite blocking each other's proposals. Take, for example, the numerous decrees that Putin issued in May 2012, upon his return to the presidency, calling for resolute action to improve health, education, innovation, and business regulation. A year later, only two-thirds of the decrees had been implemented, and the decrees' chief architect, Vladislav Surkov, was forced to resign (Koshcheev 2013).

Continuity and Change in Political Institutions

Field and Higley (1980, p. 20) defined elites as "persons occupying strategic positions in public and private bureaucratic organizations." Thus, before analyzing the individuals who make up the post-Soviet Russian political elite, one has to identify the "strategic positions" and critical organizations from which the elite exercise their power. This is no easy task in contemporary Russia, because the institutional landscape underwent a dramatic inversion in 1989–91, followed by a decade of confusion and confrontation. The contours of Russia's new political system became clearer over the course of Putin's rule (president 2000–08, prime minister 2008–12, and president again since 2012). But there is much about the system that remains opaque and open to debate.

The Soviet Union was a heavily regulated society with a plethora of strong political and social institutions. After taking over as General Secretary in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev launched a series of top-down reforms: media openness (*glasnost*), bureaucratic reforms (*perestroika*), and democratization (partly free elections). These reforms undermined the operation of central planning and Communist Party rule, and they led to economic chaos and social unrest. Some of the constituent republics made a bid for independence, which triggered an abortive coup in August 1991 by hardliners intent on preserving the Soviet Union. In December 1991, the leaders of the republics of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus agreed to dissolve the Soviet Union.

This sequence of tumultuous events left Russia with a complex institutional mosaic, a hybrid of the old and the new, that combined Soviet and post-Soviet elements (Kryshtanovskaya 2005; Gaman-Golutvina 2008). For the sake of brevity, allow me to list the principal institutions that survived the post-1991 transition more or less intact, those that collapsed, and important new institutions that emerged.

Institutions That Collapsed

(1) State ownership of all economic assets gave way to a market economy dominated by oligarchs, often with close ties to the state. The state did retain control over defense industries, gas, electricity, and railways and regained control of most of the oil sector in the early 2000s.

(2) Central planning agencies were closed, replaced (if at all) by weak regulatory bodies such as the State Anti-Monopoly Committee.

(3) The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was banned, and no new ruling party appeared to take its place. The new Communist Party of the Russian Federation was a rump left-wing opposition commanding a minority of seats in the State Duma and a few governorships.

(4) The Communist *nomenklatura*, the Soviet version of Richard Hellie's "service class," dissolved and was replaced by much looser elite networks.

Institutions That Persisted

(1) Centralization of authority in the Kremlin from Gorbachev through Yeltsin to Putin.

(2) Concentration of wealth and power in Moscow. There was some decentralization to Russia's 85 regions in the 1990s, but this was reversed after 1998.

(3) The basic ministerial bureaucracies remained intact, from finance to foreign affairs, though now without their Communist Party overseers.

(4) The Committee on State Security (KGB), renamed the Federal Security Service (FSB), lost some functions and personnel in the 1990s but basically continued to function and gained more powers in the 2000s.

(5) Soviet ethnic federalism. Putin reined in the autonomy of the 20 ethnic republics and merged a few of them but did not dismantle the structure.

(6) The procuracy and judicial systems were unreformed. The Soviet practice of "telephone law" (judges getting instructions from their political masters) persisted—though judges may now get more than one call over a single case, reflecting the absence of a single hierarchy of power.

(7) Security policy was still based on Soviet-era military capacity, including nuclear deterrence. Russia spent 4.2 percent of GDP on the military in 2015—double the European average.

(8) After an attempt at partnership in the 1990s, foreign policy reoriented toward confrontation with the West.

(9) The energy infrastructure in Soviet times, including state monopoly of oil export pipelines and the gas monopoly Gazprom, was little changed.

New Institutions That Emerged After 1991

(1) A strong executive presidency, ruling through a presidential administration, with unchecked powers and minimal mechanisms of horizontal or vertical accountability effectively took over the role of the former Central Committee of the Communist Party. This institution was forged under Yeltsin (Huskey 1999) and grew in strength under Putin.
(2) An elected State Duma with a very weak party system and an anemic "ruling party," United Russia (Gelman 2015).
(3) Privately owned corporations that accounted for 70 percent of economic activity by 2000, with a panoply of new market institutions such as a stock market, commercial code, land code, and deposit insurance (Rutland 2013).
(4) Organized crime emerged from the shadows (Soviet prisons) and became a prominent feature of Russian capitalism, providing contract enforcement and "protection" in the absence of reliable police and judiciary (Varese 2002).
(5) Media were mostly privately owned and formally independent. In the 1990s, media freely criticized the authorities, but Putin restored state control. By the late 2000s, television resembled that of the Soviet era.
(6) The arrival of the Internet in the 2000s gave activists the ability to easily connect and communicate their critique of the state. However, 70 percent of Russians still relied on television for their news.

The Persistence of Social Norms

In post-Soviet Russia, formal state institutions were omnipresent and robust. Russia had the capacity to wage war, mount the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, or build export pipelines to China. But there were persisting norms of behavior that subverted the workings of formal institutions. Russians mistrusted political institutions and relied on their network of friends and connections (*blat*) in dealings with bureaucrats. Mutual exchange of favors and loyalty to "your own" (*svoi*) were highly valued. Along with mistrust of institutions, one found a lack of respect for the law and alienation from politics—combined, paradoxically, with a desire for a strong leader to compensate for the institutional

anomie. This pattern was pervasive in the Soviet Union, Yeltsin's 1990s, and Putin's 2000s (Ledeneva 2013).

Even at the highest levels of the state, decision-making in the Yeltsin presidency was confined to an informal circle of advisors centered on his daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko. Over time, Yeltsin grew increasingly infirm and the influence of "the Family" grew. Like Yeltsin, Putin has also relied on a closed inner circle (in Russian, "*blizhnyi krug*") to make key decisions. Neither Yeltsin nor Putin ever joined a political party, not even when Putin was the United Russia Party's official leader! Unlike Yeltsin, Putin skillfully used the media to build a personality cult, appearing bare chested when riding horses, attending biker rallies, depicted in girlie calendars, and so on (Sperling 2014). This exemplifies a personalist rule that circumvents the formal institutions of government. It also fits the pattern of demagogic leaders around the world, who portray themselves as a man of the people, running against the establishment, and willing to break rules to serve the nation's needs.

Other social norms that survived the Soviet collapse included an expectation that the state would look after citizens in terms of jobs, housing, and income. Gender roles also underwent little change—women were financially independent but remained primary caregivers and were mostly excluded from politics and leadership positions. Some social norms did change radically after 1991. Soviet egalitarianism was replaced by the ostentatious wealth of the "New Russians." A public role for religion became accepted, with religion classes introduced to schools.

"Putinism" succeeded because it wove these disparate social norms together, tapping into both old and new norms, and bridging the gap between formal and informal institutions.

Elite Breakdown and Recovery

Russia in the 1990s displayed the pathologies of an unstable society with a fragmented political elite. Most of the institutions in which the Soviet elite had been embedded abruptly collapsed, and the ideological glue that had held the elite together came unstuck. The old Soviet "social contract" between state and society—mass loyalty in return for economic and political security—also dissolved. The economy shrank by half, bringing hardship and uncertainty to millions of ordinary Russians.

The Soviet collapse was a breakdown, not a managed transition. Gorbachev wanted to reform the Soviet system, not destroy it. Inside Russia, there was no counter-elite waiting in the wings with a plan for a new economic and political

system. In the republics of the Baltics and the Caucasus, a counter-elite did quickly emerge but with the goal of national independence. In the Baltics, this elite was able to forge a consensus around that program, but in the Caucasus (and Moldova), the new rulers were hamstrung by conflicts with ethnic minorities that resisted the new nationalist agenda.

Some observers dispute this analysis, arguing that there was a high degree of elite continuity in Russia post-1991 (Kotz and Weir 1997; Reddaway and Glinski 2001). They suggest that key officials among the Communist *nomenklatura* consciously decided to destroy the Soviet state in order to introduce a capitalist society in which their own personal wealth (and freedom to enjoy it) would multiply. More narrowly, there are suggestions that factions within the KGB and Communist Party Central Committee used the Soviet foreign trade apparatus to create offshore companies with money from the Soviet budget. These firms and their controllers made a fortune exporting Russia's resources once trade barriers were lifted in 1992 (Dawisha 2014). There is some truth to these analyses, but they account for only a small proportion of the new capitalist class. More broadly, it is clear that most of the Communist *nomenklatura* strove to preserve the USSR, and most of the rising capitalist class came from outside their ranks.

It is hard to quantify the degree of elite continuity before and after 1991, since much hinges on how to code low-level positions in the Communist apparatus (Lane and Ross 1998). Very few of the first-rank officials from Soviet times were able to navigate the waters of Russia's nascent capitalism and scrappy democracy. Two prominent individuals who did were Viktor Chernomyrdin, a former gas minister who was Yeltsin's prime minister from 1995 to 1998, and Yevgenii Primakov, a leading Soviet academic who served as prime minister in 1998–99. There are also few examples of the *children* of former Soviet leaders becoming strategic office holders in post-Soviet Russia. Nearly all the children and grandchildren of former general secretaries moved abroad and lead middle-class lives.

The vast majority of new economic and political leaders in Russia were a generation younger than their predecessors and had occupied fairly marginal positions in the Soviet career hierarchy. Some had been leaders of the Komsomol (Young Communist League) in their factory or town, such as Mikhail Khodorkovsky (who founded the Yukos oil company). Certainly, their Soviet-era networks of local connections helped them start up in the early years of the transition, but the bulk of their wealth and political influence accrued due to their entrepreneurial vigor from that point on.

By the 2000s, a degree of order had emerged from the chaos. The revolutionary 1990s were followed by the counter-revolutionary 2000s, with

Russians rallying behind a strong leader in the person of Vladimir Putin. Russia's recovery was helped by the fact that the global oil price went from $13 a barrel in 1998 to $148 in 2008. Clearly, Putin played a central role in this recovery, though opinions differed over whether he should be seen as a political genius or merely a front man with limited political skills—a façade behind which powerful groups vied for power. Shevtsova (2005) and Gessen (2012) took the latter view.

How would elite theory explain the emergence of stability in Putin's Russia? Field and Higley (1980) identify two forms of elite unity—consensual and ideological. As far as *consensual unity* is concerned, there was no founding moment at which the various factions of Russia's elites came together and forged an agreement about how Russia was to be ruled. There was no equivalent of England's 1688 Glorious Revolution, the US Constitutional Convention of 1787, or France's Tennis Court Oath of 1789. The salient events were moments of rupture and defeat—the failed August 1991 coup, the dissolution of the USSR in December 1991, Yeltsin shelling the parliament in October 1993, and the 1998 financial crash. These events left Russia's elites weakened and divided—over the feasibility of rapid market reform, over the reliability of the United States as a partner, and over Yeltsin's extraordinary executive powers. Moments of unity were fleeting and tactical—such as the State Duma agreeing to the appointment of former academic Yevgenii Primakov as prime minister in September 1998 in the wake of the financial crash.

The closest thing to a collective elite turning point was the election of Putin as president in March 2000. Yeltsin's appointment of Putin as acting president in December 1999 caught everyone by surprise. It was not the product of an elite pact, but it was a development that allowed an elite consensus to emerge over the following months and years. At the time of his nomination as prime minister in August 1999, Putin was an undistinguished individual plucked from the ranks of Kremlin officials by Yeltsin, reportedly at the prompting of oligarch Boris Berezovsky (who was close to Yeltsin's daughter). Putin was an enigma who tried to appeal to all points of the political spectrum—liberals and conservatives, oligarchs and *siloviki* (representatives of the security establishment). He subsequently evolved into a political institution in his own right, the linchpin of Russia's political system.

As far as *ideological unity* is concerned, it proved elusive. In the 1990s, the Yeltsin administration tried to forge a new elite around the program of introducing Western values and institutions to Russia. This had some appeal to the young, but not to older generations, who saw their living standards plummet and yearned for the stability of the Soviet era. It also alienated the

vast swath of Soviet-era bureaucrats still at their posts: in the security services, industry, and agriculture. When he came to power in 2000, Putin also stressed the need to integrate with the West, while at the same time, appealing to patriotism on the back of the second Chechen war (1999–2003) and opposition to US actions in Kosovo (1999) and Iraq (2003). It was only in response to the 2011 protest movement that Putin came up with a more vigorous nationalist worldview. He stepped up anti-Western propaganda, accusing Europe of promoting "gay" sexual values, and he gave more prominence to the Russian Orthodox Church (as in the punishment of Pussy Riot, a punk music group that performed in the national cathedral). Putin launched a program to "nationalize the elite" by forcing government officials to divest themselves of foreign stocks and bank accounts.

The propaganda machinery went into overdrive during the 2013 Ukraine crisis. After the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, Putin's approval rating jumped from 69 percent to 81 percent, and it rose to 88 percent by October 2014.[1] Subsequent Western sanctions placed on selected individuals and firms made the elite even more dependent on Putin. Oil companies and banks that could no longer borrow abroad turned to the Russian state for bailouts. In August 2014, Putin responded to the Western sanctions by imposing an embargo on all food imports from countries participating in the sanctions. But Putin's "Crimea is ours!" (*Krym nash!*) gambit came at the price of inflation and a steep recession.

Given the precariousness of the Russian economy, this does not look like a recipe for long-run elite stability. Putin's nationalist appeal is also rived by contradictions. He equivocates between appealing to Russians as co-ethnics (*russkie*) and as citizens (*rossiiskie*), cognizant of the fact that 20 percent of citizens are not ethnically Russian. His actions in Ukraine exposed these ideological contradictions: most Russian nationalists welcomed Putin's seizure of Crimea but were dismayed by his failure to follow through with open military support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine.

An elite theory approach to Russia must inevitably focus on the personal trajectory and mind-set of Vladimir Putin. But in this regard, elite theory does not differ from liberal democracy or any other paradigm of political analysis. The challenge is to identify the deeper structures that made it possible for Putin to emerge as a leader capable of articulating and enforcing the collective interests of the Russian elite.

In the 1990s, most of the elites who came to dominate the post-Soviet states quickly learned how to control the political space and steer electoral outcomes that preserved the façade of procedural democracy while gutting its substance. In a process that Andrew Wilson (2005) christened "virtual politics," the elites

deployed a variety of "political technologies" that included control of the mass media, the use of a compliant judicial system to keep opponents off the ballot, and the gathering of compromising material to blackmail potential rivals (Darden 2001). Yeltsin and Putin in Russia, Leonid Kuchma in Ukraine, and Aleksandr Lukashenko in Belarus were prime exponents of elite strategies. Even where semi-free elections were still being held (as in Russia through December 1999), corrupt elites were able to exploit public office for private gain, and the quality of governance deteriorated.

The New Russian Political Elite

Western commentary on the Russian elite focuses on three prominent groups: Putin's inner circle, the oligarchs, and the *siloviki*. To these I add a fourth, less visible but equally important: the state bureaucrats. At the apex of the elite system, these groups overlap: some *siloviki* have become business heads, while some oligarchs have moved into positions in one of the security branches. The oligarchs, *siloviki*, and bureaucrats all head hierarchical organizations that have hundreds of thousands of lower-level officials. The mass base of Putin's inner circle is less-easily defined and rests to a high degree on the managed charisma of Vladimir Putin. In 2013, Yevgenii Minchenko published an influential report entitled "Politburo 2.0" which tracked the interlocking networks that comprise the new political elite (Minchenko 2013; English version Minchenko 2014).

Putin's Inner Circle

As Putin consolidated his grip in the Kremlin, he brought with him a team of trusted associates from his days working in the St. Petersburg city administration in the early 1990s. Some of them were from the KGB (see below), but others were liberal lawyers and economists. These included German Gref (former economics minister), Aleksei Kudrin (former finance minister), and Dmitrii Medvedev, who Putin tapped to be his replacement as president from 2008 to 2012 (and who then became prime minister). These men introduced a second wave of market reforms in the early 2000s (such as the introduction of a flat income tax) and kept Russia's financial and monetary policy on a sound course. They clashed frequently with the *siloviki* over budgetary issues and were unpopular with nationalists in the Duma who blamed them for capitulating to neo-liberalism.

At the same time, information leaked out about a more shadowy group of Putin's long-time associates who were suddenly becoming very wealthy. They included banker Yurii Kovalchuk and Vladimir Yakunin, the head of Russian Railways. Putin, Kovalchuk, Yakunin, and five other friends formed the Ozero dacha cooperative in St. Petersburg in the early 1990s (Dawisha 2014). As the 2000s unfolded, the corporations these men controlled ate up a widening circle of assets. Some people with a *silovik* background became wealthy business leaders—such as Igor Sechin, who became head of Rosneft Oil Company (Treisman 2007). Putin's childhood friend and judo partner Arkady Rotenberg founded a bank, and in 2007, took over Gazprom's construction subsidiaries. By 2015, he had a net worth of $1.4 billion. When Italy seized his assets as part of the Crimea sanctions, the Duma passed a law authorizing sanctioned businessmen to be compensated from the state budget. Several insiders have bolted abroad and have provided stunning revelations about how Putin acquired wealth through offshore companies and payoffs by favored oligarchs (BBC Panorama 2016; Reuters 2015).

We see here the kernel of a cohesive elite, formed on the basis of close personal loyalty and self-interest, cloaked in the rhetoric of patriotism and Russian Orthodoxy. But a group of a few dozen men cannot by themselves rule a diverse country of 145 million people spread across 11 time zones. They need to form alliances with other elite groups.

The Rise of the Oligarchs

In the course of the 1990s, a few dozen astute and aggressive entrepreneurs created successful corporations that became prominent players in the global economy. Russia went from being a country where there were no capitalists and entrepreneurship was a crime to one that was home to dozens of billionaires. According to *Forbes* magazine (2015), the number of billionaires in Russia went from 0 in 2000 to 17 in 2003 and 95 in 2011—the second highest number in the world after the United States. They peaked at 117 in 2013 before falling to 89 in 2014 as a result of the sanctions and slump in world oil prices. (That put Russia in fourth place, behind the United States, China, and Germany.)

The oligarchs came from extremely varied backgrounds. Some were scientists in the military industry complex; others had spent time in prison for "speculation." Some had relevant industrial experience, but others had none. They included Jews, Moslems, Chechens, and Tatars. When *Forbes* first published its list in 2002, 38 percent had made their fortunes in oil and

manufacturing and 12 percent in finance and technology. By 2006, 36 percent were from finance and technology (mainly telecom) and 17 percent from manufacturing and oil. The next wave saw new billionaires emerge from construction, retailing, and online marketing. In 2001, the 23 largest firms were controlled by a mere 37 individuals and accounted for 30 percent of Russia's GDP (World Bank 2004). This was an astonishing concentration of ownership in such a large country. It was, in part, a rough and ready solution to the problem of enforcing property rights in the absence of a strong rule of law (Varese 2002). It was impossible, or unwise, to try to raise capital and share control with a broader circle of owners.

The first major political action by Russia's new capitalists was funding the campaign that ensured Yeltsin's re-election in 1996. It was then that they were dubbed "oligarchs." In 1997, some businessmen joined the Yeltsin administration—metals magnate Vladimir Potanin became deputy prime minister and Berezovsky deputy head of the Security Council. There followed a period of debilitating faction fighting. In 1998, Joel Hellman argued that insider elites had captured the state and frozen the democratic transition half way. By preventing the emergence of a competitive market economy, the oligarchs could maximize their rent-extraction capacity. In contrast to the fate of the US robber barons of the late nineteenth century, Russian democracy was too weak to rein in the oligarchs.

The 1998 crash shifted the balance of power, forcing many oligarchs to turn to the state for a bailout. They had only limited input on Yeltsin's selection of Putin as his successor. Some oligarchs backed the Fatherland/All Russia Party, led by regional bosses such as Moscow Mayor Yurii Luzhkov and Tatarstan President Mintimier Shaimiev. But that party lost the December 1999 Duma election to the pro-Putin Unity Party. After taking office as president in May 2000, Putin quickly stripped the oligarchs of their TV stations (Vladimir Gusinsky's NTV and Berezovsky's ORT) and signaled that businessmen would be free to enrich themselves so long as they maintained their distance from politics.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the head of the Yukos oil company and Russia's richest man (with a net worth of $16 billion), refused to back off from political machinations, such as buying the loyalty of Duma deputies (Sakwa 2014). Also, Khodorkovsky was preparing to sell Yukos to a major US oil company. Putin's allies in the state-owned energy sector—Igor Sechin at Rosneft and Aleksei Miller at Gazprom—coveted the private oil assets. Roman Abramovich agreed to sell Sibneft to Gazprom for $13 billion and then moved to London. But Khodorkovsky refused to cash out (Fortescue 2007). In 2003, he was arrested for tax evasion and sent to jail, where he would sit for ten years. (Putin

amnestied him in 2013, on the condition that he left Russia.) One could not ask for a more vivid illustration of the limits of business independence in Russia.

The Siloviki

The rise of Putin to the presidency naturally drew attention to the role of the security apparatus in post-Soviet Russia. There was a sense that Putin was relying heavily on a coterie of advisors who had backgrounds in the FSB—people like Sergei Ivanov (former deputy prime minister, defense minister, and then presidential chief of staff), and Sergei Naryshkin (who became Chairman of the Duma in 2011).

In 2001, Putin launched a major reform of the "power vertical" to reassert the Kremlin's authority over regional leaders, who had won a high degree of autonomy in the 1990s. Putin created seven new federal districts to oversee the 85 regions and planted a "presidential representative" in each province, who would answer directly back to the presidential administration. Most of the men appointed to head the federal districts, and as presidential representatives, had some background in the security services.

After the Soviet collapse, the KGB was broken up into several agencies, notably the FSB and Foreign Intelligence Service (Taylor 2011). The FSB has about 300,000 staff (including 200,000 border guards, over which the FSB regained control in 2003). Alongside them are a dozen other security agencies, including those of the Russian armed forces, the ministry of the interior, and the civil defense ministry.

In the early 2000s, Russian journalists started to talk about the "*siloviki,*" a word that is impossible to translate into English. It refers to people from the "force structures" (*silovye struktury*) (Soldatov and Borogan 2010). In 2003, Olga Kryshtanovskaya and Stephen White published a study of 800 top legislative and executive officials, among whom those with a military education rose from 6.7 percent in 1993 to 26.6 percent in 2002. The proportion with some military career experience went from 3.7 percent in 1988 to 25.1 percent in 2002. In a later update (2009), they reported the career group had risen to 32 percent by 2008, representing 67 percent of the inner circle, 40 percent of government ministers; 21 percent of regional chief executives, 17 percent of Federation Council senators; and 14 percent of Duma deputies.

The idea that Russia was being run by a cabal of *siloviki* took off in the media and academic discussion (Bremmer and Charap 2006). It fitted with Putin's robust nationalism and his reintroduction of some of the symbols of the Soviet Union (the national anthem, the cult of the Great Patriotic War). It

seemed as though Russia was headed "back to the USSR," but this time without the Communists, just with the army and KGB.

The findings of Kryshtanovskaya and White were, however, challenged by Rivera and Rivera (2014). In their database of 2539 elite individuals, only 8.9 percent of the 2002 cohort had a military education and 10.7 percent any military career experience. Rivera and Rivera concluded that Putin's elite is "more bourgeois than militocratic." Part of the discrepancy between the two studies stemmed from sample and coding differences (e.g., how much time in service counts as a military career). Also, Kryshtanovskaya and White used a weighted average across their five elite groups: the un-weighted figures reveal only 13.9 percent with a military career in 2002. Eugene Huskey (2010) did his own study of government and presidential officials (including deputy ministers and department heads). He also concluded that people with a business background outnumbered the security personnel.

The data on the presence of *siloviki* among top officials is interesting, but not dispositive. The key question is not whether they make up 10 percent or 30 percent of a given body of officials, but what power do they exercise over strategic decision-making. This is far harder to measure and can only really be answered through case studies of specific policy decisions. The *siloviki* seem to have a high degree of autonomy when it comes to military policy—but even there, the pervasive secrecy makes it hard to judge. (E.g., did the generals support or oppose the intervention in East Ukraine in 2014?) Putin boosted the military budget from $10 billion in 2005 to $53 billion in 2015—but in 2007, he appointed a civilian defense minister, Anatolii Serdyukov, a former furniture retailer and tax minister, who pushed through some painful restructuring reforms, firing one-third of the central staff. Serdyukov was forced out by a corruption scandal in 2012, though he avoided jail time.

It should also be remembered that the *siloviki* are far from being a unitary actor. The interests and outlook of the military and the FSB, for example, are quite distinct. There is institutional rivalry between the FSB and military intelligence (GRU), and between the procuracy and the Investigative Committee (*Sledstvennyi komitet*), which was created in 2011. Occasionally, these rivalries surface in the public eye, with incriminating materials leaked to newspapers. In 2006, for example, the procurator had the temerity to arrest some former FSB officials who were accused of money laundering (Yasmann 2006).

The Bureaucrats

Under Putin, the state bureaucracy expanded, rising from 486,000 officials in 1999 to 828,000 in 2011 and declining to 755,000 by 2014.[2] Russian state officials are infused with patriotism: they are sometimes described as *gosudarstvenniki* ("stateniks"). They also display a reasonable level of professionalism, with some elements of technocracy (i.e., faith in technical solutions).

Increased salaries (plus the possibility of bribes and other privileges) made the bureaucracy an attractive career choice for young people. A system of recruitment and promotion is in place that is partly meritocratic, at least on the surface. The more prestigious one's higher education, the better the chance of recruitment to a competitive state position. The former network of Communist Party training schools was not dismantled, but simply renamed Academies of National Economy and State Service. In practice, of course, selection at every stage is often driven by connections or bribes.

Huskey's (2010) study of the top cadres in the executive branch reminds us that the colossus of Russian bureaucracy grinds on. Familiar patterns from Soviet and even Tsarist times repeat themselves—a morass of red tape, a proliferation of agencies, overlapping authority, multiple veto points, inability to act independently of instructions from the center, and so on. For example, in 2004, Putin tried to reduce the size of the government—the number of deputy prime ministers was cut to three and deputy ministers (on average) to two to four. But by 2010, they were back to nine deputy prime ministers and an average of seven to nine deputy ministers. Rotation of cadres between different departments—an important way of fighting narrow departmental interests—virtually ceased in the 1990s but has been revived since 2004.

Similarly, Ogushi (2015) compiled a database of 618 deputy ministers between 1999 and 2013. He found a mixture of insider and outsider recruitment. The foreign, security, and railways ministries were relatively closed; energy and economy were open; and others such as finance were mixed. Only 13 percent of the cadres were promoted across ministries (and of these transferees, 35 percent were *siloviki*). Huskey also found that there was more recruitment of top cadres from outside the ministry than in Soviet times. There were of course some important differences from Soviet times. Soviet leaders tried to mobilize society, while the post-Soviet state wants to demobilize it. Not only does the contemporary Russian state lack a mobilizing ideology, it faces the need to manage semi-free elections, during which mobilization could spin out of control (Huskey 2010).

Neo-patrimonialism and the New Russian Elite

Corruption is clearly central to the cohesion of the new Russian elite. It is the glue that binds lower officials to their bosses and through which the rival elite groups transact with each other. It has become common to conceptualize the Russian and other post-Soviet systems as examples of "neo-patrimonial" (Fisun 2012) or "patronal" regimes (Hale 2014). Patrons sponsor the appointment of clients to government positions, or award their companies state contracts, and in return, the clients offer political loyalty—and a share of the proceeds. Unlike traditional patrimonial systems, these networks are relatively open and transactional and are not based on ties of kin or clan.

Transitology largely ignored the corruption problem—as did much of the Western social science canon. It was not until the late 1990s—after James Wolfensohn took over at the World Bank—that the international community came to recognize corruption as a major barrier to economic growth in the developing world. Corruption "works" in the short run—it can help business-men overcome bureaucratic obstacles and help politicians form viable coali-tions. But it is corrosive of long-run economic growth and the trust in government necessary for democracy to thrive.

Putin himself frequently spoke out against corruption, but he did not launch a systematic effort to combat it, not on the scale that has been seen in China. Putin did not send many senior bureaucrats to jail. Rather, he served as a broker mediating disputes between rival factions. Putin played the role of Mancur Olson's "stationary bandit," with the FSB establishing itself as a single "roof" (*krysha*), the one-stop regulator of corrupt transactions (Olson 2000). There was a decrease in the number of contract killings, kidnappings, and extortion in the 2000s, though bribery, corruption, and corporate raiding were still pervasive.

Meanwhile, the expansion of state control over the corporate sector that took place during Putin's second presidential term expanded the scope for self-dealing behind closed doors. There were an increasing number of cases where the children of top government officials surfaced as leaders of businesses that benefited from their political connections (Maternovsky 2005).[3] Corruption proved to be a protean phenomenon able to adapt to changing conditions more rapidly than the anti-corruption forces.

Corruption was a rallying cry of the opposition, with blogger Aleksei Navalny using the Internet in 2009–11 to expose kick-backs in government contracting. In 2013, Navalny was allowed to run for mayor of Moscow, finishing a respectable second with 27 percent of the vote. He described the

ruling United Russia party as "the party of crooks and thieves" (*partiia zhulikov i vorov*). In August 2013, a nationwide survey found 44 percent of respondents agreed (and 35 percent disagreed) with the statement that United Russia is "the party of crooks and thieves."[4] Nevertheless, in regional elections that year and next, United Russia swept the board. Russian voters may not trust their elected leaders, but they do not see any realistic alternative.

Conclusion

In the 2000s, Russia's new capitalist class reached an awkward *modus vivendi* with the revived state apparatus, which had deep historical roots and increasing confidence. The statists needed the oligarchs to generate wealth—and the oligarchs needed the state to provide political stability and protection. While the oligarchs respected Putin's rules of the game, the situation remained highly unstable, because the various protagonists competed fiercely for key assets, subsidized loans, and state contracts. "Corporate raiding"—abuse of the judicial system to seize control of rival companies—was endemic. In the meantime, society, at large, including the small business sector, was shut out of the decision-making process.

The threats to the stability of Putinism are clear. First, the various elite groups are held together by their collective dependence on the distribution of rents from resource extraction. This seems perilous in an age of declining global commodity prices. But Putin's centralized system seems inimical to the sort of competitive business climate that Russia needs to modernize and diversify its economy. Second, Putin turned to foreign policy adventurism in Ukraine and Syria, in part to bolster his legitimacy and divert attention from the lack of democratic accountability at home. But this came with a price tag—Western sanctions, increased military spending, subsidies for Crimea— that put further pressure on the economic foundations of Putinism.

Notes

1. Levada Center. http://www.levada.ru/old/26-03-2014/martovskie-reitingi-odobreniya-i-doveriya
2. Rosstat: http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/2011/gos-kadr/tab1.htm; http://gossluzhba.gov.ru/News/Details/a3627499-509a-4b37-adfb-47148aadde18
3. For example, the defense minister's son was vice president of Gazprombank; the prime minister's son—deputy director of the Far East Shipping Co.; the son of

the former Kremlin chief of staff Aleksandr Voloshin, vice president of Conversbank; and the son of the St. Petersburg governor—vice president of Vneshtorgbank.

4. Levada Center: http://www.levada.ru/old/16-09-2013/schitayut-li-rossiyane-edinuyu-rossiyu-partiei-zhulikov-i-vorov

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20

The Political Elite in China: A Dynamic Balance Between Integration and Differentiation

Cheng Li

The importance of a nation's political elite to its political system and governing characteristics can hardly be overstated. The political legitimacy and future prospects of a country are closely tied to the processes by which political elites are selected, how they circulate through the system, what their occupational backgrounds are, and to what extent they represent various geographies and other demographics. Western studies of the Chinese political system, however, have predominantly emphasized the monopoly of power of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—a defining characteristic of the Leninist party-state. Of course, this long-standing analytical approach has some validity. With the exception of a few tumultuous years in the early phase of the Cultural Revolution, the ruling CCP has always held ultimate political power in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Among all the ruling political parties that exist in today's world, only the Korean Workers' Party of North Korea has been in power for longer.

China's one-party political system has been critiqued for certain fundamental flaws, such as the rampancy of official corruption, stringent political and ideological controls, and lack of transparency in decision-making—or what China analysts commonly call "black box manipulation." Unsurprisingly, over

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the past quarter century, predictions have persisted as to the coming collapse of the CCP or the end of the Chinese communist state (e.g. Shambaugh 2015). Nevertheless, the Chinese regime has survived some daunting political crises, including the Tiananmen tragedy, the Bo Xilai scandal, and the large-scale purging of senior civilian and military leaders on corruption charges. Furthermore, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the CCP leadership has undergone generational turnovers of power—not just once, but twice—conducted largely through institutionalized procedures and in an orderly fashion. Despite the continuity of one-party rule in the PRC, the ruling party has still evolved and reformed itself over the past three decades. With that in mind, the rapid circulation of elites through the system, their changing identities and defining characteristics, and their collective impact on the Chinese political system all deserve more scholarly attention.

How can we reconcile the vulnerability of the Chinese political system with its persistence? Can classic elite theory inform our analysis of the prevailing—and paradoxical—perceptions of the stasis and mobility within the CCP elite? How has the Chinese leadership addressed a challenge common in other national settings—namely balancing elite cohesion and political competition?

The CCP has made clear that it is unwilling to relinquish its monopoly on political power and experiment with multi-party democracy. Nor do party leaders appear interested in moving toward a Western-style system based on a separation of power between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. This does not mean, however, that the CCP is a stagnant institution that has completely resisted political change. On the contrary, ever since Deng Xiaoping assumed leadership of the CCP and launched economic reforms in 1978, the party has constantly recruited new elite groups in order to keep abreast of the country's socioeconomic pressures and political dynamics. While the ruling party has continuously monopolized power, the CCP leadership today is by no means a monolithic group whose members all share the same ideology, political associations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and policy preferences. By contrast, the CCP elite in the early years of the PRC was far more homogeneous, as Mao's "Long Marchers" dominated all important leadership levels. The Chinese Communist Party rose to power as a military organization; its leaders were mostly soldiers, peasants, and members of the urban lower-middle class. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, a large number of poor peasants, many illiterate, flocked into the Red Army and the party, and many participated in the Long March. Some of these "Long Marchers," two decades later, became a major part of the ruling elite of the PRC (Kau 1971; Scalapino 1972).

To say that the Chinese political system completely lacks checks and balances would be a gross oversimplification—at least with respect to the communist party leadership itself. After the Deng era, two elite factions, or coalitions, have emerged to compete for power, influence, and control over policy. These two coalitions represent the interests of different socioeconomic classes and geographical regions, thus engendering a mechanism of checks and balances in the decision-making process. In particular, the growing influence and expanding power of China's provincial leaders have been important political trends in present-day China. In part, this stems from the fact that serving as a top provincial leader has become the most important conduit for reaching top national leadership. Prominent Chinese political elites in both the national and provincial leaderships have also become increasingly associated with particular regions, provinces, or cities, thus contributing to the differentiation of power.

These developments reflect an important transition away from the more integrated political system that existed throughout the first four decades of the PRC—one that relied on the arbitrary decision-making power of an individual leader, namely Mao Zedong and, subsequently, Deng Xiaoping. Since Xi Jinping took over the top leadership position in 2012, he has amassed impressive personal power. Like ambitious political leaders elsewhere in the world, Xi has needed to overcome the system's deficiencies and break the institutional constraints that prevented him from pursuing his political agenda, including his bold anti-corruption campaign and large-scale military reforms. Many observers in both China and abroad believe that Xi aims to reverse the trend of collective leadership and return to strongman politics. But some institutional mechanisms and constraints may prove to be more enduring and effective than these analysts have anticipated. In governing the world's most populous country as it becomes increasingly pluralistic, Xi's success or failure will largely depend on whether he encourages or obstructs the trend toward an increasingly diverse political elite.

Studying the composition and circulation of the Chinese political elite enables analysts to transcend the long-standing diagnostic paradigm of the Leninist party state. This information provides a more specific context that can potentially help in understanding China's future political trajectory. It can also contribute to a broader understanding of the various political transition processes—including their respective advantages and disadvantages—in authoritarian regimes in general (Li 2016). An empirically grounded, comprehensive study focused on the dynamic evolution of Chinese elite politics can enrich the wider academic literature on comparative political systems.

The Fluidity of Elite Turnover

One major reason the CCP has held power for over six decades, even through the experiments and turmoil of the past quarter-century, is the fluidity of elite turnover within the party and state government. The turnover rate for members of the Central Committee of the CCP, for example, has been remarkably high over the past 30 years. The Central Committee, known as the "first rung on the ladder of top leadership," consists primarily of about 350 full members and alternates. They are the country's most powerful national and provincial level leaders, including top officials in the party, government, military, and the country's flagship business firms. Newcomers have constituted an average of 62.3 percent of each of the seven Central Committees held from 1982 to 2012 (see Fig. 20.1).

The high turnover rate is partly due to the practice of multi-candidate elections for the Central Committee, a procedure that was first adopted in 1982 and that usually eliminates those who finish in the bottom 10 percent. But the main reasons for the high turnover rate are extant rules and norms,
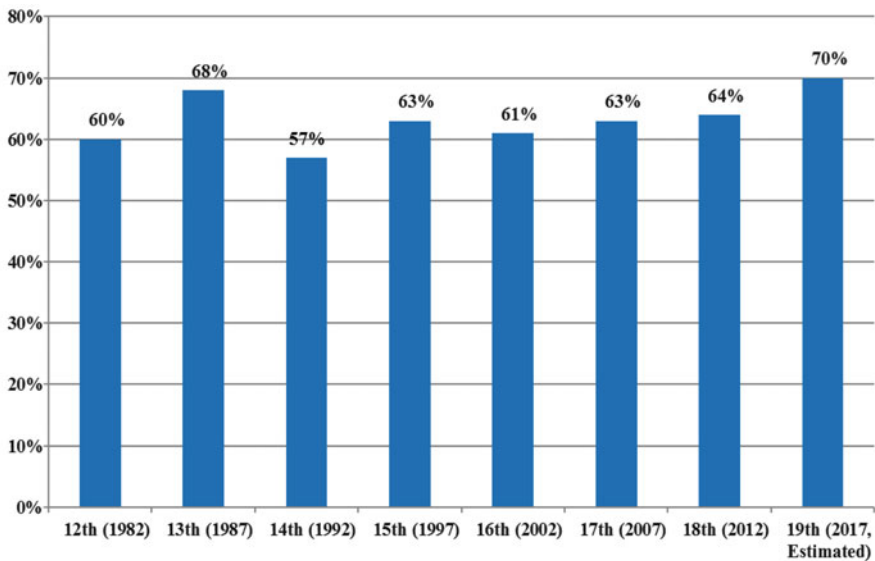
Fig. 20.1 Turnover rate of the CCP Central Committee (1982–2017). Note and source: The turnover rate of the Central Committee also includes alternate members in the previous Central Committee who are promoted to full members (Li and White 2003). The data on the 17th and 18th Central Committees were derived from the author's database. For the estimated turnover rate of the 19th Central Committee, see Cheng Li (2016)

such as age requirements for retirement and term limits at certain levels of leadership. For example, at the 18th National Party Congress, held in 2012, members and alternates of the previous Central Committee who were born before 1945 could no longer serve on the new Central Committee. Among the full members of the 18th Central Committee, 88 (42.9 percent) were re-elected; 59 (28.8 percent) were promoted from the previous Central Committee, where they had served as alternates, and 58 (28.3 percent) were first timers. Among the alternate members, 46 (26.9 percent) were re-elected and 125 (73.1 percent) were new. The member turnover rate at the 18th Central Committee, including alternate members in the previous Central Committee who were promoted to be full members, was 64.4 percent. Excluding the full members who were promoted from their alternate status on the 17th Central Committee (59), 183 leaders on the 18th Central Committee (comprising 58 new full members and 125 new alternates) are first timers (48.7 percent of the total).

According to the CCP Constitution, members of the Politburo must be selected from the ranks of the Central Committee, members of the Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) must come from the Politburo, and the CCP General Secretary must be a member of the PSC. Among the higher leadership bodies formed at the 18th Party Congress, newcomers also constituted a majority, including 60 percent of the Politburo, 71 percent of the PSC, and 64 percent of the Central Military Commission (Li 2016, p. 79).

One can reasonably expect that the turnover rate at the upcoming 19th Central Committee will exceed that of the 18th Central Committee, given three facts: (1) age limits will require that members born before 1950 retire; (2) some members, despite remaining qualified for the next committee in terms of age, have recently been transferred to ceremonial positions; and (3) some members, who have recently been purged, are under investigation for corruption or are seen as protégés of patrons who were purged in recent years (Chun 2013). Based on my research, the 19th Central Committee will likely have a 70-percent turnover rate, the highest since the ninth Party Congress in 1969 (Li 2016, pp. 378–380). By August 2016, a total of 24 members and alternates of the 18th Central Committee were purged.

These institutional regulations and procedures do not eliminate the favoritism and nepotism inherent in China's party-state system. The age requirement for retirement is indisputably a form of age discrimination. Nevertheless, these mechanisms have imparted a new sense of consistency and fairness into the Chinese political system and have even changed competitive political behavior among the elite, contributing to the delicate balance maintained between stability and mobility.

Occupational Changes of the CCP Elite

The elite transformation in China over the past three decades has not simply been generational but also occupational. In fact, the backgrounds of CCP leaders themselves have fundamentally shifted twice over the past three decades. First, the leadership transitioned from a revolutionary party consisting primarily of peasants, soldiers, and urban workers to a ruling party dominated by technocrats (i.e. officials who were trained as engineers and natural scientists before they advanced politically in the mid-1980s and 1990s). The second shift occurred at the beginning of the twenty-first century when a different set of leaders—this time with formal training in law, economics, or the social sciences, as well as a small number of entrepreneurs and lawyers—rose to power at both the national and provincial levels.

Figure 20.2 illustrates drastic changes in occupational backgrounds (specifically, the rise and fall of technocrats) of the three prominent leadership groups in the PRC—namely, cabinet ministers, provincial party secretaries, and provincial governors—from 1982 to 2013. In 1982, only one minister in the State Council—the minister of the Electric Power Industry, Li Peng, who later became premier and chair of the National People's Congress (NPC)—was a technocrat, and no provincial party secretaries or governors had a college-level technical education. In contrast, at the turn of the century, 70 percent of
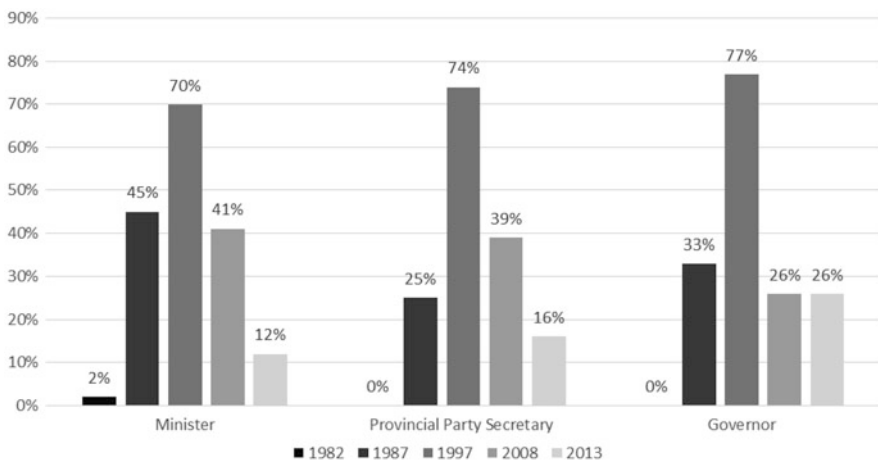
Fig. 20.2 Technocrat representation in ministerial/provincial leadership posts (1982–2013). Source and notes: The data for the years 1982, 1987, and 1997 are based on Lee (1991), Lieberthal (1995) and Cheng Li and Lynn White (1998). The data for 2008 and 2013 were primarily compiled by the author using Xinhua News Agency and Chinese-language searches provided by Google, Baidu, and Yahoo

ministers in the State Council, 74 percent of provincial party secretaries, and 77 percent of governors were technocrats. The nine members of the PSC elected in 1997 were all engineers, including the three top leaders: General Secretary Jiang Zemin (electrical engineer), Chair of the NPC Li Peng (hydro-electric engineer), and Premier Zhu Rongji (electrical engineer). The top three leaders elected in 2002 also followed this trend: General Secretary Hu Jintao (hydraulic engineer), NPC Chair Wu Bangguo (electrical engineer), and Premier Wen Jiabao (geological engineer).

Beginning with the 17th National Party Congress in 2007, technocratic dominance in the Chinese leadership began to wane, and leaders with non-technical backgrounds rapidly increased. In the current seven-member PSC, only one member studied engineering and worked as an engineer during his early years. An overwhelming majority of the current members of the Politburo and the PSC studied economics, political science, law, or the humanities. Although Xi Jinping's undergraduate education was in chemical engineering, he never worked as an engineer, and he holds an advanced degree in law and political science (Marxism). Similarly, Li Keqiang received his undergraduate degree in law and his doctoral degree in economics, and vice president of the PRC Li Yuanchao received his undergraduate degree in mathematics, his master's degree in economic management, and his doctoral degree in law (scientific socialism).

As some Chinese scholars note, a degree in law or legal studies is actually "an umbrella term that encompasses not only the discipline of law *sensu stricto* but also political science, sociology, ethnography, and Marxism" (*China Leadership Monitor* 2013, No. 42). My empirical research shows that CCP leaders with law degrees can be divided into three categories, based largely on the nature of their academic training and professional experience: (1) leaders who hold a law degree in name only but actually studied political science or Marxism (e.g., President Xi Jinping and Vice President Li Yuanchao), (2) leaders who are legally trained but have never practiced law (e.g., Premier Li Keqiang), and (3) leaders who are legal professionals based on both educational credentials and professional practice (*China Leadership Monitor* 2013, No. 42) The third group includes the president of the Supreme People's Court, Zhou Qiang; the executive vice president of the Supreme People's Court, Shen Deyong; the procurator-general of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, Cao Jianming; and the executive deputy procurator-general of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, He Zejun. These are the top four leaders of the judicial branch of the PRC, and all of them serve as full members of the current Central Committee of the CCP. All pursued undergraduate and graduate studies in

law at top Chinese law schools, practiced law, and gained lengthy experience in the legal field.

No less significant is the fact that since the beginning of the new century, younger, business-savvy, politically connected, and globally minded Chinese CEOs have increasingly been viewed as suitable candidates for the CCP leadership, thus greatly broadening the CCP's recruitment options. Many of these political leaders with strong business backgrounds have advanced their careers through China's flagship state companies and financial institutions. The rapid political ascent of a particular elite group in any given country is often linked to concurrent changes in the domestic and international environments. The recent emergence of chief business executives in the CCP leadership is no exception. This phenomenon can be attributed to the meteoric rise and the ever-increasing power of China's large state-owned enterprises on the world stage. If the economic success of a given country is measured by the number of its companies on the Fortune Global 500 list, the PRC undoubtedly represents one of the greatest triumphs in the contemporary world. Li Rongrong (2010), former head of State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), recently stated that the most important criterion for China's rise to the status of a global economic giant is the number of Chinese companies that make it on the Global 500 list. Chinese companies on the Fortune Global 500 have dramatically increased, from 3 in 1995 to 15 in 2005, 46 in 2010, 95 in 2014, and 98 in 2015 (Li 2011; *China Daily* July 8, 2014; Cendrowski 2015). In 2015, Sinopec Group, China National Petroleum, and State Grid were ranked second, fourth, and seventh on the list, respectively. All told, China has the second-largest number of companies on the list, behind the United States, which leads with 128 (Cendrowski 2015).

Overall, the proportion of entrepreneurs, business elites, and financial experts in the national leadership is still relatively small. However, an increasing number of businesspeople have entered the top levels of leadership, including the PSC and the State Council. The most noticeable of these is the "anti-corruption tsar," Wang Qishan, who previously served as vice president and then president of China Construction Bank from 1989 to 1997. Wang is widely regarded throughout the international business community as a seasoned expert on economics and finance. Similarly, Guo Shengkun, a state councilor and the minister of public security, served as general manager of the Aluminum Corporation of China from 2001 to 2004.

Meanwhile, private entrepreneurs have begun to acquire positions in the provincial and national political leadership. In 2002, for the first time in PRC history, seven private entrepreneurs attended the National Party Congress as a distinct group, and some even served as members of the presidium of the

Congress (*Shijie ribao* 2002, A3). The group of private entrepreneurs that attended the 2007 Congress includes Wang Jianlin, Chairman of the Dalian Wanda Group, which became the world's largest operator of movie theaters in 2013 after acquiring AMC Entertainment Holdings for US$2.6 billion. Zhang Ruimin, the CEO of China's Haier Group, a multinational consumer electronics and home appliances manufacturer, has served on the Central Committee as an alternate member since 2002.

Leaders educated in a broad array of fields and individuals who have advanced their careers through different channels may well bring a wider range of perspectives to policymaking and problem solving. But equally important, their emergence and representation in the PRC's ruling political elite reflects an effort on the part of the Chinese authorities to recruit new blood and to open doors for important players with more diverse educational and occupational backgrounds.

Western elite theory has done well to explain the rationale behind such openness and the significance of fluidity in elite circulation. Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca, classic scholars of Western elite studies, describe the "circulation of elites" as key to any ruling group's survival. In Mosca's view, governing groups decline in influence when they cease to find an outlet for the expertise they drew upon in rising to power—that is, if the services those groups rendered become obsolete or if their strengths become less relevant in the face of socioeconomic changes (Mosca 1923/1939). Pareto explains that a revolution—or, in his words, a "wholesale circulation of elites"—becomes likely when a "piecemeal circulation of elites" occurs too slowly. In other words, a cohort of old elites can clog channels of political recruitment and prevent "new blood" from entering the power structure (Pareto 1968). Any enduring regime will try to maintain its internal integrity not only by defining who can rule but also by adapting to its external environment through the recruitment of fresh talent—new, ambitious elites who may otherwise become potentially formidable challengers of the system.

The CCP leaders have demonstrated that they understand the importance of accepting elites with new professional credentials and occupational backgrounds. Therefore, the makeup of the party leadership has changed significantly over the past three decades. From a historical perspective, all three of the important elite groups in post-Mao China—technocrats, entrepreneurs, and lawyers—are, for the most part, new components in the governing elite. China was traditionally a meritocracy in which social status was largely determined by success in the imperial examinations but in the Confucian worldview, scientific knowledge and technical competence—which have been esteemed in the West for centuries—were always subordinate to literary and cultural

achievements. Likewise, Chinese society, which was dominated by the scholar-gentry class, tended to devalue merchants because they earned a living by profiting off of others rather than through "honest" mental or manual labor (Pye 1988, 1991). This anti-capitalist bias reached its apex during the first few decades of the PRC. By the mid-1950s, the four million private firms and stores that had existed in China before 1949 all disappeared as part of the transition to socialism (*China News Analysis* 1994, no. 1501). Furthermore, the long-standing ethical norm of governance in China has always been rule of man, not rule of law. Therefore, during the first three decades of the PRC, legal nihilism and legal instrumentalism dominated the public view of law. The rise of legal professionals has coincided with the transformation of Chinese society and has signaled ideological changes in the party state.

In a broader context, the changing occupational composition of the party leadership reflects the demographic transformation of the CCP, and the nation at large. In the early 1980s at the beginning of the reform era, farmers and workers—the traditional base of the Communist Party—made up 63.4 percent of the CCP (Lee 1990). In 2013, farmers and workers accounted for only 38.3 percent of CCP members—a decrease of about 25 percent in three decades (*Xinhua News Agency* June 30, 2013). An official study conducted by the United Front Work Department of the CCP Central Committee in 2004 found that 34 percent of private enterprise owners were party members, up from just 13 percent in 1993 (United Front Department of the CCP 2005; *Sing Tao Daily* December 13, 2004). In 1982, only four percent of the 4000-plus county-level party chiefs held undergraduate degrees or higher, while by 2015, 44.3 percent of party members held undergraduate degrees or higher (Peng 2016). At the start of the reform era in the early 1980s, there were only 3000 lawyers in a country of over one billion people (Center for Chinese Studies, Columbia University; Xin 1999, p. 80). Since then, the number of registered lawyers and law school students has greatly increased. By early 2014, China had a total of 250,000 lawyers in about 20,000 registered law firms (Bin 2014).

The shift in the educational and occupational characteristics of the CCP in general, and its ruling elite in particular—including the emphasis on more diverse academic and professional backgrounds—reflects the deliberate objective of circulating elites, a process that contributes to the survival and revival of the ruling Communist Party in this rapidly changing society. To understand the country's political trajectory, a balanced and forward-looking assessment of elite transformation is crucial. Top leaders having received legal education does not, of course, guarantee a genuine commitment to reinforcing legal frameworks and to strengthening the rule of law in the course of governance. For example, Chen Shui-bian, a lawyer who became president of the Republic of

China, was notorious for his disregard of the law and his involvement in corruption and other criminal activities. In October 2014, for the first time in CCP history, the leadership under Xi Jinping devoted a Central Committee plenum to the country's legal development. Nevertheless, the regime's harsh treatment of independent lawyers and NGO activists has continued. It would be a mistake, however, to disregard the importance of changes in the occupational composition of governing elites. China's legal development—including the authority of lawyers and the influence of the legal community—is still in its infancy, with substantial room to grow and mature. The potential consequences of this development for the Chinese political system as a whole deserve greater scholarly attention.

Balance of Power: Factional and Regional Differentiations

Perhaps even more important than the fluidity of elite turnover and the growing diversity in the educational and occupational backgrounds of political leaders is the trend, within the upper echelons of the CCP, toward increasingly dynamic factional politics. This has resulted in more meaningful alliance building and political grouping in the leadership. The CCP unambiguously rejects political competition from outside forces. But within the party leadership itself, there exist meaningful checks and balances. The nature of Chinese elite politics has changed over the past two decades, largely due to the development of collective leadership in the post-Deng era. Under the leadership of Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and now Xi Jinping, each of whom has been linked to various vested interest groups and geographic regions throughout the country, intense elite competition has driven the formation of two main leadership coalitions: the "elitist coalition" (or the Jiang-Xi camp) and the "populist coalition" (or the Hu-Li camp). This Chinese-style bipartisanship—in a sense, "one party, two coalitions"—has created an intraparty bifurcation (Li 2005, 2006)

The elitist coalition emerged from the Jiang Zemin era and is currently led by Xi Jinping. It is more closely associated with China's east coast—the region famous for its rapid economic growth. The coastal provinces and cities were the country's dominant economic force in the 1990s and have reassumed their roles as pacesetters for China's new phase of economic development under the Xi administration. The region's core political faction used to be the Shanghai Gang—leaders who had advanced their careers in Shanghai under Jiang and

Xi. The faction's main membership now primarily consists of "princelings," that is, leaders born into the families of communist revolutionaries or other high-ranking officials, including both Jiang and Xi. These leaders have usually enjoyed quicker career advancement than leaders who did not come from such backgrounds. More recently, under Xi's leadership, the elitist coalition has expanded to include the so-called Shaanxi Gang (leaders who were born or advanced their career in Shaanxi, where Xi has strong ties due to both his family origin and the fact that he spent his formative years there) and Xi's other regionally based political networks in Fujian and Zhejiang (Li 2014). This elite group has tended to be economically liberal and supportive of market reform but politically conservative, especially with regard to media control and intraparty elections. Yet, in making anti-corruption the centerpiece of their political agenda, Xi Jinping and his principal political ally, the aforementioned Wang Qishan (also a princeling who spent his formative years in Shaanxi), have shown their resolute commitment to dealing with this particularly corrosive issue.

The populist coalition draws its name from the well-known political rhetoric of "putting people first" and, consequently, orients its policies toward economic equality, social justice, and more-balanced regional development. The coalition consists of factional cliques that support the populist agenda, and its cadres usually come from humble family backgrounds and have worked in poor, inland provinces. The leaders in this group usually have more experience at the grassroots level and have mostly advanced their careers in a step-by-step manner through local leadership. The populist coalition was previously led by former president Hu Jintao and is now headed by Premier Li Keqiang. Its core faction is the so-called *tuanpai* ("league faction"), which includes both Hu and Li and is made up of leaders who have advanced in politics through leadership positions in the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL). This leadership experience facilitates political socialization, which in turn grants former CCYL leaders a distinct identity and constitutes an important stepping stone for *tuanpai* leaders' career advancement. At a time when the Xi-led elitist coalition is rapidly expanding its own power and influence, some other factions, especially the geographically based cliques associated with inland regions (except Shaanxi Province), tend to lean toward the populist camp of Hu and Li.

Factional politics is, of course, not a new development in the PRC. Major events during the Mao and Deng eras, such as the anti-rightist campaign, the Cultural Revolution, and the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, were all related to factional infighting within the CCP leadership. Factional politics in the post-Deng era, however, has become less of a winner-take-all game. Neither the

elitist coalition nor the populist coalition is capable of defeating the other and monopolizing power. Previous purges of senior leaders—for example, former Politburo member and Beijing party secretary Chen Xitong in the Jiang era and former Politburo member and Shanghai party secretary Chen Liangyu in the Hu era—did not lead to large-scale replacements or arrests of their protégés. Even after the fall of Bo Xilai, a former Politburo member and Chongqing party secretary, Bo's principal partner in Chongqing, Mayor Huang Qishan, retained his leadership post and membership in the Central Committee. While the recent purges of senior leaders—Zhou Yongkang (former PSC member), Xu Caihou (former vice chairman of the Central Military Commission), Guo Boxiong (former vice chairman of the Central Military Commission), and Ling Jihua (former chief-of-staff for Hu Jintao)—have led to arrests of some of their associates on corruption charges, it is notable that most of their patrons and close friends have not been targeted. Political deals regarding the scale and scope of these purges seem to have been cut between a small number of very senior leaders from both coalitions before the Xi leadership moved to prosecute Zhou, Xu, Guo, and Ling.

China's current factional dynamics exhibit three main features. First, the two coalitions compete for power not only for their own sake but also because they represent different socioeconomic and geographic constituencies and therefore seek to advance contrasting policy agendas. In other words, each coalition maintains distinct constituencies and sources of support.

Second, the leaders of the two coalitions have alternated in occupying the top position in the leadership, as evidenced first in the transition from Jiang to Hu, and then in the succession from Hu to Xi. These two competing coalitions are almost equally powerful, partly because they are well represented in various national leadership bodies (although each group may not always have equal representation in each leadership body) and partly because their leadership skills, administrative experiences, and political credentials complement one another. The rotation of power provides both the opportunity for new policy initiatives and the means to rectify the shortcomings of a previous administration led by the other coalition. The principle of equal power distribution should not be interpreted in a narrow or rigid sense. It instead entails a future-oriented sense of "factional rotation." For example, the dominance of the Jiang-Xi camp in the PSC formed at the 18th Party Congress (the elitist coalition maintains a six-to-one majority rule) is balanced by the fact that the Hu-Li camp has remained well represented within the lower tiers of leadership, especially in the 376-member Central Committee (where *tuanpai* leaders hold a record-breaking 99 seats) (Li 2016, p. 291). It is particularly worth noting that as of 2016, in each and every one of the nine most

important leadership organs in the PRC—the PSC, PRC presidency (that is, the president and vice-president), State Council, Central Military Commission, CCP Secretariat, National People's Congress, Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Supreme People's Court, and Supreme People's Procuratorate—the two highest-ranking leaders belong to opposite coalitions (Li 2016, p. 22).

And third, while the two coalitions compete with each other on certain issues, they are willing to, and sometimes must, cooperate on others. From an individual perspective, cross-coalition personal friendships and other sorts of close connections do exist, just as they do in the US political system, wherein politicians from the Republican and Democratic parties can be very good friends. From time to time, political strategizing and personal deal-making occur across coalitions. From a collective perspective, both camps share fundamental goals: maintaining China's political and social stability, promoting continued economic growth, enhancing China's status as a major international player, and, most importantly, ensuring the survival of CCP rule. This explains why, in recent years, both coalitions have been willing to accept serious "casualties"—the purging of heavyweight leaders including Bo Xilai, Zhou Yongkang, Xu Caihou, and Guo Boxiong of the elitist coalition and Ling Jihua of the populist coalition. For the CCP establishment as a whole, these leaders and their outrageous scandals must be dealt with but the factions themselves are too strong to be dismantled.

Granted, this Chinese style of bipartisanship is not a fully institutionalized system of checks and balances like the one that operates between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the US government. This informal and still largely experimental Chinese mechanism of "one party, two coalitions" provides only limited political choices for the CCP establishment, not to mention the Chinese public. Although factional politics in present-day China is not entirely opaque, the decision-making process lacks meaningful public transparency.

Yet, this "one party, two coalitions" mechanism has proven quite effective over the past two decades. For one thing, this mechanism is closely linked to the growing demand for regional representation in the country's governance. Provincial and municipal governments in the coastal and inland regions are essentially political interest groups that exert strong influence over Beijing, promoting the adoption of socioeconomic policies that advance development in their regions (White et al. 2013). In terms of elite formation, two patterns are particularly important. First, since the 15th Central Committee formed in 1997, each provincial level administration has held two full membership seats on the Committee (usually occupied by the provincial party secretary and the relevant governor or mayor). Provincial chiefs may later be promoted to the

central government or transferred to other provinces or cities, but when the Central Committee is initially selected, seats are allocated according to this norm (Li 2013). Leaders from wealthy coastal provinces—namely, those the elitist coalition—may still dominate the Politburo, especially the powerful PSC, but representatives from inland provinces hold a majority in the Central Committee. The even distribution of full-membership seats in the Central Committee at least ostensibly enables different regions and constituencies to benefit from collective leadership. Local leaders may differ greatly from one another in diagnosing problems and prioritizing policies. They are naturally inclined to form political coalitions in the national leadership, either to avoid steps that would alter the institutional and personnel apparatus or to adopt new mechanisms and structures that advance their interests.

Second, over the past three decades, provincial leadership posts have become the most important stepping stones to national leadership positions. Top leaders, including Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping, all served as provincial or municipal party secretaries before being appointed to the PSC. This should not come as a surprise, as the provinces and municipalities that these leaders governed are large socioeconomic entities themselves. It is often said that a province is to China what a country is to Europe. More than three-quarters of the current Politburo members (19 out of 25 members) have previously served as provincial chiefs (Li 2016, pp. 112–113). The previous Politburo, formed in 2007, had exactly the same percentage of leaders with experience as provincial chiefs. A majority (52 percent) of current Politburo members were serving as party secretaries in provincial administrations when they obtained their seats on the 18th Central Committee in 2012, which is a much higher rate than the corresponding 22.7 percent of the 14th Politburo, 20.8 percent of the 15th Politburo, and 40 percent of both the 16th and 17th Politburos (Li 2016, p. 115).

Not only did a large number of Politburo members have previous leadership experience as provincial chiefs, they also concurrently serve as party secretaries in major cities and important provinces. In what appears to be a new political norm, the party secretaries of the four major cities under the direct leadership of the central government—Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Chongqing—routinely hold seats in the current Politburo. Table 20.1 shows that in the past three decades, provincial and municipal leaders have consistently occupied about one-quarter of the seats in the Politburo.

One of the most important tactics the central leadership employs to control the localities is the use of promotions as an incentive. This ensures that provincial chiefs remain loyal to Beijing instead of developing close allegiances to the provinces and cities in which they serve. But it is understandable that as

Table 20.1 Representation of provincial chiefs in the Politburo (1987–2012)

Politburo	No. of provincial leaders/total no. (%)	Provincial-level cities				Other provinces				
		Beijing	Shanghai	Tianjin	Chongqing (Sichuan)	Shandong	Guangdong	Henan	Xinjiang	Hubei
13th (1987)	4/17 (24)	X	X	X	X					
14th (1992)	5/20 (25)	X	X	X		X	X			
15th (1997)	5/22 (23)	X	X			X	X	X		
16th (2002)	6/24 (25)	X	X	X			X		X	X
17th (2007)	6/25 (24)	X	X	X	X		X		X	
18th (2012)	6/25 (24)	X	X	X	X		X		X	

Source: Author's database

a way to better advance or protect their regional and local interests, leaders from various regions aim to place individuals from their same region in the senior leadership, especially on the Politburo and the PSC. Meanwhile, top national leaders are inclined to build political capital and take advantage of their close ties with important regions in the country. Deng Xiaoping's strong ties with Sichuan, Jiang Zemin's Shanghai power base, and Xi Jinping's Shaanxi connections are all good examples. The significance of having served as a provincial party secretary, especially in a major province or city, when competing for top national leadership positions further enhances the political weight of local power in present-day China. The dynamics of central-local relations is itself an important political and institutional mechanism that affects the composition of the CCP national leadership.

Final Thoughts

The CCP's bipartisan factional politics seems to constitute a modest system of checks and balances, helping keep the party leadership resilient by adapting to changing circumstances, all while maintaining a delicate balance between integration and differentiation. The CCP's institutional developments in elite recruitment and representation are not aimed at reducing factional tensions between the princelings, the Shanghai Gang, and the *tuanpai*. Rather, they make factional politics all the more dynamic as politicians try to comply with new rules and norms. As evident in the dramatic events that occurred before the last Party Congress, political campaigning and lobbying has already begun in various forms. Political dramas and scandals such as the fall of Chen Liangyu in the Hu era, the Bo Xilai incident on the eve of the 18th Party Congress, and the purge of Ling Jihua in the Xi era are all related to the power ambitions of heavyweight politicians across the various factions.

Some analysts argue that Xi's rapid consolidation of power since becoming the top party leader in the fall of 2012 reflects the Chinese public's desire for a stronger and more effective leadership, especially against the backdrop of the "inaction" or factional deadlock of the previous administrations. Others believe that due to the deficiencies of collective leadership and the fragmentation of interest group politics, China is now, in accordance with Xi's personality and political ambition, returning to the era of strongman politics or perhaps even to a dictator with monopolized power.

The choice, of course, is not just between an effective dictator and an ineffective collective leadership. One should not mistake a strong and effective leader for a dictator. Despite their limitations, the CCP's institutional norms

and regulations, including the "one party, two coalitions" experiment, may gradually overcome the system's deficiencies and refine rather than reverse collective leadership.

Despite the Jiang-Xi camp's widely perceived landslide victory at the 18th Party Congress and Xi's six-to-one majority rule in the PSC, *tuanpai* officials in fact hold record-breaking representation (99 seats) in the 376-member Central Committee, and most of those officials serve as provincial leaders—the most important pool from which the top national leadership is drawn. The *tuanpai* faction is also well represented among the younger generations of officials, namely those born after 1965 and 1975 (Luo 2015). One could argue that from Xi Jinping's perspective, it is neither feasible nor desirable to abandon the notion of collective leadership and demolish the *tuanpai* faction or the Hu-Li camp.

The incentives for both competition and cooperation among elite groups in the leadership—and especially the tough political choices facing President Xi—are likely to make the leadership assemble at the next Party Congress in 2017 remarkably interesting and revealing. Both the domestic and international communities will focus closely on the composition of the leadership—especially the PSC, reaffirming the critical importance of elite studies.

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21

Political Elites in the West

John Higley

The presence or absence of stable political institutions is one of the major differences among political systems that can be explained on the basis of differences in political elite behavior. Stable political institutions are marked by the absence of irregular seizures of executive power or obvious military influence in policy-making through threats of military intervention. Yet, it is unusual for political power to be institutionalized effectively, as has been the case for many generations in Great Britain, the United States, Sweden, Switzerland, and what used to be called Britain's self-governing dominions, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Every four years since 1789, a president has taken office in the United States on the basis of a competitive election and has served out a term, unless dying in office or having to resign, as the more or less effective head of the American political system. In Britain over an even longer time span, prime ministers and cabinets have regularly succeeded each other as the chief political authority in accordance with principles and rules that, in spite of being informal, are well known. Much the same observation applies to Sweden and Switzerland since the first half of the nineteenth century and to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand since independence late in the century.

The personalized manipulation of political institutions through individual and direct control of military and police forces was much more common

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historically in the West. Typically, there was a distinct political elite faction that effectively commanded organized coercive forces and was willing to arbitrate political decisions, no matter what existing institutions prescribed. It was of little consequence analytically whether this faction centered on a traditional monarch, a civilian coalition tied closely to professional military commanders, or an overt military junta. What was consequential is that political elite factions, no matter what their partisan inclinations were, saw power as personalized and directly dependent on the support of organized coercive forces. Factions critical of existing social organization necessarily viewed political change in terms of removing or altering the faction that effectively commanded those forces. Fearing power plays, factions distrusted each other, and attempts to seize executive power by force were seen by all as plausible, even probable, eventualities.

These were the basic aspects of *disunited political elites* during the West's modern history. For long periods, as in Portugal, Spain, and their former colonies in Latin America during the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, governance oscillated between "democratic" and "dictatorial" poles. The oscillations were transitory and circumstantial manifestations of fundamental political instability, which persisted so long as elite persons and factions believed that no matter what its current complexion was, a hold on power was subject to sharp and sudden changes. Politics approximated a fight to the death among mutually antagonistic factions struggling to defend or advance their partisan interests with little regard for propriety or cost. Occasionally, a set of political institutions was maintained more or less accidentally for a generation or two, usually in monarchical or dictatorial but sometimes in republican or "democratic" forms. In such cases, however, there was little reason for elite factions to count on this maintenance.

Consensually United Political Elites

Of supreme interest in the West's modern history were the relatively few countries in which political instability did not obtain. As noted, a handful of countries displayed patterns of institutionalized authority and procedures that were respected and perpetuated over long periods. In them, irregular seizures of executive power by force were unknown, and informed observers considered such seizures highly unlikely. This deviant historical pattern is explicable *only* in terms of elite behavior. Specifically, political instability was abrogated *only* where a *consensually united political elite* came into existence.

It is worth making the view of politics that underlies this contention explicit. Agreement or consensus about major political decisions directly affecting the distribution of valued things is never deeply or widely shared in a large population. When such issues rise to clear public consciousness, the tendency is toward civil strife. From the standpoint of political stability, the problem in politics is always how to act authoritatively so that those who are active in the struggle for valued things are not driven into open hostility and those who are inactive are not mobilized into a posture of hostile engagement. In other words, political stability in any large population is *never* the result of all or even most social actors cooperating voluntarily, peacefully, and with adequate information. It is *always* the artificial product of shrewd decisions made by those who are seriously influential, by political elites. In its essence, this shrewdness consists of suppressing, distorting, or otherwise manipulating issues that, if expressed and acted upon openly and widely, would result in disastrous conflict.

Shrewdness in making decisions that affect large categories of people requires that elites trust each other not to expose each other's stratagems. It involves a broad but still concerted cooperation among numerous groups of influential persons and effective decision-makers. This rests on a basic, if mostly tacit, consensus about the desirability of a politically stable system and the goals toward which it is ostensibly moving. It entails, in short, a political elite that is "consensually united" in a fundamental sense.

It is impossible to find any single sequence of political development in the West that led to the formation of consensually united political elites and stable political systems in a few countries but not in all others. Western political systems varied greatly during the past 400 or 500 years, and the variations were shaped by contingent circumstances in each country. The kind of political elite that each country had at any given time depended mainly on how elite persons and groups chose to organize their basic relations. Although elites could not do whatever they wished in the increasingly complex societies of the West, they usually had enough autonomy and enough choices open to them to make political outcomes highly contingent and not subject to much influence by mass populations.

I have analyzed the variable process of Western political development elsewhere (Higley 2016), and space does not permit rehearsing my analysis here. Nor is it possible to discuss political elites and political systems in the 28 European Union (EU) countries, plus the 2 North American and 2 Australasian countries, which, along with Norway, Switzerland, and Iceland (not formal EU members), comprise the contemporary West as I conceive it. Instead,

I concentrate on main political elite patterns and changes in the West since World War II and on ominous challenges they now confront.

Political Elite Patterns and Changes Since World War II

As a consequence of how World War II ended in Europe, Germany was split into two parts to accommodate Soviet and Allied occupation forces. After a period during which the Allies culled and tutored its leading personnel and after descendants of pre-war socialism jettisoned Marxist and pacifist doctrines in the late 1950s, the West German political elite became consensually united. The "grand coalition" of previously antagonistic conservative and socialist factions, which formed in 1966, was the most concrete manifestation of the political elite's substantial consensus and unity.

Austria also emerged from the aftermath of World War II with a consensually united political elite. Consensual unity may have dated from 1955, the year when postwar military occupation ended. Before 1955, however, there had been considerable fear that the intense elite conflict and political disorder of the last republican period in the 1920s and early 1930s might recur. Almost immediately after the war, elites of the two main political parties, plus the farming, business, and trade union elites tied to them, agreed to stave off a recurrence of interwar conflicts by forming a governing coalition based on the understanding that all controversial issues would be settled in private consultations among the most central elite persons and groups, instead of being agitated before the voters in elections. Eventually, in 1965, one of the main party elites chose to withdraw from the governing coalition, and a smooth transition to competitive two-party politics took place without arousing old antagonisms.

Already partially united Norwegian and Danish elites became more fully consensually united during the years following World War II. During the 1930s, elite factions leading or associated with socialist parties in both countries had found themselves under strong electoral pressures to moderate their egalitarian doctrines and programs and tamp down their unremitting bids for power. The common privations and resistance of political elite members during German Nazi occupation in World War II soon brought full consensual unifications. Previously disaffected socialist elite factions governed in restrained and non-doctrinaire ways for two or more decades after the war,

eventually giving way to similarly restrained governing coalitions of "bourgeois" parties.

Belgian political elite factions achieved substantial consensus and unity during the early 1960s. This was facilitated by a sudden inflammation of the country's linguistic and cultural divisions, provoked by the recrudescence of Flemish nationalism during the late 1950s. In the months after Belgium lost control of its Congo colony in 1960, socialist elite factions and their followers began a typical agitation to protest against the working class having to bear the costs of decolonization. But the agitation was rapidly overshadowed by demonstrations and protests in both Flemish and Walloon areas over Flemish demands for cultural equality. The linguistic-cultural conflict largely supplanted previous class divisions and forced factions in the leading parties to form separate Flemish and Walloon wings and concentrate on containing the cultural-linguistic conflict. The result was a coming together of previously antagonistic factions committed to peacefully managing a steadily more decentralized federal political system.

Political elites in Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal likewise moved toward consensual unity during the decades that followed World War II. In Italy, the postwar emergence of a reliably conservative electoral majority and the increasing doctrinal moderation of the major left-wing party elites—Communists and Socialists—indicated this movement. Collaboration between the principal left- and right-wing elite camps to defend themselves and the existing political order by repressing radical-egalitarian "terrorists"—principally the *Brigade Rossi*—during the late 1970s signified a historically unprecedented elite unity in Italy.

Likewise in France, the intense elite divisions of 1958, in which Charles de Gaulle returned to power from self-imposed exile, manifested the French political elite's historical disunity and the political system's basic instability. However, electoral dominance by Gaullist and other center-right factions after 1962, and the seemingly permanent minority electoral status of radical leftist factions, principally the Communist Party elite, contributed to increasing consensus and unity. By the latter part of the 1970s, conservative electoral dominance had forced leftist elite factions to moderate their traditionally radical positions considerably in order to compete seriously for government power. This was evident in the Communist Party elite's "Euro-Communist" doctrines and the startling electoral strength of a much less doctrinaire Socialist Party elite. The latter's sweeping victory in 1981 elections, its allocation of several executive posts to members of the Communist elite, and its generally cautious and placatory government policies indicated that the political elite as a whole was for the first time in French history consensually united.

In Spain, an attempted coup in 1981 involving a dissident military unit's capture of parliament while it was in session might have indicated a disunited elite. But in fact, the dramatic event followed a protracted settlement of basic disputes and abating mutual distrust between elites associated with the *Franquist* regime and those subjugated by the regime but resurgent after Franco's death in 1975. King Juan Carlos appointed a former *Franquist* minister, Adolpho Suarez, as prime minister, and in that position, Suarez displayed much political courage and dexterity. Between 1976 and 1978, Suarez persuaded the Franco-created parliament to dissolve itself; superintended the election of a constituent assembly and released hundreds of political prisoners; legalized the Communist Party after persuading its leaders to abandon their opposition to the monarchy; effected reconciliations with disaffected regional elites; and engineered a set of elite agreements to reform *Franquist* political institutions, secularize the education system, and limit strike activity by trade unions affiliated with the Communist and Socialist parties. Thus, the attempted military coup in 1981 was not more than a faint echo of the elite disunity that afflicted Spain throughout its modern history. The coup drew no political support from civilian elites, and it fizzled when the King ordered all military units to remain in their barracks. Since the remarkable accommodation between elites in the late 1970s, factional competitions have been restrained, even amid the protracted financial crisis that largely crippled Spain economically after 2009.

Portugal transited to representative political institutions only in 1974. Whether elites remained disunited, as they had been throughout the country's modern history, was problematic for quite some time. Military overthrow of the Salazar dictatorship in 1974 was followed by considerable turbulence, in which radical-egalitarian forces were prominent, while the military elite secured for itself a constitutionally prescribed "supervisory" role. It was not until 1979 that a trend toward the electoral dominance of center-right elite factions began. The military elite's supervisory role was cautiously and incrementally eliminated during the 1980s. Constitutional reforms in 1989 deleted a clause that committed Portugal to socialist goals, provided for full parliamentary control of economic policy-making, and cleared the way for an accelerated privatization of state-owned enterprises. The reforms assured conservative elites about capitalist economic prospects and dissipated doubts about the political system's acceptability to all major factions. Portuguese politics have since displayed the routine cut and thrust of competitions between factions comprising a consensually united political elite even, as in Spain, amid a protracted and wrenching financial crisis.

Following the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, the process of replacing Soviet satellite regimes afforded political elites, some of whose members were holdovers from state socialism and others who had chafed under Soviet domination, opportunities to orchestrate transitions to representative democratic political systems. Transitions from state socialist to post-socialist regimes in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia late in 1989 were initiated, negotiated, and implemented through collaborations, more apparent in Poland and Hungary than Czechoslovakia, between old and new elite factions. "Roundtable" talks led to a rough consensus about parliamentary democracy, market economies based on private ownership, and joining the EU. In Czechoslovakia during 1992, fruitless negotiations between Czech and Slovak elite factions about the country's political future led to a "velvet divorce" that created sovereign Czech and Slovak republics at the start of 1993. In other former Soviet satellites, such as Bulgaria and Romania, elite survivors of the Soviet withdrawal continued to hold the upper hand for a decade or longer, but during the 2000s, a somewhat precarious cooperation among members of a new elite generation was achieved, although it remains uncertain if political elites in Bulgaria and Romania are consensually united in any full sense.

In the Balkans, the Yugoslav state socialist regime imploded violently when elites in its constituent republics declared independence and oversaw a substantial ethnic cleansing of their populations. Initially, only the political elite in Slovenia engaged in sufficient collaboration and restraint to indicate a consensually united configuration. During the 2000s, political elite factions in Croatia displayed similar tendencies, and these had at least some echoes between elite factions in Serbia. It is important to bear in mind that the consensual unity, or at least increasing consensus and unity, of political elites in all of the Eastern European countries, including even the three Baltic countries, has been propelled in no small degree by the requirements and strictures of EU membership. If these external EU constraints weaken or are ignored, consensual unity and political stability in Eastern Europe will be in danger.

Political Elite Discourse Since World War II

Western politics from the seventeenth century until World War II constituted an "age of ideology." First liberalism, then democracy, and finally socialism constituted intellectual frameworks in which political elites and their supporters assessed and discussed various sweeping choices that underlying

processes of social change appeared to present. Toward the end of the nine-teenth century, the ideology of democracy was incorporated, in varying degrees, into both liberalism and socialism so that between about 1880 and World War II, ideological debate centered mainly on the choices that the several strands of liberalism and socialism ostensibly offered. Especially during that 60-year period, public argument among political elites was fairly carefully constructed in terms of those complex, sophisticated, and subtle doctrines. Their effect was to give elite thinking a markedly instrumental character. Prevailingly, political elite discourse addressed a question: How do we proceed so that A will bring about B and C, and to what extent will B and C bring about the kind of social and political behavior that we prefer?

The circumstances of Western societies after World War II upset that intellectual posture. The strong postwar impression of a pacific social and political condition extinguished elite thinking and discourse in the detailed instrumental terms that liberalism and socialism had previously encouraged. This is not to say, however, that elite persons and factions ceased being liberals or socialists or, as with British and Scandinavian labor movement leaders, some combination of the two. On the contrary, elite members continued to hold the ideal goals and values of liberalism, socialism, or "democratic socialism." They continued to assume that more personal liberty or more social equality were desirable goals. Similarly, elites remained committed to extending the institutions and processes of representative government (increasingly termed "liberal democracy") so that citizens would be more satisfactorily represented. Factions continued to differ over how much of private capitalism should survive and how much of public ownership should be adopted, although their difference tended to center on administrative convenience and organizational detail. In so far as liberalism, socialism, and democratic socialism encapsulated values and goals, there clearly was no "end of ideology" during the post-World War II period. Political elite adherence to familiar values and goals persisted, but serious discussion of instrumental doctrines prescribing how to attain them largely ceased. In the absence of obvious social conflicts and discontents, there was neither motivation nor a clear focus for instrumental thinking along ideological lines.

This was why the initial encounter of Western societies with post-industrial conditions occurred under the leadership of political elites whose public utterances implied a markedly "utopian" outlook. It was not, of course, the kind of utopianism associated with revolutionary or millenarian movements that visualizes an impossibly ideal situation. Rather, it consisted of the sorts of optimistic, but also somewhat complacent, expectations that are sometimes held by successful and well-placed persons who see no need for far-reaching

change. During the 1950s and 1960s, many political, economic, and intellectual leaders apparently believed that their societies possessed enough material resources, technological know-how, and organizational skills to solve all, or at least most, major problems. Moreover, they appeared to believe that solving such problems could be accomplished at little cost to people like themselves who were well-situated organizationally, politically, and socially.

The highly optimistic outlook encouraged persons in influential positions to act with a dangerous naïveté. Under its sway, policies were adopted that proved unrealistic and ineffective for an assured continuation of economic productivity and political tranquility. The policies contributed to a set of increasingly difficult economic and social problems. When problems began to surface during the late 1970s, important parts of Western electorates sensed that political elites did not know how to make good on optimistic and imprudent policies they had adopted.

In retrospect, it is not surprising that when disillusionment with the direction in which Western societies were actually moving set in during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the disillusioned and the discontented, who were mainly young people, began to reassert established values and goals in exceptionally crude but vigorous ways. The instrumental doctrines associated with those values and goals had simply not been transmitted to them. Although the older generation of political elite and educated persons had never abandoned the ideals with which they had grown up, they no longer held them with any urgency or in any programmatic form. From the perspective of the older elite generation, utopia had very nearly arrived. I now want to examine how illusory this elite perspective proved to be.

The Problem of Anemic Economic Growth

The "Golden Age" of robust post-World War II economic growth ended in the mid-1970s when most Western economies returned to the modest average rates of annual growth in per capita output that had obtained between 1700 and World War II. Compiling and analyzing a mountain of historical data for Western economies, Thomas Piketty has shown that during those two-and-a-half centuries, Western Europe's average annual rate of per capita growth was somewhat below 1.5 percent. During recovery from World War II, however, its average annual growth rate briefly surpassed 4.0 percent before slowing to little more than 2.0 percent during the 1970s and 1980s and to the historically normal 1.5 percent after 1990. Piketty has also shown that during most of US history, average annual growth in per capita output was somewhat greater than

in Western Europe. The US growth rate peaked and held steady at nearly 2.5 percent between 1960 and 1980, but between 1980 and 2013, it slowed toward the historically normal Western European rate of 1.5 percent (Piketty 2014, p. 97).

Exacerbated by petroleum-exporting countries' attacks on Western economies during the 1970s, "stagflation" (low growth, high inflation) took hold in most of the West after 1974, and the world economy as a whole slid into recession. Popular faith in the ability of governments to solve spreading social problems through redistributionist measures associated with the welfare state declined. This was a chief reason why political parties' bases of electoral support eroded steadily after the 1970s, and this made elite factions increasingly uncertain about where and how they could mobilize support for new policies. Major swings of political sentiment, which reflected concern and dismay among voters, tended to undermine what had previously been stable political alignments and relatively reliable electoral majorities.

Elite factions questioning the benefits of welfare state programs and committed to laissez-faire economic principles won government office in Britain and America at the start of the 1980s. During the next three decades, those factions either held office or formed oppositions strong enough to insist that governments adhere at least broadly to laissez-faire principles. The belief in these principles spread to politically ascendant factions in other Western countries, notably Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Sweden. A brief information technology "revolution" during the late 1990s, along with the Eurozone's creation and its initial spur to cross-border investment and bank lending from richer to poorer European economies during the early 2000s, created expectations of a return to robust growth rates. Once the IT and initial Eurozone spurs to growth attenuated, growth rates in most Western economies were again anemic in spite of reduced taxation, huge deficit spending by governments, unprecedentedly low interest rates, and gigantic bubbles in de-regulated housing and bond markets (Blinder 2013; Best and Higley 2014).

The laissez-faire prescription for robust economic growth thus had little overall success. Moreover, because the profound financial crisis that occurred in 2008–2009 and the protracted economic recession that followed it stemmed quite directly from deliberate government actions and inactions when pursuing laissez-faire nostrums, the prescription lost much of its plausibility. Some prominent economists now suspect that "secular stagnation," involving insufficient consumer demand and insufficient supply of labor owing to population aging, small further increases in women's labor market participation, few additional gains from already well-educated work forces, and

slow growth in productivity, is the "new normal" or the "end of normal" in Western economies (Summers 2014; Galbraith 2015; Gordon 2016).

Demands for More Democracy

Pursuing democracy as a solution for many problems in Western societies is harder to judge and even more difficult to discuss briefly. Democracy has deep ideological roots in the West, although as a term and concept, it did not figure greatly in popular discourse until after World War I when it amounted to a rationalization of representative political practices that political elites had instituted, gradually and piecemeal, during the preceding half-century (Higley 2016, pp. 1–15). The interwar period in Europe involved the downfalls of more than a dozen unstable, marginally "democratic" regimes that various factions in disunited elites had managed to install in the wake of World War I (Linz and Stepan 1978; Huntington 1990). It was only after elites in liberal Western countries hailed their victory in World War II as a "triumph of democracy" that the concept gained an utterly central place in the West's political discourse. Following that war and in a Cold War context, democracy was enshrined as the cardinal feature of Western countries comprising "the free world." The West's liberation of colonies during the postwar decades was seen as betokening democracy's global spread.

During the twentieth century's third-quarter, many affluent, educated, and semi-leisured Westerners embraced democracy as a solution to the ills they discerned at home and abroad. In all Western countries, women and various minority groups who suffered from discriminations moved to the foreground and demanded rectification of their circumstances through greater democracy. A profession of sturdy moral principles, regardless of circumstances, became prevalent, especially among university students.

In addition to the major student-led uprising in France in May 1968, serious disturbances brought about by bodies of angry students occurred in every Western country. University buildings were seized, administrative files were rifled, and radical political demands were shouted. From an exposure to student radicalism and mass media reporting of it during the 1960s and 1970s, one could hardly have concluded that in reality the interests of people frequently differ and that people, if they can, pursue their own interests as they see them. The lack of realism among student radicals and the influence they exerted on public consciousness left many actual issues and realistic possibilities unaddressed. Once the radicals and the many students influenced by them finished their university educations and moved into government and

academic positions and into many jobs in the media and entertainment industries, it was inevitable that young scholars, civil servants, media personalities, entertainers, writers, and rising political leaders would hold more extreme views of desirable social reforms than had generally been present before the 1960s.

These are reasons why democracy came to be pursued with unalloyed enthusiasm in Western countries during the twentieth century's final quarter. That "democracy" in the West had historically been for the most part a post-hoc rationalization of representative practices gradually adopted by political elites was ignored. That *stable* representative democratic regimes in the West, whatever their limitations historically, had depended first and foremost on political elite factions concluding that representative practices posed no lethal threat to their diverse and conflicting interests was a proposition too heinous to entertain.

Events during the present century's early years have generally run counter to democracy. Measures of democratic freedoms outside the West have registered fairly steady declines, while failed or failing states have increased in number. Overthrows of a tyrannical secular regime in Iraq and a theocratic regime in Afghanistan by the United States and other Western military forces ignited vicious insurgencies led by deposed elites, with Iraq's territorial disintegration and a return of theocratic rule to Afghanistan being probable. During 2003, the toppling of a despotic regime in Ukraine by mass protests ushered in a pervasively corrupt "democratic" government. After a second uprising drove that government from power in early 2014, Ukraine's permanent division along the civilization "fault line" traced by Huntington (1996, p. 17) between its western and eastern parts seems likely.

An "Arab Spring" in 2011, during which protests and uprisings by masses of people, many of them imbued with Western urgings to "choose democracy," unseated repressive military regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya and sparked an emulative revolt against an autocratic regime in Syria. Except in Tunisia, however, the mass uprisings, which had been greeted ecstatically by democracy enthusiasts in the West, had unsavory consequences: a military coup and a still more repressive regime in Egypt; descent into virtual anarchy in Libya; horrific civil warfare in Syria from which no democratic regime could possibly emerge; and the rise of a savage millenarian movement, the so-called Islamic State, vowing to recreate the Caliphate of early Islam and annihilate Westerners for their perceived iniquities. Prospects for the global spread of democracy, which were always much more imaginary than real, were dim (Kurlantzick 2013; Plattner 2014).

Conclusions

During the past 150 years, many qualities of life that thoughtful Westerners have tended to treat as ultimate goods have spread quite widely throughout Western countries: safety from interpersonal violence, wide educational opportunities, and a feeling that one's views and wishes are reflected in a representative political process through which public policies are determined. These refinements of life have afforded greater self-respect and dignity to larger proportions of Western populations than has ever been the case in another civilization. Whether the consensually united political elites that have contributed greatly to these refinements will persist during the twenty-first century is, however, an open question. To the extent that economic conditions and environmental threats may prove inimical to steady economic growth and expanding prosperity, there are grounds for doubt. Elites may manage to keep the lid on discontents and conflicts, but signs of fragmentation and polarization incompatible with consensual unity cannot be ignored. The disintegration of consensually united political elites in one or more Western countries as rising populist-nationalist elite factions successfully mobilize spreading mass discontents to take and retain government power through demagogy is, alas, a distinct possibility.

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Section IV

Differentiation and Integration of Elite Sectors

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Elite Sectors: Differentiation and Integration

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While elites are a universal feature of complex societies, structural and functional differentiation is a universal quality of elites (Putnam 1976). Both the complexity of societies and the differentiation of elites are linked intrinsically, because societal complexity requires and induces some degree of adaptation by elites to the special conditions and requirements of separate segments or sectors of societies.

The beginning of the process of social differentiation, which turns simple societies into complex ones, is marked by the emergence of elites or in other words, the formation of a stratum of power holders that overarches the "natural" hierarchies of authority in families and clans (Parsons 1964). These elites are, however, not identical with the collectivity of family and clan heads in a given territory. The reason is that from the beginning of their formation, elites undergo a process of structural and functional differentiation related to the process of increasing societal differentiation, although not mirroring the latter. The needs of organizing and exerting military and police power, of developing an efficient system for extracting resources that maintain and expand power structures, of legitimizing systems of domination, and of enforcing central power locally induce a division of labor and specialization within and between elite groups.

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This division of labor among elites is associated with requirements for distinctive qualifications, recruitment processes, and career paths to positions of power and influence that cannot be satisfied by a purely ascriptive access (Aron 1950). The emergence of structurally differentiated elites, side by side and eventually replacing aristocracies, has thus been associated with the increasing efficiency and resilience of power structures and systems, giving them an edge over structures and systems with less differentiated power holders. Yet, elite differentiation also leads to barriers in communication, jurisdictional conflicts, and rivalries for resources between elite groups, which can sometimes generate massive inter-elite conflicts and may even imperil the existence of a given elite system. The process of elite differentiation is, accordingly, linked to the process of elite integration, with both processes highlighting the systemic character of elite structures.

Driving forces of elite differentiation and integration are the willful and targeted actions of elites, not in the sense of a great elite conspiracy but as sequences of many individual actions by elite persons and groups when responding to challenges to their power bases. By such actions, however, elites can neither simply impose their will nor control outcomes in any full way. To slightly modify Karl Marx's famous axiom in his Eighteenth Brumaire essay ([1852] 2005 p. 1), elites, "make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances but under circumstances already given and transmitted from the past."

The most important transmitted givens for elite systems are elite-population and elite-elite differentials. Elite-elite differentials deserve special emphasis, because they involve the most powerful and resourceful actors in societies. Mass populations are normally unable to manifest themselves as collective actors unless elites or counter-elites activate and coordinate mass movements. Elite-elite differentials may result in conflicts between elite groups over material or between ideational interests and resources.

I suggest that the differential between economic and political elites is primordial and fundamental. It is primordial because it came into being with the emergence of organized political entities possessing territorial boundaries and engaging in long-distance trade during the late Neolithic and early Bronze Ages. Rulers and traders formed a precarious symbiosis in which traders supplied the necessary resources and goods for establishing and sustaining power structures, such as metals, weapons, and luxury goods, while rulers supported traders through securing safe conduct and providing for the bartering of goods. The symbiosis was precarious and conflict-ridden, because rulers could readily be tempted to expropriate the profits and goods of traders, while traders could similarly be tempted to use their resources to

acquire political power and even supplant rulers. Any full merger of political and economic power was impeded, however, by the fact that traders and rulers disposed of different power bases: rulers ruled because of their control over territories and populations, and traders flourished through their control of border-transcending networks and possession of mobile assets.

Such precarious power structures are difficult to sustain because the *modi operandi* of ruling and trading are not often in harmony: a strict enforcement of borders by rulers cuts territories off from trade links and necessary resources, and a relaxation or removal of borders in service to traders undermines the control of local rulers over "their" populations and resources. Extended empires, in which the scope of political rule and the extent of long-distance trade relations coincided, were exceptions to this rule. But even in such empires, the symbiosis between political and economic elites was precarious because traders and rulers squabbled over priorities of empire building and allocations of costs and profits. The symbiotic relationship between rulers and traders—between political and economic elites—is in these respects inherently precarious, because it is based on purely instrumental criteria for providing conditions for the private accumulation of capital and for acquiring resources for large public projects. The symbiosis is not a loving relationship—it is, rather, a marriage of convenience.

A symbiosis between political and economic elites was the basis of a co-evolution of modern capitalism and the modern state or, to use Max Weber's terminology, of rational capitalism and a rational state. In his *General Economic History*, Weber ([1924] 2003) outlined the institutional requirements for the development of a variant of capitalism that involves calculations of long-term risks.[1] Among these requirements are solid constitutional guarantees of property rights, efficient goods and financial markets, no taxation without representation, an efficient infrastructure, and standardized measurements and weights. In Weber's view, the modern state is rewarded for good governance by increased internal revenues and technological innovations, which in turn provide the basis for socio-economic progress and external power expansions.

The co-evolution of the modern state and modern capitalism gave both advantages: the modern state was advantaged in international rivalries and modern capitalism was advantaged in competitions with rival economic systems, especially communist or state socialist systems. The co-evolution of modern capitalism and the modern state has not, however, been a royal road to success for either elite sector, because it is riddled with dysfunctions and contradictions that disrupt the symbiosis (Rothkopf 2012). Each pursues its own logic of action, and this can have unfortunate consequences for the other. The international rivalries of political elites can impair the interests of

economic elites, as recent sanctions against Russia and Iran illustrate, while the maximization of profits by economic elites can undermine the stability of polities, as shown by the recent crisis of financial markets and the Euro-crisis that ensued.

The dynamics and logics of conflicting or consensual elite-elite interactions manifest themselves in, and are exemplified by, three broad elite configurations (Best and Higley 2014). The first—borrowed from Pareto ([1921]1984)—is plutocracy, in which fiscal and monetary policies result mainly from measures instigated by wealthy elites to serve their own interests. The premium is on protecting rather than creating wealth and on securing public acquiescence through the provision of government jobs and various social benefits. However, the disjunction between protecting wealth and mollifying publics leads to swelling government debt, which at some point becomes unsustainable. The financial crisis of the early twenty-first century can be seen as the culmination of this Paretian plutocratic cycle.

The second configuration, étatism, is in many important ways the mirror image of plutocracy. Instead of powerful business-financial elites shaping the direction in which profits and losses flow, political and state administrative elites orchestrate economic enterprises and extract inflated tax revenues that enhance state power and, in some cases, fill the pockets of state actors. Under étatism, economic elites become dependent on state patronage and protection and they tend to become part of a kleptocracy consuming public resources to enhance private wealth. Whereas in a plutocracy wealth is protected more than created, in étatism, state interests—or, to be more precise, the interests of those who are in control of the state and of those attached to them—are promoted at the expense of economic growth. Étatism takes two forms: "political capitalism," in which members of the political elite acquire profitable positions in state-controlled industries or members of the economic elite with a special relationship to political leaders are allowed to exploit state monopolies and "bureaucratic state control of the economy," in which inflated state budgets serve to pay off and tie large parts of the electorate to the governing faction of the political elite. Both forms of étatism lead to the misallocation of resources and/or to unsustainable debt.

In the third configuration, which can be labeled "elite segmentation," there is no symbiosis between the political and economic elites. Instead, there is a segmented differentiation of elite sectors into diversified and specialized units that are heterogeneous in social composition and relatively autonomous. According to Suzanne Keller (1963), diversified and specialized elites resemble "separate and contending islands," each with its own agenda and beholden to

its own clientele. As regards political and economic elites, both follow different and sometimes conflicting dynamics, particularly those of electoral versus economic markets.

Plutocracy, étatism, and elite segmentation are ideal types against which observable actions and patterns can be compared. The typical features of each type are more prevalent in some elite systems than in others, and it is this variation that can help shed light on why elites respond differently to crises and why they follow different paths of differentiation. It should also be noted that none of the three types is antithetical to democratic politics. In Joseph Schumpeter's (1942) well-known formulation, a "competitive struggle for the people's vote" may occur in all three types of elite configurations, although the struggle is circumscribed and orchestrated differently according to which configuration elites most approximate. Where plutocracy is fairly pronounced, business-financial elites bankroll competing political parties and set the parameters for "acceptable" policies and debates. Where étatism tends to prevail, democratic competition produces parliaments that primarily meet the priorities of state executives, administrative and specialized policy elites, and their economic clienteles. Where elites are preponderantly segmented, the multiplicity of interests they articulate often befuddle voters and inhibit clear electoral outcomes. All three elite configurations limit, but do not nullify, democratic politics or the flow of pressures from the electorate to political elites (see Chap. 23).

The primordial differentiation between political and economic elites also provides the basis for further elite differentiations within and for a more intimate interpenetration between elite sectors. Regarding political elites, pre-modern political systems had already established complex power structures with an internal differentiation of political roles and positions. To put it in Eisenstadt's words, a decisive criterion for identifying a political system as a state is, "the extent to which the several political activities and organizations in ··· societies can be discerned and differentiated" (Eisenstadt 1963, p. 6).

The need to extract and allocate resources for the preservation and expansion of (relatively) unified political systems led to the formation of state bureaucracies (Tilly 1975; Ertman 1997). Although bureaucrats were often recruited initially from the ranks of servants or even slaves in the households of rulers, they soon developed into a (partly) autonomous and self-oriented body that survived the downfalls of rulers, family dynasties, and sometimes even political regimes (see Chap. 13). As is the case today, the holders of top positions in bureaucracies formed sub-elites with an often limited loyalty to rulers and rulers' entourages. Bureaucracies—the "state apparatus"—tend to undergo differentiation into specialized branches of state administration and

power exertions, which in turn engender an even more compartmentalized elite structure with branch-specific recruitment regimes and career patterns of sub-elites. Although this process is in no way linear and has been subject to severe reversals, such as in the downfall of the western half of the Roman Empire, it has led to the formation of modern states that are characterized by differentiated power structures and elite systems. The shape and degree of differentiation varies, however, between different political regimes. Dictatorships, particularly "ideocracies," exhibit a lower degree of elite differentiation and the hegemony of a pivotal segment of the political elite (Best 2012). In contrast, modern democracies are characterized by a higher degree of differentiation that ideally follows the separation of powers into Montesquieu's "*trias politica*," namely the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, each with its own sub-elite.

Economic elites have also undergone a process of horizontal and vertical differentiation related to the broadening and deepening of the division of labor within and between economies. As already mentioned, this development was linked closely to the emergence of complex societies that provided the essential means of existence for modern or, in Max Weber's term, rational capitalism operating in a predictable legal system and a sound bureaucratic administration. In this way, modern capitalism co-evolved in interdependence with the modern state: there is no functioning economy without an at least halfway functioning polity, and a failed state leads routinely to a failed economy.

Chapters 23 to 27 in this section address some of the main outcomes and consequences of elite differentiation outlined in this introduction. They cover the functional, structural, and normative aspects of the formation of distinct elite sectors, including the emergence of sector-specific powers and responsibilities, norms and rules, recruitment practices, and career patterns. The overview of elite sectors is selective and aims at a representative account of the inherent logic and outcomes of the process of elite differentiation. As regards representative and executive elites, Chaps. 23 and 24 cover elite sectors that are part of Montesquieu's "*trias politica*" and exemplify the division of powers at the elite level. The judiciary is analyzed in Chap. 25, on authorities controlling legal and humanitarian norms at the European level, which also provides insights into the involvement of European political elites in supranational and multilevel institutions. Chap. 27 discusses media elites, a sectoral elite located at the border between economy and polity and one that is both a branch of business and a political force. The interpenetration of both sectors shapes the inherent logic of the media as a sub-system of the political system. Chap. 26 covers economic elites at large. Its focus is the extent to which economic elites form a global elite that has severed ties to national political systems.

The section concludes with Chap. 28 discussing elite integration. As outlined earlier, elite differentiation is linked intrinsically to elite integration. This is partially due to the fact that elites play an integrative role within and between sectors. Although the functioning of every social system, including elite systems, requires some degree of integration, rivalries and conflicts within and between sub-elites are inherent in all elite systems. The competition of elites for democratic votes has, for example, been introduced as a defining characteristic of representative democracies and the modus operandi of representative elites. This final chapter, therefore, emphasizes the predicament between elite differentiation and elite integration.

Note

1. Weber's *Economic History* inspired the propositions of neo-institutionalist economic history, namely, those of the economic historian Douglas North and the sociologist Randall Collins. The co-evolution of the modern state and modern capitalism is a core element of modernization theories and their derivatives, including Francis Fukuyama's "end of history" prognosis (1992). That prognosis raises the question of why the breakdown of communist regimes in Eastern Europe has not led to the predicted end of history and why we are still waiting for the final victory of liberal democracy. In his later writings, Fukuyama (2014) has assigned responsibility for these developments—or lack thereof—to the behaviors and failures of political elites.

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23

Representative Elites

Heinrich Best and Lars Vogel

If one applies the widely accepted definition of elites as "persons who are able, by the virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations and movements, to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially" (Higley and Burton 2006, p. 7), there can be little doubt that elected members of parliament in representative democracies are part of the political elite. Even when they act in relative obscurity as backbenchers and submit themselves to the rigid voting discipline of a parliamentary party, they have an important role in shaping fundamental policy decisions, in filling top positions of the polity (e.g., as members of electoral bodies, as a pool for recruitment into high political offices or by granting or withdrawing support for governments) and by deciding about the institutional order of the polity. Their institutionally defined position within representative democracies qualifies them, therefore, as "parliamentary" or "representative" elites.

The epithet "parliamentary" refers to the institutional settings and the organizational environments in which members of legislative and constituent assemblies act and which define their mutual relations with other members of the political elite. The epithet "representative" refers to their link to the polity and to society at large. This special relationship is established by elections, which entrust them with their office and formally legitimize their status as members of the political elite. Being "parliamentary elites" designates members of legislative and constituent assemblies as members of a (large) social group

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that is bound together in relatively stable patterns of interaction and a feeling of unity (although the latter is not necessarily shared by all members of a parliament). As "representative elites," they are expected to function as the political representation of salient ideological and material interests present in their societies. Socially, they are a composite mixture drawn from different sectors and milieus of society. Politically, they are intended to represent the main currents and conflicts of interests in the polity.

These qualities and qualifications designate representative elites as the main integrating element within representative democracies and define parliaments as places for institutionally regulated debates over conflictual issues that lead to legitimate decisions valid for the whole polity and society. By providing a public platform for the display of dissent and consensus within the political elite, parliaments also fulfill an important function for vertical political communication and can thereby strengthen the links between elites and non-elites.

The role of parliament in integrating societies and polities horizontally and vertically collides, however, with the inherently conflictual nature of the political discourse and the competitive nature of relations between individual members and factions of representative elites. They are cooperating antagonists and have to balance these two contradictory elements of their public role continuously. If they fail to perform this balancing act, representative democracies may, at best, end up in disorder or, at worst, disintegrate and give way to a non-representative political regime, as seen in the fate of the Weimar Republic (Best 2010a).

Representative Elites as Competing and Cooperating Agents

Within broad limits of institutional variety, the tasks and relations of representative elites can be conceptualized as an interplay of three basic social configurations: the principal-agent relation of delegation and accountability; the competition between elites (and their contenders); and their (antagonistic) cooperation (Best and Vogel 2014). This focus on social settings does not ignore the impact of institutions but rather emphasizes the effect of elites' structural composition and internal relations on the functioning of these institutions (Best 2010b).

The principal-agent approach captures the core function of representative elites as agents and the basic dilemma of representative democracy resulting from the diverging interests of elites and their various principals. These principals usually comprise the entire population, regional constituencies, partisans and the party organization, all of which exert their influence in hierarchical and non-hierarchical networks of interrelated principal-agent relations.[1] In such relations, principals select and elect agents to act on their behalf and keep them accountable by maintaining the threat of de-(s)election (Strøm et al. 2006). The principal-agent relation is characterized by an asymmetric interdependency: principals rely on delegation because they are either not capable or not willing to conduct the delegated tasks on their own, whereas the agents' status depends upon evaluation by their principals. This interdependency is, however, asymmetric as the agents are usually better informed than their principals, better resourced and usually devote their professional lives to the accomplishment of the delegated tasks. Principal-agent relations inevitably involve diverging interests of principals and agents: while it is in the interest of the former to constrain the autonomy of their agents, the latter are keen to increase their autonomy. Accordingly, the principals can never be certain in whose interest their agent is acting. Institutional and organizational arrangements are, therefore, designed to counter the risks of such *agency loss. Ex ante* mechanisms, like extended screening procedures or formal and informal agreements, are intended to select agents who have been proven to be competent and trustworthy or who share the values, interests and convictions of their principals. *Ex post* mechanisms aim to target and monitor the actions of the agents, either by competing contenders, by external institutions or by a system of checks and balances between multiple agents (Lupia 2006).

The competition between representative elites and competing contenders takes place between parties and between individuals within parties (see Fig. 23.1). The relationship is two staged in electoral systems where voters cast their ballots primarily for parties, who are in turn the principals of the representative elites they delegate into parliament. This is still the case where voters cast their ballots for individuals, but parties dominate the nomination process and where the party affiliation of individual candidates is the main criterion upon which voters make their choice.

Representative democracies provide institutional frameworks that regulate delegation, accountability and competition, but these institutions are established and maintained only if they are based on a consensus of support among the otherwise competing elite groups. This consensus is the
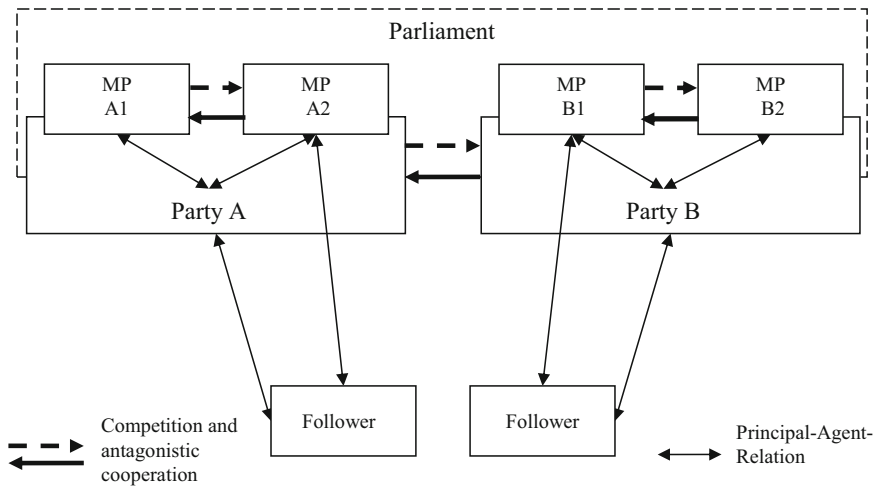
Fig. 23.1 Basic social configuration in which representative elites are embedded (Source: Vogel (2016))

prerequisite for *antagonistic cooperation*. This refers to the idea that competing elites are able and willing to cooperate if it allows them to pursue their individual or a common interest (Best 2010a). Because representative elites owe their elite positions to the underlying institutional framework of representative democracy, their support for it is likely. This also holds true for competing contenders, particularly if they have a realistic chance to get elected. Antagonistic cooperation among representative elites is, however, not confined to politics but may also extend to policies, something that is obvious in party coalitions. For their part, parties are often platforms for competing contenders who cooperate to increase their individual prospects of success in vote-, office-, and policy-seeking (Müller and Strøm 1999).

Taking into Account Principals' Preferences

Compared to other sectoral elites covered in this volume, *representative* elites have less leeway in taking the interests and opinions of their principals into account in their decision-making and general work, unless they are willing to put their elite status at risk. However, democratic theory and empirical research offer various versions about what "taking into account" actually means. The different versions establish a continuum between two poles ranging from complete control of representative elites by their principals

(populist or delegate models) to complete elite autonomy (elite or trustee models) (Körösényi 2010, p. 58).

Populist models assume principals' interests and preferences to be fixed and exogenous to any interaction within the principal-agent relation. These preferences are considered to be clearly structured and sufficiently defined to be presented by the principals as an obligatory mandate for the (potential) agents. Accordingly, principals select agents who appear to be the most trustworthy and competent in turning such a mandate into actual policies. In order to win or maintain their elite status, agents are responsive to the interests and preferences of the principals. This is either *ex ante* by implementing the mandate given to them in recent elections or *ex post* by anticipating changes in the preferences of voters, which will likely manifest themselves in upcoming elections (Stimson et al. 1995). Either way, the interests and preferences of principals are considered to be the sole determinants of elites' preferences and actions. Substantive representation, that is, the congruence of representative elites and their principals regarding policy preferences, is the likely outcome and the most significant normative benchmark for the democratic quality of representative elites.

These assumptions of the populist approach have, however, been criticized. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that issue congruence is only one determinant of the general population's voting behavior (Dalton 2014), which is why representative elites may deviate from their principals without encountering electoral defeat. Previous research has also questioned whether citizens possess the interest, knowledge, resources or time to formulate their interests in a way that could serve as a mandate for their agents (Miller and Stokes 1963; Converse 1974). While these assumptions have been reconsidered recently by recognizing that political interest and competence among the general population have increased (Dalton 2014), other constraints, particularly citizens' limited time for public activities, still apply. A particular problem is that, without interest aggregation, the principals' interests and preferences remain fragmented and often contradictory and cannot provide a clear mandate for representative elites, who in the end have to decide between policy alternatives. Moreover, as outlined in the "Ostrogorski Paradox" (Rae and Daudt 1976), the collective outcomes of elections are the aggregated results of individual decisions that are determined by varying causes and can thus not convey a coherent mandate.

Based on these observations, elite-centered approaches reverse the causality and treat principals' interests not as causes but as consequences of the political process, particularly as a result of the preferences and actions of the representative elites involved. Accordingly, elites are thought to enjoy a wide autonomy

vis-à-vis their principals. Some authors even conclude that elite opinions are independent of citizens' influence (see, e.g., Körösényi 2010) and, given the inequality in status and resources between elites and citizens, maintain that the influence goes in the opposite direction: citizens base their own political opinions on those offered by political elites and their competing contenders. Democratic influence of citizens is thus not secured by the *responsiveness* of elites to citizens' opinions but exclusively by the *accountability* of elites to their citizens. In this approach, the decisive criteria by which representative elites are judged and held responsible are *ex post* evaluations of their past performance or their individual traits, like charisma, competence and trustworthiness. To curtail elites' attempts to manipulate their *ex post* evaluations, approaches to democratic elitism have stressed the importance of competitive elites. Here, the expectation is that competing attempts to influence public opinion restrict the impact of each respective influence (Best and Higley 2010a, b).

However, both, populist and elite models, assume that the accountability of representative elites means they must overcome incongruences with citizens' interests and preferences either by adapting to or by transforming them. These two poles of elite heteronomy (exemplified by populist or delegate models) and elite autonomy (exemplified by elite or trustee models) constitute ideal types between which the empirically observable relations between representative elites and their principals are to be located.

The Individual Representation of Regional Interests and the Causal Flow Between Public Opinion and Public Policy

To determine the distinctiveness of representative elites compared to other sectors of political elites, the prevalent approach is to analyze how each type of representative elites takes the electorate into account and to identify the degree of congruence between representative elites and citizens regarding political perceptions, values and attitudes. Miller and Stokes (1963) introduced the congruence approach in their pioneering work on *individual constituency representation.* Adopting this approach, research on the United States has repeatedly confirmed that the degree of competition in regional constituencies between representative elites and their contenders does *not* usually increase issue congruence with their constituents (Brunell and Buchler 2009). This evidence contravenes the expectation that, because the likelihood of electoral defeat increases with intensified competition, the latter will be an

incentive for representative elites to implement the preferences of their constituents as policies (Fiorina 1973). This unexpected result was explained by the fact that marginal districts are characterized by the attitude heterogeneity of their constituents, which motivates representative elites to choose to be responsive to specific subgroups of the electorate, to manipulate the preferences of their constituents, or to refuse to take them into account at all (Gerber and Lewis 2004; Harden and Carsey 2012). Otherwise, secure districts show homogeneous attitude patterns and send clear cues about voters' preferences. These results show that, where their principals exhibit clear preferences, elites' autonomy is more constrained than in case of unclear or even contradictory preferences.

Whereas research into *individual constituency representation* asks if "taking into account" establishes a link between the preferences of the electorate and the attitudes and behavior of individual representative elites, the *public-opinion/ public-policy nexus* asks whether voters get the policy they demand or one that at least comes close to their preferences. These approaches contribute to the study of representative elites because they explicitly deal with whether public opinion is a cause or a consequence of public policy, thereby being an outcome of elite behavior.

Work on the *public-opinion/public-policy nexus* builds on extensive empirical evidence demonstrating the substantial degree of congruence between majority opinion and predominant policies in Western democracies (Shapiro 2011). Dynamic perspectives demonstrate that changes in public opinion are more often than not accompanied by subsequent policy changes. However, this chronological proximity may or may not be interpreted as a bottom-up influence of the electorate, because representative elites may initially attempt to change public opinion in order to generate political support for subsequent policy changes. This exogenous character of individual and public opinion and the role representative elites play in molding it is addressed in research on *opinion molding* (Druckman 2014). Here, it has been shown that if they are not personally affected, citizens rely on information shortcuts and evaluate the content of political messages on the basis of contextual information. Among other sources, these cues are provided by the personal traits of the messages' senders, including those of representative elites (Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Kuklinski and Hurley 1994). The more representative elites are considered as competent and trustworthy by their constituents, the more constituents agree with representative elites' basic ideological convictions and the more they tend to adapt to their positions on political matters independent of content. It has been shown that, in the absence of any need to transform them into political decisions, the political preferences of citizens are only loosely

structured and even tend to be contradictory (Converse 1974). Due to their pivotal role in agenda setting, that is, in shifting the saliency of issues, and in framing, that is, in defining the meaning of an issue, representative elites can influence the emphasis in addressing these contradictory preferences and consequently sway public opinion. On the other hand, representative elites are constrained in their opinion-molding capacity. When they promote contradicting political positions, their attempts at molding public opinion may cancel each other out, especially if voters consider the rivaling elite groups as equal regarding their competence or trustworthiness. If, however, competing positions are associated with party affiliations, they are not canceled out (Aaroe 2012). In polarized party systems, individual elites' influence is high on their partisans' preferences, whereas in case of elite consensus the impact is higher on the entire public (Zaller 1992).

Finally, elite attempts at shaping public opinion are constrained by the structure of public opinion itself. This interplay has been demonstrated for the United States (Wlezien and Soroka 2007) and for member states of the EU (Franklin and Wlezien 1997) in a "thermostatic model," showing that dramatic changes in policies can be followed by counter movements in public opinion. This is especially true for unpopular governments (Hakhverdian 2012). In such a setting, public opinion does not usually target concrete policy issues but is more appropriately described as "policy mood," that is, citizens diffuse opinions about the general tendency of policies, such as their preference for more or less state intervention (Stimson 1991). This vagueness is not likely to generate bottom-up policy proposals. In such a situation, representative elites have to lead by putting forward policy proposals until they lose public acquiescence and provoke opposition. The behavior of representative elites is, therefore, not so much determined by public opinion *ex ante* than constrained *ex post* by the public scrutiny of their policy proposals (Key 1961).

Parties as Mediating Actors

Principal-agent relations are also shaped by the structure of party systems and the strength of parties. According to *responsible-party models*, parties offer competing policy packages and voters choose between them basing their choice on the compatibility of these packages with their own interests and preferences (Thomassen and van Ham 2014). Parties implement policy packages depending on their strength in parliament and in government either by deciding governmental policy via majority control or by their proportional influence in coalitions (Huber and Powell 1994). *Responsible-party models* are

not conditional (Aldrich 1995) since parties and regional constituencies do not constitute competing principals between which representative elites can choose. Moreover, parties are the main principals of representative elites, whose accountability to the general population is mediated in a two-staged process in which parties are, in turn, agents of the citizens.

Accordingly, *responsible-party models* have largely neglected the role of individual elite members since the core requirements of these models are party cohesion and party conformity. Nevertheless, *responsible-party models* contribute to elite studies by their emphasis on the role of parties in efficient principal-agent relations. Parties and party systems emerge out of societal conflicts, and representative elites are core actors in carrying these conflicts into the political realm by giving conflicting societal groups symbolic significance and by providing a vehicle for them to express their grievances politically (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Best 2007a). In this way, emerging parties become agents of cleavage representation. In cleavage-based party systems, competition between parties is structured by their positions in the cleavage structure, by the saliency of existing or emerging cleavages, or by the assignment of particular policy issues to these cleavages. Empirical research has demonstrated that the congruence of partisans' and their parties' preferences increases the closer the preferences are linked to the conflicts underlying the party system (Luna and Zechmeister 2005; Powell 2004).

In contrast, de-alignment, which can be caused either by social change or by a deliberate party strategy, has the potential to reduce party-partisan congruence because it loosens ties between social groups and parties. De-alignment, therefore, encourages representative elites to seek political support outside of any clearly defined social basis. Catch-all parties are a vehicle for the strategy of de-alignment by making median voters the focus of their electoral campaigns, usually by putting less emphasis on distinct programs. Cartel parties go even further and cooperate to reduce competition between representative elites and thereby diminish the risk of electoral defeat (Katz and Mair 1995). Both types of parties display different forms of representative elites' autonomy. Representative elites in catch-all and cartel parties are less constrained than those in cleavage-based parties due to their distance to the policy preferences of specific social groups. Furthermore, representative elites in cartel parties are even less constrained by their party organizations than those in catch-all parties, since they form loose networks of individual actors united only by the common purpose of accessing state resources and safeguarding their mandates and offices. Accordingly, representative elites in these parties rely on direct support by a volatile electorate, which is to a lesser extent mediated by party organizations.

Traits and Backgrounds

Although, as mentioned before, differences between elites and citizens are inevitable, the extent may be affected by the structural traits of elites. In this respect, social background is considered to be of pivotal importance because the interests, values, cognitions and dispositions of citizens and elites alike are expected to be shaped by their social position and their affiliation to large social groups. Regarding representative elites, their social background can be considered as a cue for their affiliation(s) to social groups and as an asset or a disadvantage in their competition for office. Social background also provides information about representative elites' fitness for structural integration, because shared interests and preferences may facilitate antagonistic cooperation (see Chap. 31).

Research has also provided evidence for the "law of increasing disproportion" (Putnam 1976), whereby the share of recruits from disadvantaged segments of the population decreases with the increase in importance of the elite position occupied (Best 2007b, p. 88). For example, country studies have repeatedly demonstrated that the share of women (Sawer et al. 2006; Christmas-Best and Kjaer 2007) and ethnic minorities (Bird et al. 2011) among representative elites is smaller than among the general population, whereas holders of academic degrees and middle-age cohorts are overrepresented. Disparities favoring privileged occupational backgrounds are also common (Best 2007a; Best and Cotta 2000b; Semenova et al. 2014).

In European countries, the structural composition of representative elites has been shown to change in response to social and political developments (Cotta and Best 2007; Best and Cotta 2000b). For example, in the mid-nineteenth century, the formation of nation states was accompanied by an influx of "symbol specialists" (like university professors) and specialists in the application of executive power (like administrative civil servants) as representative elites. In periods of accelerated industrialization, the share of economic elites reached a high. By the turn of the twentieth century, during the transformation to party-based mass democracy, specialists in mass mobilization and the running of intermediary organizations, such as trade unions, entered the parliaments of most European countries. Following WWII, the public sector became the dominant occupational background among representative elites, a development grounded in the loyalty of public servants to the established political order and their competence in redistributive politics. These qualities qualified representatives from the public sector to face the imminent communist threat. The influx of public servants also

coincided with the emergence of cartel parties, which are based on arrangements between otherwise competing politicians to appropriate and share the resources of the state (Best 2007b).

To emphasize the impact of a shared social background for the functioning of the relationship between representative elites and their principals, Hannah F. Pitkin coined the term "descriptive representation" (1967, p. 61). While she considered it to be a secondary aspect of substantive representation, the concept of "mirror representation" presumes that if principals and agents have similar social backgrounds and share common interests, the latter will be more reliable agents. This concept has, however, been criticized because it presumes principals' and agents' preferences are determined by their social backgrounds and thus as fixed and endogenous (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996; Norris 1997). Contemporary approaches to descriptive representation, therefore, tend to avoid including preference congruence in their analyses, rather stressing the catalytic function of shared social backgrounds for efficient communication and symbolic representation. These approaches also assume that the trust of principals in the decisions of their agents is reinforced by a shared social background (Mansbridge 1999: 641ff; Gay 2002).

If similar social background decreases the likelihood of agency loss, the disproportional overrepresentation of social groups can result in incongruence between representative elites and the general population. Such disproportionality, however, only has adverse consequences for the principal-agent relation when social background matters for the formation of representative elites' political preferences. In this respect, gender has been a research object of pivotal importance: a gender gap in political preferences has been repeatedly confirmed for the general population (Inglehart and Norris 2000; Abendschon and Steinmetz 2014), and female underrepresentation in politics is still significant. Although the share of women among representative elites has increased over the past decades worldwide on average, not even in the most advanced regions has it exceeded the thirty percent mark (see Fig. 23.2). A share around this threshold has been considered to be critical for making a difference in the behavior of female representatives and subsequently for changing the way institutions work (Childs and Krook 2008). Although the concept of "critical mass" has been criticized for its assumption of a threshold effect (Studlar and McAllister 2002), it points to the idea that the share of women matters for the representation of female interests, thereby linking descriptive and substantive representation.

Research has also revealed differences in policy preferences between male and female legislators, with the latter giving issues concerning women, family and children, health and education higher priority (Thomas 1994). Female
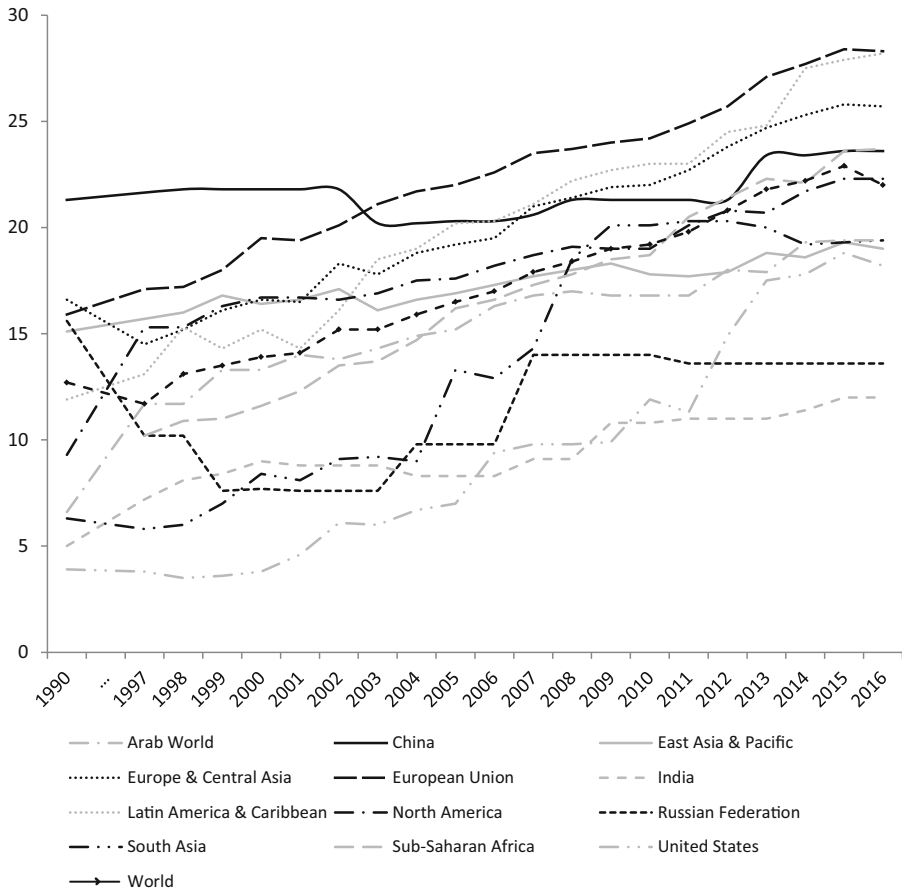
Fig. 23.2 Share of elected women in national parliaments (percentage; 1990, 1997–2016) (Interparliamentary Union. The regional aggregation is provided by the World Bank http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS)

representative elites also place themselves more to the left on a left-right scale and more toward liberalism on the green-alternative-liberal versus traditional-authoritarian-national dimension (Lovenduski and Norris 2003; Heidar and Pedersen 2006; Best and Vogel 2012; Poggione 2004; Devlin and Elgie 2008). They also tend to perceive the representation of women's interest as part of their political role-orientation (Dodson 2006).

Gender differences among representative elites are particularly evident where issues affecting women rather than men are concerned. Simply identifying these differences is, however, not sufficient to indicate whether or not female representative elites see women as a significant subgroup of their principals that needs particular attention. Party affiliation, for instance,

needs to be considered as a mediating factor. Gender differences regarding policy preferences may be due to the unequal male-female ratio within parties, with women typically being overrepresented in left parties. In fact, party affiliation mediates what female representative elites define and support as women's interests. Other studies have demonstrated that when voters are split along gender lines on policy issues, female representatives are more in congruence with female voters than their male colleagues (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996; Campbell et al. 2010; Wangnerud 2000; Reingold 2000). In general, studies of social background confirm that representative elites demonstrate links to their voters by referring to shared social traits. In this way, similarity of social background provides an indirect mechanism for bringing the preferences of social groups to the attention of parliament.

In view of these findings, it is paradoxical that recruitment into parliament tends to produce a large differential in social composition between electorates and the general population. Typically, recruitment is performed through a sequence of positions which elite aspirants occupy before they enter parliament. This process is inextricably linked to the particularity of representative elites because at each step in this sequence the competing candidates have to take the interests of their respective selectorates and electorates into account. Selectorates are those collective and/or individual actors, usually parties or party committees, who select contenders as candidates. Selections are complex choices that have to consider "the probable value of the contenders' resources for electoral success, their ideological fit with, their instrumental function for, and their loyalty to the selectorates" (Best and Cotta 2000a, p. 11). Electorates are collective actors who make the final choice between the candidates offered by the selectorates. Within this recruitment process, the traits offered by the contenders are repeatedly screened and judged by selectorates and electorates, each basing their choices on their specific demands (Norris 1997). Besides finding the candidates who are best qualified for the job, this protracted recruitment process also reduces moral hazards and the risk of agency loss in the relationship between representative elites and the principals involved. Ascribed social background traits, like gender, can serve as assets in the recruitment process by suggesting that the interests and preferences of related social groups are thereby represented. However, other assets, such as experience in party and public office and access to resources and related networks, are acquired and distance representative elites from their electorates (Best 2007b, p. 90). These acquired assets also advantage incumbent members of parliament against any contenders and may enhance their image as efficient organizers, as policy experts, as advocates of specific interests, as charismatic leaders or as reliable delegates. In conclusion, we can say that the final composition of representative elites is the outcome of advantageous and disadvantageous

factors working in the (self-)selective process preceding becoming a member of the representative elite (Best and Cotta 2000a, p. 12).

Attitudes and Dispositions

The recruitment and careers of representative elites are associated with the formation of dispositions that regulate elite behavior toward relevant collective actors in their environment. Recently, role theory has been reintroduced to capture this relationship (Rozenberg and Blomgren 2012). This assumes that roles systematically link positions occupied sequentially in the hierarchy of societal and political organizations with change in the perceptions and dispositions of their holders. This link is established by the interplay of role-expectations and role-orientations with the former constituting the "structurally given demands [. . .] associated with a given social position" (Levinson 1959, p. 172) and the latter being chosen by the holders of this position when they "select, create and synthesize certain forms of adaptation rather than others" (Ibid. 175). Role-expectations toward representative elites are primarily articulated by other elite members and by their principals.

The vast majority of research on the impact of the recruitment process on representative elites' role-orientations deals with *institutional socialization*. This shows that when representative elites first enter parliament, they tend to focus on internal matters and their relation to other elite members, while simultaneously reducing their concern about external expectations. This change is partly a consequence of specialization, which implies that representative elites tend to prioritize issues that are closest to their field of specialization. It also results from the demands of reciprocity and compromise in the cooperation between elite members, which distances them from the interests and expectations of voters and ordinary party members (Fenno 1962; Asher 1973; Mughan et al. 1997; Searing 1986). Institutional socialization, however, is dependent on context. For example, the developments mentioned earlier have not been seen in some legislative institutions, such as the European parliament (Franklin and Scarrow 1999; Scully 2005) or state legislatures in the United States (Bell and Price 1975). There are also indications that the effect of institutional socialization on role-orientations is relatively small compared to the effect of the preceding recruitment process (Asher 1973, p. 284; Bell and Price 1975). Best and Vogel (2012) have demonstrated that, in Germany, institutional socialization is accomplished in a sequence of positions occupied *within* and *outside* parliament. The movement between these positions is associated with a shift in role-orientations away from particularistic foci of

representation toward the universalistic claim to represent the entire country. By identifying themselves as representatives of the whole country, members of parliament can elude the contradictory demands of their various principals.

A number of studies have demonstrated that representative elites' role-orientations and political attitudes differ from those of the electorate at large. In particular, when compared to the general population, representative elites are more favorable toward democracy, more tolerant of minorities, more appreciative of parties and their competition and less supportive of the practices of participatory democracy. These differences become more pronounced when specific questions concerning role-orientations and the behaviors of representative elites as main actors of democracy are at stake (Peffley and Rohrschneider 2007; McClosky and Brill 1983; Pettersson 2010).

Many studies in this area center on differences in the focus and style of representation thereby following the work of Eulau et al. (1959). These differences have been shown to vary at the international level. For example, von Schoultz and Wass (2016) demonstrated strong congruence between elites' role-orientations and populations' role-expectations for Finland, whereas low levels of congruence have been found for Spain (Méndez-Lago and Martínez 2002) and Sweden (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996). In the Netherlands, Andeweg and Thomassen (2005) found clear majorities among the population and representative elites favoring mandates given *ex ante* in elections while both favor *ex post* evaluation to a lesser extent. Another recent study on Germany (Vogel 2016) has shown that representative elites prefer a narrow scope of state responsibilities with professional politicians being closely attached to parties and exerting strong political leadership. In contrast, the general population tends to support a wide range of state interventions with politicians expected to be primarily responsive to their constituents, less connected to political parties and to participate in politics on a non-permanent career basis.

Political Professionalization and Legislative Turnover

Recruitment into elite positions strengthens elite autonomy because it entails an element of political professionalization. Professionalization is defined *individually* as a process by which applicants become members of an occupational

group and *structurally* as the establishment of the same group by a combination of social mechanisms and rules, formal and informal, defining the criteria of belongingness to the in-group and its collective identity (Borchert and Zeiss 2003; Best 2007b). The resulting "insider-outsider differential" contravenes the ideal of democratic equality since (almost) every citizen is *de jure* eligible for office in democracies, whereas professionalization produces an elite-population gap with regard to social background and turns incumbent representative elites into a closed group. Political professionalization is driven, among other factors, by the intention of elites to maintain their status and to reduce the likelihood of de-selection by curbing the potentially adverse outcome of external and internal competition for offices, in particular between and within parties. The social closure of a professionalized representative elite transforms the risk of de-election by an unpredictable electorate into predictable risks of de-selection according to the internal criteria applied by caucuses and party organizations. Representative elites' interest in safeguarding their status forms those who are professional politicians and who live not only for but also off politics (Weber 1958 [1919]) into a "political class" (Mosca 1939). In this way, since professionalization increases the probability of incumbents remaining in office and reduces the risk of de-selection, it buttresses representative elites' autonomy from the electorate.

Strategies of professionalization differ according to social, political and historical context. In contexts with highly volatile electorates, seeking elective positions in local or regional government and councils and cumulating them sequentially or simultaneously can help to secure the careers of representative elites (Navarro and François 2013). In contexts with lower electoral volatility and where the national parliament is the core institution for representative elites, parties are the most important vehicle for securing elite status. Here, *legislative turnover,* which is usually measured by the number of newcomers in parliament after the latest election (François and Grossman 2015), becomes a valid indicator of political professionalization. Low turnover indicates a static composition of representative elites and their autonomy and attenuates their accountability and openness for emerging interests and preferences. In contrast, high turnover rates indicate an unstable composition of representative elites, which weakens their position toward administrative and other elites, impairs the accumulation of collective knowledge and skills (Miquel and Snyder 2006) and complicates the formation of a consensually united representative elite capable of antagonistic cooperation (Higley and Burton 2006).

Classical theory, namely Vilfredo Pareto's work (see Section I), has considered elite circulation—the replacement of established elites by counter-elites—as an inescapable historical law. Alternatively, recent studies have identified an

"appropriate" turnover rate as a means for stabilizing an elite structure. Here, "appropriate" is a rate that provides stability of the group of representative elites while simultaneously providing a limited influx of individual members with new ideas and from different social quarters. A moderate level of renewal should thereby help to take selectorates' and electorates' interests into account.

In terms of actual turnover rates, these have been relatively low in Western Europe until around 1989 (Best 2007b), since when they have increased, while turnover in the new democracies of post-communist Eastern Europe has been higher from their beginning (Semenova et al. 2014). An increased pace of elite circulation has been related to an emerging "legitimacy challenge" manifesting itself in reduced acceptance of elite autonomy among the population (Best 2007b; Norris 1999). Increased turnover can either be externally imposed through a more volatile electoral behavior increasing the risk of incumbents losing their office or it can also be an internal response to the legitimacy challenge with representative elites attempting to prevent the emergence of protest- and anti-system parties by intensifying their competition. In general, growing rates of legislative turnover lead to further hierarchical differentiation within representative elites between those with episodic careers and those who endure because they are in better control of selectorates and electorates.

Conclusion

Representative elites are latecomers in the process of sectoral differentiation within the political elite. Their emergence is tied to the spread of mass politics in the second half of the nineteenth century, which furthered the gradual replacement of representation through dignitaries, amateur politicians and proxies of the upper classes by representation through professional career politicians who specialized in operating the levers of electoral democracy. This process gained momentum in the beginning of the twentieth century and was closely linked to the extension of participatory rights toward universal suffrage and eligibility, the emergence of mass parties and the granting of parliamentary pay. The last of these freed members of parliaments from having to live off their private means or off relying on the support of sponsors while carrying out their offices. This was an important step toward full professionalization and to acquiring autonomous elite status. The seminal writings of the fathers of the elite paradigm, namely Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels, and Max Weber, were inspired by and reflected on these processes, which transformed members of parliaments into representative elites. Being at

once the creators and the creations of representative democracies' institutional orders, representative elites became the chief operators of modern mass democracy.

This chapter has also shown that representatives' elite status is precarious—arguably more precarious than that of other sectors of political elites—and that they are at the center of highly complex principal-agent relations which extend their influence and power but simultaneously entail multiple dependencies and limit their scope of action. On the one hand, these checks and balances are, together with the demands resulting from antagonistic cooperation between factions within representative elites, prerequisites for keeping representative democracy stable and responsive. On the other hand, inherent conflicts and disjunctions disrupt principal-agent relations and impair antagonistic elite cooperation. They also contribute to what has been identified as the looming legitimacy challenge to representative democracy (Best 2007b).

Note

1. Some authors consider the principal-agent approach as inappropriate for an analysis of representative democracy because they doubt its purpose beyond formalizing already-existing descriptions of representative elites and their behavior. It has been argued further that the reduction to two types of actors is an overreduction of complexity (Gilardi 2001). Finally, the assumption of fixed preferences of the population as the main principal has been seen as inappropriate given its exogenous character.

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24

Executive Elites

Luca Verzichelli

Executive Elites: Definitions and Concepts

There is a tendency to equate the concept of an executive elite to that of the political elite at large. Indeed, the concepts developed by classical elite theorists (see Section I of this handbook) and studies centered on links between elite characteristics and types of political regime (see Section III) have tended to focus on the elite segment comprising members of government (a proxy definition for executive elite) as a fundamental unit of analysis. Moreover, in the public discourse, there has been a tendency for the concept of a political elite to relate to the few dozen power-holders who have an effective and formal role in running main political institutions. This relatively narrow group of individuals is a distinct entity and, as such, an essential subject of study. Here, however, is the rub: it is difficult to identify and define the exact set of formal political positions that constitute an executive elite. This is compounded by the same designated offices varying in salience from one context to another and across time and by definitions of an executive elite being vague and by changes in it over time.

In pre-behavioral political science, the notion of political power formed the basis of a distinction between those deemed to be the most influential leaders and those in the secondary ranks of power (Lasswell 1936). However, in the

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late 1950s, literature on executive office holders began to emerge that stressed trends of convergence in the process of political elite formation across Western democracies. Some American political scientists, who played a major role in the study of this subject, increasingly associated the exploration of origins and careers of executive office holders with the subject of a power elite, which had to some extent obviated previous debates about pluralism and elitism. The studies by Fenno of US cabinet members (1959) and Schlesinger of governors and federal representatives (1966) were among the first examples of this renewed attention, which aimed at a comprehensive understanding of the different forms of political leadership in modern polities (Edinger 1964). This made it possible for US scholars to embark on extensive comparative studies of executive elites. The results of their efforts were documented in volumes by Edinger (1967) on Western democracies, Dekmejian (1975) on Middle-East countries and Putnam (1976) on selected democratic and non-democratic systems.

Notwithstanding the undoubted advancements of studies in the behavioral tradition, two problems remained unsolved in the definition of an executive elite. First was the question of the size of the core elite and the second concerned the relationship between political appointees and other executive office holders present in a political system. The problem of size, which had already been raised in the seminal works by Gaetano Mosca, could itself be split into two opposed approaches, one focusing on the apex of institutional power and the second on studying governmental personnel in general. Both can be risky: the first narrows the subject to emphasizing the role of "political leaders," while the second tends to confuse political and administrative responsibilities. For this reason, studies of executive elites soon focused on the question of the scale of power allocated to governmental position holders, with recent research applying empirical measurements to the "salience" of each ministerial position (Druckmann and Warwick 2005).

The second problem, which has traditionally faced elite scholars, mainly focuses on whether or not the concept of an executive elite should include top civil servants, advisors and other non-political actors somehow involved in the processes of decision-making.

Although a large and to some extent incongruous body of literature has emerged over the past several decades in an attempt to find satisfactory solutions to the aforementioned problems, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to enter into a comprehensive exploration of these matters. For this reason, and given the division of labor among the different sections of this handbook, this chapter limits its scope to three fundamental dimensions: the empirical study of ministerial personnel as an elite group; questions relating to

the notion of executive elites in the context of coalition and government formation; and relationships among individual actors (politicians and administrative personnel) involved in executive institutions.

Ministerial Personnel as an Elite Group

As already mentioned, the use of the behavioral paradigm by social scientists to explore the processes of selection and circulation of leading figures in executive institutions was certainly not new. Indeed, this approach had already been used by the classical authors and by the first generation of North American political scientists earlier in the twentieth century. However, the first systematic analyses of profiles of leading ministerial personnel appeared only later, when the increasing complexity of modern politics encouraged scholars to shift their attention from ministerial power to an empirical observation of the activities of ministers. This interest also inspired the important pioneering studies of top executive leaders in the USA mentioned earlier (Fenno 1959; Schlesinger 1966) and corresponding studies in the UK (King 1969; Headey 1974).

By the mid-1970s, the amount of data collected on the selection and circulation of top political elites was already considerable (for a review, see Putnam 1976), but its collection was neither systematic nor driven by a truly comparative framework. The importance of a comprehensive observation of the political experiences and competencies of individuals recruited to core executives was pioneered by the work of one scholar who probably embodied a commitment to the study of political elites more than any other: Mattei Dogan. During the long period he spent as Chairman of the Research Committee on Political Elites of the International Political Science Association, Dogan repeatedly called for a truly comparative approach to the systematic study of core ministerial elites in all kinds of regimes and across all types of political systems in order to fully understand the nature of government formation (Dogan 1981, 4). Dogan also expected a better understanding of the factors determining different patterns of elite composition to emerge as well as a more solid basis for comprehending elite behaviors and attitudes. His efforts soon resulted in important comparative research (Dogan 1981, 1989).

In his extensive research on governments around the world, Jean Blondel (1980, 1985) also emphasized the need for global comparisons of top executive elites. Introducing his seminal book, *Government ministers in the contemporary world*, Blondel asserted that the growing relevance of the top personnel

involved in the life of executive institutions was due to the fact that ministers ". . . are more and more visible, glamorous, and important" (1985, 3). However, even if institutional roles and the degree of political autonomy of ministers were less significant, the development of a number of specialized public policy domains and the resulting emergence of "big government" (Rose 1984) justified an increased awareness of the role executive elites play in shaping the distribution of power and the outcomes of decision-making. The basic questions posed by Blondel, which are still paradigmatic for this field of inquiry, primarily concern:

1. The prerequisites and conditions for the selection of ministers: what kinds of backgrounds characterize aspirants to a ministerial career in different political regimes? What are the typical social and political experiences displayed by individuals entering a ministerial career?
2. The personal and professional qualities and qualifications of members of the executive (ministerial) elite, and the ties between each member and different positions within the executive. Here, the main question relates to the degree of specialization (or "technicity") vis-à-vis the generalist nature of many traditional "party representatives."
3. The different patterns of and backgrounds for tenure and turnover in ministerial careers. This topic is part of the established research agenda in political science today, and it resembles the classical arguments and discussions about elite circulation (see the Chap. 36, on Elite Circulation and Stability in this volume).

The comprehensive empirical evidence presented in Blondel's book (1985) raised theoretical and normative questions referring to the performance and legitimacy of political regimes. For instance, it highlighted differences between the long duration of ministerial careers in non-democratic regimes and the high turnover in democratic ones, with especially short terms in parliamentary democracies. Significant differences were also shown between types of democracies: prime ministerial democracies had, for instance, a larger share of amateur ministers, who tend to serve for short periods without accumulating different ministerial jobs. Conversely, fragmented coalition governments dominated by party machines showed the strong presence of long-standing specialist ministers or even party representatives, whose basic characteristics resemble some of the qualities of the ministerial personnel observed in some non-democratic regimes—for instance, communist regimes in Eastern Europe when Blondel did his studies.

The Evolution of the "Sociology of Ministerial Elites": Recent Findings

Overall, despite changes in approach, little significant change can be seen in the research questions guiding empirical analyses on executive elites over the past four decades. However, intensive and more sophisticated projects on a limited number of countries have clarified some aspects that the previous comparative works had neglected. One important example is the distinction in terms of power, qualities, and career patterns, between ordinary ministers and core ministers. This distinction became particularly relevant for the study of democratic elites after an important branch of the literature stressed the role of core ministers in the conduct of policy making, as well as in the guidance of public administration (Rhodes and Dunleavy 1995). Over time, this developed into a specific category of empirical studies not associated with the notion of elites but with that of leadership. A good example is the book by Ludger Helms dedicated to three relevant examples of executive leadership (the US President, the British Prime Minister, and the German Chancellor) combining organizational analyses of executive institutions with some aspects of the elite approach, and applies it to the circle of politicians and advisors around the leader in question (2005).

Returning to the question of cabinet ministers as a group, one should remember that it was Jean Blondel who assembled a net of scholars with the intent of redefining the framework of studies on the "profession of minister," at least in the Western democratic context. He inspired the publication of a volume (Blondel and Thiebault 1991) which became a reference book for elite studies. A number of findings presented in this widely quoted work are still of relevance today. These include the differentiation of political career patterns according to institutional and country-specific factors (Bakema 1991) and constraints to the autonomy of top executives stemming from constitutional rules and the complexity of coalition governance (Mueller and Phillipp 1991). Of particular relevance for this discussion was the high rate of diversity in the selection of ministers, such as the frequent choice of outsiders—ministers with no parliamentary and leading party background—in some Nordic democracies and in semi-presidential systems, which contrasts with the prevalence of insiders—ministers with strong parliamentary-party backgrounds—in Italy, Denmark and Belgium and other "party government" systems (De Winter 1991).

The Blondel/Thiebault volume and the extensive data set on which it was based expanded the study of ministerial selection across many countries.

A consequential step, therefore, was the widening of the comparative framework, at least in the European context, to include cases of "interrupted democracies" from Southern Europe and a longitudinal analysis of the characteristics of ministers (Bermeo et al. 2003). Similarly, after the turn of the century, institutional and biographical data have been gathered consistently covering at least fifteen years of democratic governance in a large number of post-communist countries from Central-Eastern Europe (Mueller-Rommel et al. 2004; Blondel et al. 2007).

More recent studies of executive elites have focused on the nature of ministerial appointments. These studies stress the relationships between the phenomena of ministerial selection/de-selection and different sets of explanatory factors, like institutional and constitutional constraints, political and partisan factors and strategic and individual issues. The wide scope of research emanating from this approach has resulted in two important volumes (Dowding and Dumont 2009, 2015) and a growing number of contributions—case studies and comparative projects—inspired by several research questions developed on similar data on governmental appointments.[1] For instance, significant results have been recently published related to factors influencing ministerial careers (Bright et al. 2015) and on the increasing role of technocratic ministers (Costa Pinto et al. 2017).

Executive Elites in the Context of Coalition and Government Formation

While behavioristic scholars were rediscovering the "sociology of elites," a new paradigm, often referred to as "rational choice," pervaded American academia. Starting in the 1960s, this new approach generated a series of studies that addressed the formation of governments based on relations resulting from the utility considerations of actors who compete for the maximization of their own gains.

From this point of view, the strong linkage between modes of political selection and the possible "payoffs" at stake is evident. In democratic polities, the office of cabinet minister is an important payoff available to individual politicians but also to important collective actors like political parties, which have their own preferences and can act, given certain conditions, as unitary actors during the phase of government formation (Verzichelli 2008). Although rational choice theory had a particular influence on American political science, the most striking applications of this idea were probably those concerning the

typical situation of coalition governments characterizing most of the European parliamentary democracies. Indeed, it was an extensive study on European democracies that provided a strong confirmation of the prediction, originally derived by Gamson (1961), of the so-called parity norm in the allocation of cabinet positions, whereby it is proportional to the shares of parliamentary seats within a given coalition (Browne and Franklin 1973).

Later studies have refined the hypothesis based on the parity norm, adjusting for *inter alia* some slight underrepresentation of the party of the chief executive due to portfolio salience (Druckman and Warwick 2005). During the 1990s, another variant of coalition theory introduced the idea of the relevance of parties as policy-seeking actors (Budge and Keman 1990; Laver and Shepsle 1990, 1996). Although without disputing the basic idea of the party as a unitary actor, able to impose its preference on elite members competing for a ministerial position, this idea represented a new approach in the study of government formation. This was primarily because the shares of portfolio to be allocated to each single player, that is, party, were seen as the result of a bargaining capability of a series of actors that had to be represented in the cabinet. This concept also takes into consideration the need for the actors to respond to their own constituencies through the formulation and implementation of a specific set of policy decisions. A work by Keman (1991) confirmed that all the relevant European party families would tend to receive, once in government, a policy responsibility corresponding to their typical party priorities. The oft-quoted volume by Laver and Shepsle (1996) framed the game of government formation in an even more comprehensive way. Depending on a number of conditions, including the variable policy-seeking nature of different party families, the extent of political polarization and the presence of institutional constraints, ministers can be appointed following significantly different patterns. These include the creation of very different ministerial roles, whereby the "constrained optimizer" will tend to support a specific party priority and the "global maximizer" will seek a general equilibrium in the policy expectations of their own party.

A third generation of coalition studies has then increased the scope of the interpretation of the process of government formation, thus overcoming the vexing question concerning the parity norm. Within these studies, we have to include those that link the central issues of electoral competition to portfolio allocation (Bäck et al. 2011) and which require a number of coalition actors to appoint "watchdog junior ministers" in departments controlled by coalition partners (Verzichelli 2008; Thies 2001). This cluster of studies had implications for the study of ministerial elites as fundamental payoffs: in line with the previously discussed policy-viable coalition theory, the main argument at the

core of these studies is that the greater the size and complexity of a coalitional context, the less likely will there be mutual trust among the players and, therefore, the more likely the demand for adjustments to the "normal" portfolio allocation (Lipsmeyer and Pierce 2011; Carroll and Cox 2012). Among these adjustments, a negotiated and relatively "non-proportional" allocation of ministerial posts needs to be mentioned. The multiplication of ministerial "spoils" (with a clear implication for the overall size of the political elite) and/or the possibility of balancing some asymmetries in the representation of some coalition actors in terms of other political and institutional payoffs also need to be taken into account.

Relationships Within the Executive Elite

A second string of studies on executive elites addressed ministerial bodies "at work," an area of research stimulated initially by behaviorism. The work of Dahl (1963) and that of Almond and Powell (1966) are early examples of an institutional approach that connects the structure and the power of executive authorities to the competences and skills of the "policy makers" who staff them. In the late 1960s, a new wave of comparative studies emerged that focused on the functional analysis of the work of the ministerial elite in a context of coalition governance (Browne and Drejimanis 1982; Bogdanor 1983). A few years later, one of the most eminent scholars in the field of executive institutions in Europe produced an in-depth analysis of the British Government that studied ministers from a "public policy perspective" (Rose 1987).

A later study by Blondel and Mueller-Rommel (1993) focused on the specific dimension of the organization of government using a variety of data—quantitative data on inter-departmental conflicts and qualitative interviews—to study the limits of joint policy-making activity both in single-party governments and in coalition governments. The findings confirmed the difficulties of coalition governments, especially in a context of fragmented and polarized party systems, but also highlighted the positive effects of intra-governmental procedures in limiting inter-departmental policy conflicts.

Another group of comparative studies on intra-governmental relationships focuses on the length of ministerial mandates, showing the different factors affecting government stability and the capability of each minister to survive within the ministerial elite. Huber and Martinez-Gallardo (2008) have demonstrated that ministerial stability is independent of cabinet stability. A thorough work on the links between elite characteristics and patterns of ministerial survival in the UK (Berlinski et al. 2007, 2012) confirmed the relevance

of social and political background variables in determining the varying patterns of ministerial survival. This finding is currently under extensive scrutiny in a comprehensive program of comparative analysis (Fischer et al. 2012; Dowding and Dumont 2015).

The analyses accumulated so far reveal significant regularities and causal associations. Looking at the overall scenario of political regimes, democratic polities manifest a greater inclination to the instability of ministerial elites. However, when focusing purely on democratic regimes of government, variations in tenure and instability are discernible between regime types. The system of government (essentially, parliamentary versus semi-presidential democracies versus presidential systems) is therefore an important variable but one that should be considered in a broader time frame. These differences point to the multitude of institutional constraints present in the world of parliamentary democracy (Dowding and Dumont 2009). For instance, the long established distinction between the roles of cabinet members and that of MPs still generates important consequences in the phase of selection and de-selection of ministers in Westminster-type parliamentary systems. Other institutional constraints, affecting the recruitment of ministers and tenure, result from a multitude of legal rules—for instance, the obligatory representation of women and ethnic or religious communities—or from the formal or informal interferences of actors, such as the head of state, the judiciary or the central bank, who are not directly involved in the delegation chain (Bergmann et al. 2003).

Many studies into comparative government have been recently inspired by the "principal-agent" paradigm. On the one hand, ministers fulfill complex roles as principals of their departments (see Chap. 23, on representative elites, this volume) and on the other hand, they act as "double agents," delegated both by heads of government and by their political parties (Andeweg 2000). This is particularly true in the case of coalition governments where heads of government are unable to choose ministers freely when they have a personal disagreement with the current post holder or where there is evidence of poor performance. Every action of the governmental principal is constrained by the party principal and vice versa. This has a number of consequences, as evidenced by the rich supply of empirical literature. For example, the extent of ministerial turnover is indeed lower in parliamentary democracies with a tradition of coalition governments (Huber and Martinez-Gallardo 2008). However, even when coalition government is not the rule, the relationship between heads of government and ministers remains very complicated and deeply affected by party-specific and contextual factors (Strøm 2000). This understanding has paved the way for in-depth analyses into the phase

of ministerial de-selection with particular emphasis on Europe (Dumont and Verzichelli 2015 for a wider review) and Latin America (Camerlo 2015; Slavelis and Baruch Galvan 2015).

The insights produced by case studies and regional comparisons help to refine hypotheses and to test propositions generated by principal-agent and partisan theories. For example, when a president is confronted with an opposing parliamentary majority, recent studies on semi-presidential systems, such as that of Bucur (2017), suggest that three forms of competing delegation and de-selection can occur, that is, originating from the president, the prime minister and the party leadership. The French case of "cohabitation" is a particularly telling example of the complex interactions between institutional and individual-related factors of ministerial instability (Indridason and Kam 2008). However, an exploration of the more straightforward practices of delegation, like those in Westminster-type democracies, also reveals highly complex patterns of relationships between the chief executives and their ministerial "agents." They also show a growing number of ministerial reshuffles due to personal scandals or in view of increasing media pressure (Berlinsky et al. 2012).

The Executive Elites at Large: The Relationships Between the Cabinet and the Government

If questions related to the sociology of ministerial elites and to the selection and de-selection of governmental personnel are connected to classical elite theory, the exploration of the links between representative and executive elites within the institutions of government evokes the seminal work of Max Weber and his ideal of a distinction between autonomous political professionals and politically neutral bodies of state servants. The actual processes of democratization in the course of the twentieth century revealed the limits to a nonpartisan rationality of public administrations and a strict distinction between representative and executive elites. As a consequence, a "bureaucratic government" was increasingly seen as an alternative to and not as a form of government in a representative democracy (Niskanen 1971). A systematic review of the discussion on the effective role of higher civil servants in contemporary democracies is beyond the limits of this chapter, but the implications of this extensive body of literature in the analysis of long-term transformation within the executive elite have to be considered.

After World War II, increasing attention was paid by political science to the emergence of top civil servants as an autonomous elite group. It is revealing

that the first comprehensive research in this area was executed by a dedicated pioneer of elite studies, Mattei Dogan. This resulted in a groundbreaking volume on top executive elites in Europe that put a special emphasis on the interpenetration between the spheres of party politics and public administration (Dogan 1975).

Other contemporary studies compared the development of administrative elites in Europe: J.A. Armstrong (1973) used four European cases (France, Germany, Russia, and the UK) as prototypes for taxonomy of modern bureaucratic elites. Research directed by R. Tilly (1975) on the development of European nation-states contributed to an understanding of the links between the formation of effective administrative systems and the performance of the modern democratic polities.

Although mainly concentrated on the explanation of the variations in the processes of formation and transformation of administrative systems, these classic works had already pointed to relevant aspects of the interrelation between the two "worlds" represented by top administrative elites and political leaderships. The *École nationale d'administration*-based recruitment of higher civil servants in France (Suleiman 1974) exemplifies a mechanism of centralization of an influential class of top executives who monopolize a particular set of skills and competences and control networks stretching into influential social groups. A more generalist, open and fragmented pattern of recruitment can be seen in Germany, while the British system based on the "Oxbridge" model of higher education assures a probably less heavy but more dynamic class of state servants.

A later study conducted by Aberbach et al. (1981) extended the comparative study of relations between executive and representative elites to the USA (alongside Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Netherland and Sweden). It also included a contextual analysis of comparative data, covering both attitudinal and positional information, on large samples of top civil servants. The shift from the traditional Weberian image of neutrality to a highly political role of the top administrative elite was extensively documented in this study, with the affirmation, in most of the "post-modern democracies," of a model which these scholars characterized as a "symbiosis" between bureaucrats and politicians. However, some of the cases under analysis, such as Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany, showed a more pronounced political involvement of bureaucrats than others. The evidence gathered on the characteristics of higher civil servants, and on the links between executive elites and political elites at large, facilitated the theoretical reassessment of the relationships between the spheres of politics and administration during the last decades of the twentieth

century. The work by Guy Peters (1987) providing five theoretical modes of interaction is particularly influential. According to Peters, the Weberian ideal type of the "administrative state," with a clear separation between bureaucratic government and party politics, is hardly identifiable in the real world. In reality, democratic polities appear as mixed models with different forms of interaction and interpenetration. Here, the "village life" model is governed by a positive and collaborative relation between bureaucracy and political elites, anchored in strong common values and ideological heritages. The "functional village life" model still provides an effective cooperation based on compromises and rational considerations. Finally, the "adversarial model" is built on a conflictual process of confrontation where each elite group appears unified in defending its respective prerogatives.

However, the profound transformation of the institutional order of states after the fiscal crises and the subsequent adaptation of welfare and administrative systems made the outcomes of these processes increase diversity among countries. As a consequence, a large part of the literature that appeared during the past three decades has been dedicated to administrative reforms in comparative perspective and to their effects on the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians. A key reference, in this regard, is the volume by Page and Wright (1999) which focuses on Europe. The profound transformation in the top-administrative elite, in terms of the "managerialization" of public service and the adaptation of values from the private sector (Page and Wright 2007), is explained by different variables, such as the higher degree of social mobility, the spread of different educational and professional standards among the higher civil servants and, last but not least, the pressure from exogenous factors like the process of supranational integration. However, the effects of path dependency are also visible, causing the slowing down of transformative processes and often leading to different paths of change as, for instance, in Southern Europe.

Further studies following the so-called New Public Management approach (Lane 2000) have found evidence for an effect on the performance of executive elites in different democracies. However, it should be noted that the discussion has recently shifted from country-specific case studies to the consequences of a long-term reforms. It would seem that the myth of a dichotomy between bureaucracy and politics has been overcome but that the mode of "complementarity," which is supposed to produce an optimal relationship between the two, still needs to be clarified. In particular, the process of managerialization of the civil service has not solved all the problems of accountability and effectiveness within public administration or those related to the quality of public service.

Furthermore, the system of executive elites keeps evolving, and the crisis of party democracy, especially in Europe, has accelerated this process. It has been shown that pressure from top administrators toward a redefinition of policy agendas increases in times of economic and political crisis. In in some cases, the same formation of top executives has transformed with the emergence of technocratic governments (McDonnel and Valbruzzi 2014) while in others, change was effected by opening its ranks to public sector managers and/or other external experts somehow connected to administrative elites. The discussion of the implications of this variant of democratic governance has only just started (Pastorella 2015), but the consequences for the structure of executive elites are already evident (Costa Pinto et al. 2017).

Open Questions

This chapter has shown that recent developments in the study of executive elites extend beyond three traditional research areas, namely, the sociology of ministerial elites, the comparative study of ministerial delegation within contemporary executive bodies, and the relationships between political and bureaucratic elites in democratic polities. The formation and practices of executive elites in non-democratic polities, in terms of their patterns of selection, duration of mandates, internal cohesion and internal relationships, are, however, still neglected subjects. We have also seen how the study of executive elites in democratic polities, which has produced a multitude of case studies and comparative research, has revealed a more complex and rather contradictory situation that reflects the changing patterns of ministerial selection, the increasing complexity of the work done by cabinet ministers, and a transformation of relationships among members of the executive. We have also introduced recent literature showing a profound transformation in relationships between administrative and political elites, which challenges the Weberian model of a dichotomy between administrative and political elites. How these elite sectors will interact in the future is, however, an open question.

Overall, executive elites face serious challenges, such as the problem of poor political decision makers, a low level of public trust in governmental institutions, and increasing political instability. These problems arguably mark the present period as one of the most unstable since the end of World War II. Changes, such as ephemerous party systems and social movements on the one hand and the growing complexity of governance on the other, which also

act as strong agents of change, make it necessary to search for new solutions regarding the structure and functioning of contemporary governments.

Some immediate consequences of these problems have been summarized in this chapter. For example, the increasing presence of external "technocrats" within and around the executive, a more differentiated system of skills and experiences replacing the traditional figure of the "insider politician," a growing complexity in the organization of the procedures for portfolio allocation and policy delegation (with a more pronounced imbalance that favors top executives), and finally, the increasing role of the media in highlighting consequences of low ministerial performance, especially by uncovering personal or financial scandals and other considerations that lead to cabinet reshuffles.

We have also seen that endogenous factors thought to explain these processes of change, such as changing perceptions about policy priorities, the reputations of individual policy makers, the existence of more or less fragmented institutions, and the degree of party system polarization seem to remain unchanged. Efforts to modernize public administrations, leading to new arrangements in the consolidation of executive elites, also appear to be constant.

Within the many exogenous agents of change, the effects of a number of horizontal and vertical "shifts" within the system of governance are evident. Concerning horizontal shifts, we have to include, above all, the redistribution of executive power within governments, such as the personalization and "presidentialization" of parliamentary democracy and the formation of strong core executives due to a growing professionalization of staff, and so on. Moreover, regarding the vertical differentiation of governance, we also see a modification in institutional structures that influence the perimeters and powers of executive elites. The processes of devolution to local government and the emergence of influential supranational actors, such as institutions of the European Union, are obvious examples of such changes, but all political regimes, especially democratic ones, are experiencing processes of transformation.

Note

1. The code-book and the summary of the project Selection and Deselection of Political Elites can be found at www.sedepe.org.

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25

Non-elected Political Elites in the EU

Niilo Kauppi and Mikael Rask Madsen

With globalization and Europeanization, profound changes have taken place in the composition and structure of elites. Once solidly tied to the nation state, elites have, following processes of differentiation and specialization, become more transnational than ever before. Their development has been conditioned by the evolving relationship between international, transnational and national powers. This has meant that new elites have shaped supranational institutions like the European Court of Justice (ECJ/CJEU), the European Commission (EC), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the World Bank to name a few. In the European context, key institutional players today include the EC, the European Ombudsman and the ECJ/CJEU as aspiring representatives of the general European interest and the Council of Ministers and member states as representing national interests in the EU. Their relationship and changing interfaces are crucial when assessing the development of non-elected political elites as well as more generally the rise of an institutionalized and integrated Europe (Cohen 2013; Cohen and

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Madsen 2007). Since the 1950s, a bifurcation has developed between, on the one hand, increasingly autonomous European and global-level policy networks revolving around European and global public policies (Slaughter 2003) and relatively weak general, national public spaces confined to the nation state and its decision-making structures. This contradiction has prompted some to call for a post-national democracy (Habermas 2015) and others to denounce the democratic deficit of the EU (Follesdal and Hix 2006; Kauppi 2005) as well as other international organizations (Nye 2001).

In this chapter, we focus on non-elected elites in the EU. We start with a brief presentation of some of the socio-political and legal conditions that enable in the EU the formation of non-elected political elites. We then discuss in more detail two key European institutions marked by non-elected elites, the ECJ and the institution of the European Ombudsman, respectively. We conclude by raising some additonal points about non-elected political elites and their resources in transnational society.

A Fertile Ground for Non-elected Political Elites

Many scholars consider the EU as the most complex political system in history. This is mostly due to the scalar levels involved in its activities. These include the local and regional levels, the national level of the member states, the supranational level of the Union itself, and finally in many domains the global level. The complexity has also to do with the fact that the Union, and the European integration process, is constantly evolving. The competencies of the EC, which represents and acts in the name of the Union, have evolved. They are very uneven, but the Commission can be described as being, to paraphrase Max Weber, an expansive political organization (Weber 1959). The key to understanding the political actions of both the EU and the member states is to see the relationship as being one of growing mutual dependency. Periods of rapid acceleration, like during the two Jacques Delors presidencies—1984–1989 and 1989–1994—have been followed by periods of disorientation and disarray, like the present period. The process itself has a direction, but nobody is in a place to impose a singular masterplan. Some, albeit a minority, would like to see a federalized European superstate, yet most are happy with the unusual hybrid that exists. In terms of historical models, the EU is a unique hybrid, a supranational bureaucracy that has political ambitions to represent European democracy. And in its surroundings, an ever larger group

of economists, lawyers and lobbyists are seeking to influence its direction and policies.

According to the literature what characterizes the actions of the European Union is technocratic politics, of European public policies without politics, of low politics in contrast to the high politics that involves major political leaders and decision-makers, that is, the traditional elected and executive political elites in member states. Explaining this preeminence of non-elected elites requires some brief history. When World War II ended, the Americans began a massive aid program called the Marshall Plan that aimed at rebuilding Europe. Institutions such as the future OECD were created for this purpose. On the basis of this American-led project, the Europeans started building European institutions to manage recovery. In 1953, the Americans pulled out because of the Korean War and the Europeans were left to their own devices. Political leaders, ranging from social democrats to Christian Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives, shared the same diagnosis: the culprit causing World War II was nationalism and the political extremism that went with it. Building supranational institutions was seen as the only way to avoid the mistakes that had ignited two world wars. Yet nationalism was still a powerful force limiting possibilities for establishing genuine supranational political institutions. The solution was to create non-political institutions that were not on the radar of politicians, the media and the public. This opened the door to a slew of technocratic elites that were not elected but nevertheless played important roles in subsequent developments.

In part to satisfy French imperial ambitions, French bureaucratic concepts and practices were transferred from the national level to the European level. *Commissaire*, *Haute autorité*, *Assemblée commune* and others were institutional concepts that described a new reality that was not reducible to national politics and concepts such as government and parliament. In this process, a key role was played by Jean Monnet, a French civil servant who had held important positions in the League of Nations and had been the head of the French *Commissariat général au plan*, the central planning agency for the French economy. His idea was that a small, elite administration would spearhead European integration. Integration would advance by the force of its own logic, incrementally by small steps and spillovers from one domain to another, and quasi-automatically as neofunctionalist theory soon predicted.

Today, however, the situation is different. As an expansive political organization, the EU has been growing from its initial role as a supranational secretariat into a real political organization, challenging the member states' monopoly over input legitimacy. Although the European Parliament (EP) is now directly elected and has been given more powers in the Lisbon Treaty, the

political attachment of Europeans to the EU continues to be low, as voting turnout in EP elections shows. Input legitimacy is still largely a monopoly of national politics, while the EU and member states share output legitimacy.

The EU has gradually become the provider of a wide set of outputs that range today from a common currency to representation of the EU in world trade, a complicated legal system, and management of the EU's external borders. These developments would not have been possible without the actions of a variety of non-elected political elites specialized on the issues in question (Madsen and Christensen 2015). There are, however, important differences between national public policies and European public policies that need to be pointed out. The first is that the sums of money involved in European public policies are smaller than those in many member states. The yearly budget of the EU is around 140 billion Euros, about the size of the national budget of a small member state like Finland. While this seriously hampers the development of the European bureaucracy, it nevertheless has provided an opportunity for new transnational elites to develop. A second difference is that geographical and social distances are greater between those who formulate policies and those who execute them. This means that inter-mediaries are necessary to fill the voids by transmitting to the national and regional level what is happening at the EU level. And third, the domains of action of the EU are narrower than those of national governments.

The EU can act only in those domains where it has competencies. This further conditions the development of non-elected elite groups. Those attached to European policies are able to develop expertise in areas relevant to such policies, for example, expertise about legal regulations or knowledge relevant to financial integration. Newer areas include higher education (HE), where the EC has been investing heavily since the beginning of the 2000s. What kinds of non-elected groups have developed that play an important role in European politics? European public policies have until now favored capital at the expense of labor, urban consumers at the expense of rural producers, and peripheries at the expense of centers. The priority of capital over labor is exemplified by the creation of a free zone for the movement of goods, capital and workers.

Transnational Elites

Compared to the 1950s, the current political landscape in Europe is much more complicated, with more institutions and actors of various kinds involved in European public policies that have proliferated. Processes of autonomization

and specialization of elite groups have taken place, enabling some to become professionals on European issues. This autonomization and specialization have involved linking the evolving supranational level to national, regional and local levels. European experts who have access to specific European resources can be found at all levels of the system, from the smallest hamlet in the remotest part of the continent to the EU "capitals" of Brussels and Luxembourg, and to a lesser extent Strasbourg. Today, there are politicians who specialize in European issues. This type of *Europaberufspolitiker,* to paraphrase Weber, did not exist 20 years ago. We can say that a differentiation of elites, public policies and public spaces has taken place. New transnational elites operate in European institutions and actively participate in the shaping of supranational public policies (Kauppi and Madsen 2013, 2016).

A variety of elites revolve around European institutions that consist of roughly 6000 policy-making positions and some 20,000 translators who together form the bulk of the workforce that is the EU administration. Thousands of trainees, national experts who are in temporary posts, and representatives of member states—diplomats mostly—supplement the 6000 policy-making positions. Those with permanent positions in the Brussels bureaucracy form the vanguard of European integration, working full time for the Union. However, with the increase in supranational outputs, a variety of other types of elites have formed. They include lawyers, journalists, academics, lobbyists and various representatives of interests. According to some estimates, interest groups employ around 10,000 persons in Brussels today. They range from consultants to law offices to professional groups of various kinds. European institutions have consulted such persons and groups since the beginning of European integration. The main reasons for this dependency are the small size and limited resources of the European administration and the expansion of its outputs. With time, some of these relationships have become more formalized. Various expert groups and committees exist today and the Commission consults with nearly 1000 ad hoc groups.

In terms of the permanent, key personnel in European institutions, EC officials play a major role in supranational integration. Commissioners are mostly male, over 50, and have had considerable legislative and executive experience in their home country. Their profiles correspond to ministerial profiles in their home countries (Egenberg 2006). Some research shows that Commission managers favor deeper European integration regardless of their national origin or organizational experience (Ellinas and Suleiman 2012, see also Egenberg 2006). They see as their main mission the integration of Europe. Other research is more nuanced (Hooghe 2012). According to a survey carried out by Liesbet Hooghe, Commission officials can be divided

into three groups in terms of their vision of European integration: 36.6 percent are in favor of a supranational Europe with the Commission acting as its government. Hooghe contrasts these supranationalists with state-centric officials—13.3 percent of the respondents—who see the EU as essentially an intergovernmental organization. To these groups, Hooghe adds institutional pragmatists, who favor neither of these alternatives and comprise 29.3 percent of her respondents, along with those who are ambivalent and, cannot be included in any of the categories (21 percent). Her findings cover well the different perceptions officials have of their role and of the development of the EU. In terms of political ideology, the Commission is broadly representative of European societies, at least on traditional economic left/right issues. Not surprisingly, social directorates-generals (DGs) are significantly more socio-democratic than DGs handling market integration. Officials from new member states are more market liberal than their "Western" colleagues. Concerning the common opinion that EU officials just want to increase their own power, Hooghe finds that Commission officials want more authority, but their desire to centralize is selective and measured: "It seems driven by functional imperatives – centralization where scale economies can be reaped – and by values and ideology rather than by a generalized preference for maximal Commission power". Other research (Michel 2013) shows that the sociological profiles of European officials and interest representatives and lobbyists are similar: they have gone through the same schools and have had similar experiences prior to joining the Commission or interest representation organizations.

Until the Single Europe Act in 1986, European interest representation consisted of activities that targeted mostly the Council of Ministers, that is, the representatives of member states. Following a deepening and expansion in the integration process, interest representatives started targeting the Commission. And today, with the increase in the powers of the EP, they have increasingly shifted their attention to the parliament. The paradigm of interest representation evolved from a corporatist paradigm, or a government paradigm, that favored a few relatively large organizations, a limited scope of public policies and elite groups into a pluralist or governance paradigm with a greater variety of policies and actors. This has involved an increase in the number of consultancies as well as a greater role of markets in policy making. With the increased powers of the EP, a further shift has occurred, from non-elected elites to directly elected supranational political elites. These play a more important role in the European policy process, a novelty. However, with decentralization and the principle of subsidiarity (that is that outputs have to be produced as close to the citizens as possible), national and regional actors play a key role in European public policies, further shaping elite group formation.

Most of the organizations that seek to influence Europeans are composed of one or a few individuals (Courty and Devin 2005). Three kinds of organizations can be distinguished:

1. *Private organizations*. These represent the business world and the great majority of so-called Eurogroups, that is, European-level interest groups. The most represented sectors are the chemical industry and firms linked with the environment. Highly federated groups like BUSINESSEUROPE, the European association of industries and employers, and the European Round Table of Industrialists are highly influential. High-level executives with considerable social and economic capital such as the CEOs of Philips and Nestlé have manned these. The European representative of the workers, the European trade union confederation, is composed of 85 national trade union confederations.
2. *NGOs and associations*. These range from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace to representatives of German automobile constructors. For organizations like Greenpeace or Amnesty International, the Brussels offices are policy offices of global organizations. The EU directly funds over half of public interest groups. Some even act as agents of the EU via various development projects both in Europe and beyond Europe. The European Citizens Action Service for instance has functioned as the EU's monitoring instance in the area of the free movement of people. A coproduction of supranational bureaucratic elites and supranational civil society elites can be observed.
3. *Regional representations*. These include, for instance, the representation of the Land of Bavaria, which is larger and better funded that many EU member state representations.

In general, non-elected political elites develop where funds are available, and interest representation evolves where there are supranational policies that can be influenced. Three structural factors of European decision-making influence directly the actions of these new elites.

1. *National tensions and differences* condition their development and influence. For instance, the promoters of environmental protection can be faced with national policies that are hostile to them, especially in member states that are net recipients of EU money. Multinational actors have an interest in putting together their resources and trying to influence the Commission, but some actors like representatives of trade unions are handicapped by the existence of very different national traditions. French trade unions like the

Confédération générale du travail (CGT) have traditions that are quite different from for instance large Swedish trade unions like the *Landsorganisationen*. The CGT has a tradition of direct action, a strategy of the street, with a strong hold in certain sectors like railroad workers. In France, the level of union membership is however very low compared to Sweden or Germany. French trade union elites are not used to concerted action or common action with unions from other countries. In this way, national traditions hamper the development of a unified trade union elite at the European level. The same goes for political parties. European political parties are at the moment weakly developed and resemble more an assemblage of national parties.

2. *The competencies of the Union*. The more the Union's capacity to operate is important, the more you will find European-level pressure groups and elite formation. For instance, in the area of primary or secondary education, there are very few European-level groupings. In contrast, in HE, there is today more than before, mainly because HE has been framed since the 2000s as a key element in the knowledge economy and the competitive edge of European economies. For this reason, the Commission plays an important role in coordinating this area and associations such as those representing European universities are actively shaping Union policies. In order to succeed, these elites have adopted a language that is close to the language used by the Commission and other EU institutions. And the aims of the action have to be concordant or in harmony with the aims of the EU as formulated by the EU. HE governance in the EU has been developed by a set of high-powered university professors in specific research centers such as the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) at the University of Twente in the Netherlands. These include individuals like Frans van der Vught, who was a member of the Group of Societal Policy Analysis of the EC (under the leadership of former EC President Barroso) and who also sits on the Executive Board of the European University Association (EUA). His institute has been instrumental in the creation of the EU's U–multirank tool for the evaluation of HE institutions, a tool that is poised to become a competitor to dominant rankings such as the Shanghai ranking and the Times Higher Education ranking of world universities.

3. *Decision-making modalities*. The default decision-making modality in the EU is the community method, where the EC, together with the EP and the ECJ/CJEU as developer of the European law, plays a key role as the initiator of policies, controller of the implementation of these policies and of the Union's agenda. When competencies are shared between the EU and the member states, such as is the case with most European public policies

(environmental protection, consumer protection, mergers, transports, development aid, etc.), the interaction between the two will be determinant. In a second decision-making method, the intergovernmental method, key players will be national political leaders and civil servants. Policies involved include fiscal policies for instance. And a third, more recent decision-making procedure is the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) that the Commission uses increasingly in areas like social policy and HE, areas where it does not have a priori any power. In the intergovernmental and OMC modalities, few incentives exist to develop European-level power strategies. Today, the general development is toward more flexible coordination methods like the OMC. The OMC gives European institutions a slightly ambiguous role as an arena where new approaches can be developed and coalitions formed to solve policy problems, with the active participation of non-elected political elites. Various transnational networks of elites play a key role in this process, reinforcing the technocratic and transnational dimension in EU politics. The OMC has introduced into European public policies a whole set of concepts and techniques from new public management that have changed the way public policies are formulated. These include benchmarking, best practices and so on. The strategy of Lisbon, that is the making of the EU into the most competitive economy in the world, is a good example of this kind of policy coordination. The OMC has been the Commission's power strategy to acquire resources in areas where it does not have any competencies and which are in other words the domain of the member states. In these, an expansive EC has taken the role of general coordination.

Non-elected political elites have clearly transformed with the evolution of the Commission and its European public policies. These have been technocratically determined, often business led, a key mechanism being the revolving doors between the Commission and business/finance, which has enabled the circulation of elites from supranational bureaucracy to international business. As for European civil society organizations, the EU often finances them. This is especially the case with smaller organizations and public interest groups. In exchange, they provide the Commission with the input legitimacy and information it craves (coproduction of policies and stakeholders). Many like the Confederation of national political science organizations have a formal existence as European-level organizations. The small size of the supranational administration leads to a structural dependency on lobbies and other non-elected actors to provide information and expertise. A constant concern has been the desire of supranational elites to regulate their legal

environment and to increase their input legitimacy by promoting values such as democracy and equality. At the receiving end, European institutions have welcomed such input legitimacy but also sought to institutionalize new non-elected elites to ensure the balance between broader legitimacy and the output of the EU.

In order to explore this key issue which is at the heart of many debates on the EU, we will turn to two particular European institutional elites, the European Ombudsman and the ECJ/CJEU. The European Ombudsman is illustrative of an institution that has been established almost out of simple necessity for the development of the EU as a legitimized and somewhat more democratic regime, while the ECJ/CJEU has since the 1960s functioned as a legal motor of European integration, often providing key inputs in times of political inertia. Moreover, it has almost single-handedly produced a catalogue of rights that only later were formally codified in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000).

The Ombudsman

The transplantation of the Ombudsman from national contexts to the EU has been all but straightforward (Erkkilä and Kauppi 2017). For one, the Ombudsman has taken different forms in the national contexts where it has been adopted. In Europe, there are two Ombudsman traditions. In the Nordic countries, the Ombudsman institution is the legal overseer of government and executive. In this conception the Ombudsman, in practice a group of senior lawyers, investigates citizens' complaints and passes a public judgment on the legality of the actions of public administration in the case concerned. There are no formal sanctions but the public judgment carries its own efficiency. In contrast, in many central and Southern European countries, the Ombudsman is a mediator, seeking to solve disputes between different parties in a social conflict.

Adopted in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, it was in 1995 that the EP appointed the first European Ombudsman, the Finnish lawyer and politician Jacob Söderman. The successful adoption of the European Ombudsman institution was largely a question of good timing. The EP had already discussed the creation of the Ombudsman in 1979, without effect. This political transplantation was the outcome of several favorable developments between 1979 and 1992. In the early 1990s, the question of human rights was high on the agenda in the EU (Madsen 2013). Human rights became one of the key domains of the Ombudsman, and the increased attention paid to them

also legitimized creating the Ombudsman institution at the national level. By the beginning of the 1990s, all EU member states had adopted the Ombudsman institution on a national level. This led to an increased awareness and political acceptance of the institution, which was not the case in 1979. Also, the EU law had already become an independent legal system, which spoke in favor of adopting a European control system (Biering 2005).

Defining the discourse of "good governance" and "maladministration" became the key challenge for the European Ombudsman in the early years (Söderman 2005). The main sources of grievances had been the lack of openness in terms of access to documents and information, and staff matters linked with recruitment through open competitions (*concours*). The Ombudsman institution basically had to adapt itself to an evolving institutional environment. This was especially clear in complaints related to contractual matters. National Ombudsmen did not deal with these complaints because they were considered as being commercial disputes (Söderman 2005). In the European context, they have been one of the staples of the Ombudsman.

Since 1995, the caseload of Ombudsman has been on a steady rise. The years 2004 and 2005 marked a clear increase in complaints. This was a result of EU enlargement as ten new member states entered the Union. Although the cases, mainly consisting of complaints, have increased from 298 in 1995 to 4416 in 2005, the amount of yearly decisions has been steady and under 400. A clear majority of the complaints have not been within the mandate of the Ombudsman, that is, they have been addressed to the wrong institution. This discrepancy between the complaints and the resolutions indicates that there is little public knowledge concerning the Ombudsman's mandate and functions. In fact, in 2005, over 70 percent of complaints did not fall within the mandate of the Ombudsman. However, starting from 2007, there has been a steady decline in the number of the cases. This seems to indicate normalization after the rapid increase following EU enlargement. Interestingly, the complaints have sunken roughly to the level of 2003. Also, the number of cases within the Ombudsman's mandate has slightly increased, though there is no major difference in sight. Nevertheless, the statistics indicate that the institution has channeled general social pressure that is not linked to its mandate. Moreover, the European Ombudsman seems to be finding its standard level of operation in terms of complaints.

Such extra-judicial institutions of public accountability, to a certain extent, also need turning points in order to keep up their legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Conflicts between the Ombudsman and other European institutions can give institutions of public accountability the publicity that they usually lack. Conflicts can become defining moments, when the political function of

an institution crystallizes itself both to the representatives of other institutions and to the wider public. In 1999, Romano Prodi was elected President of the European Commission after the resignation of Jacques Santer's Commission. A social demand for charismatic political action existed. Prodi's ambitious statement on the objectives of the Commission indicated that the new Commission wanted to become a European political government. One of Prodi's points had to do with new European governance. The White Paper on European Governance was to play a politically equivalent status to the similar documents on economic competitiveness and employment. The Ombudsman played a key role in this broader dynamic.

In the post-Lisbon Treaty era, the European Ombudsman has come to redefine fundamental rights. The Lisbon Treaty brought the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU into force, stating that any citizen of the Union (and any natural or legal person) has the right to refer to the Ombudsman of the Union in cases of maladministration. Also, citizens' right to access EP, Council and Commission documents was added to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It is important to differentiate fundamental rights from human rights. However, the entry of maladministration into the charter will shape the understanding of "rights" in the European Union.

The Court of Justice of the EU

French sociologist Antoine Vauchez recently published a newspaper article with the provocative title "The New President has arrived, and it is a judge" (Vauchez 2015). Analyzing the change of presidency of the ECJ/CJEU, Vauchez sought to point to the fact that the key institutions of the EU are those of only quasi-elected nature, namely the CJEU alongside the Central Bank and, of course, the Commission. He has further developed this argument in a small succinct book that argues that to democratize the EU, one needs to look not at the institutions of formal power like the EP but those of real power like the Court, Bank and Commission (Vauchez 2014). This raises the question of how the CJEU, and before that the ECJ, has managed to come to the forefront of European politics and integration. Prior to the establishment of the EU, no European country had a legal-political culture of *gouvernement des juges* (Madsen and Thornhill 2014). Rather, the ideology was the opposite, namely that the judges were only *la bouche de la loi*—the mouthpiece of the law. In fact, the term *gouvernement des juges* stems from a critique of the US Supreme Court in its early jurisprudence, notably *Marbury*

versus Madison (1803), and was articulated by French legal comparativist Édouard Lambert in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Like in the case of the Ombudsman, the rise of the ECJ/CJEU as a real force in European integration is in part due to timing, in this case the Court filling the vacuum in European integration created by the lack of initiative at the political level in the 1960s as described above. It was precisely in 1963 and 1964 that the ECJ in the decisions of *Van Gend en Loos* and *Costa versus ENEL* established the doctrine of the direct effect and supremacy of European law, thereby forging the fundamentals of a supranational European legal order from which the member states could not escape through non-compliance (Weiler 1991). The two decisions have in much literature been turned into the veritable "Big Bang" of European law and remain to this day the "founding myth" of European law (Vauchez 2012). Interestingly, from 1950 until these landmark decisions the community legal order was anything but the self-sustained supranational legal order of today (Boerger-De Smedt 2008).

This was also reflected in the composition of the early ECJ. The first seven judges appointed to the Court indeed reflected the kind of socio-economic and political microcosm of technocratic governance. Three of them had significant experience with the judiciary as judges in their domestic systems at the highest level: the Italian Judge Massimo Pilotti (1952–1957), the German Judge Otto Riese (1952–1962) and Judge Charles Hammes (1952–1966) of Luxembourg. All three of them also held doctorates in law. Another path toward the Court was the financial administration of the state as in the cases of the French Judge Jacques Rueff (1952–1962) and the Dutch Judge Adrianus Van Kleffens (1952–1957). A member of the French Inspection des Finances, Rueff had pursued most of his career as a civil servant in the French central financial administration (the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of France), whereas Van Kleffens had entered the Ministry of Economic Affairs after having been in charge of the litigation department of the Royal Dutch Navigation Company. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Belgian Judge Louis Delvaux (1952–1966) and the "Seventh" Judge, Petrus Serrarens (1952–1957), both had pursued political careers before being appointed to the Court. A doctor in law and practicing lawyer, Delvaux had been a Belgian MP (from 1936 to 1946), Minister of Agriculture (1945), before returning to private practice and taking up a number of administrative responsibilities, for example, at the Office des Séquestres and the National Bank of Belgium. Serrarens had been Secretary General of the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (1920–1952) as well as a Dutch MP (Data from Cohen and Madsen 2007).

By the time of the landmark decisions of *Costa versus Enel* and *Van Gend & Loos*, five of these original seven judges had been replaced. But the new batch of judges resembled greatly the original bench. Robert Lecourt (1962–1976), barrister, member of the French Parliament from 1946, had been Minister of Justice before he succeeded Rueff, and Walter Strauss (1962–1976) was an administrative State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Justice (1950–1963) before he succeeded Riese. However, a younger academic elite was making its entry to the Court: Andreas Donner (1958–1979) was only 39 when he became the Dutch Judge. Son of the President of the Dutch Court of Cassation, his entire career had been as a Professor of Constitutional and Administrative Law at the University of Amsterdam (1945–1958) before he became President of the Court. Alberto Trabucchi (1961–1970) was a Professor in Private Law at the University of Padua when he succeeded Nicola Catalano (1957–1961), former Director of the Legal Service of the High Authority (who had replaced Pilotti). The pro-Europe orientation of this cast was, as in the case of other European institutions, relative and divided among them. But they nevertheless managed to produce a pro-integrationist jurisprudence that has set the tone for the Court in subsequent decades. One scholar has even suggested that they created a myth about the Court as a key player of European integration that since then has been reproduced (Vauchez 2012).

In his seminal article, "The Transformation of Europe," Joseph Weiler divides the development of EC law into three major phases: (1) a foundational period (1958–mid-1970s) developing the jurisprudence on direct effect, supremacy, implied powers and human rights, (2) a period of mutation of competences, 1973–mid-1980s and (3) contemporary EC law beginning with the Single European Act (Weiler 1991, pp. 2403–2483). Since then, further key moments have occurred with the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the adoption of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000) and more recently the Lisbon Treaty (2007), renamed the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Interestingly, in almost all instances, the Court has managed to maintain its key role as the guardian of an ever-closer Union. The only slight exception was the Maastricht Treaty where the Court was left out of two of the three pillars, albeit the two smallest pillars (Common Foreign and Security Policy and Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters). Since then, the Court has gradually bounced back.

Overall, the CJEU has formidable power in EU affairs and a power that is far greater than any of its national homologues. This has also meant that the CJEU has spurred the development of a particular legal interest in European affairs, a form of legalized politics that is generally foreign to European legal-political culture marked by the supremacy of parliament. However, the

lobbying of law and the legal representation of private interests is largely taking place outside the realm of formal representative politics. In this realm, legal expertise tends to matter far more than democratic representativeness. This is not entirely taking place outside of formal politics but it is neither entirely controlled by formal politics.

The current composition of the Court is interestingly fairly similar to the original Court detailed above. The main change over time is that the percentage with a background in politics decreases over time. The main backgrounds of the judges remain however academia, civil service and the judiciary. This also means that the Court continuously has been able to "speak" to relatively different audiences and gain input legitimacy from a series of sub-fields. Also, although the business around the Court is obviously legal in nature, the diversity of the bench is somewhat similar to the overall profile of the elites of European integration, ranging from lobbyists to civil servants in the Commission. While this creates a relatively smoothly operating machinery of policy-makers and legal servants, it is also a limited social sphere that is overall represented in these European elite milieus.

Conclusions

Following processes of differentiation and specialization, elites become more transnational than before. In the case of the EU, non-elected political elites such as legal elites and institutions analyzed in this chapter have played a considerable political role in the forging of supranational public policies and their output legitimacy. These are, of course, very specialized non-elected elites that are part of the broader political regime of the EU. These elites have legal backgrounds and their members combine national and supranational careers. But as suggested in the case of the CJEU, such institutions produce a kind of alternative political arena to that of the formal politics of elected elites. They spur the emergence of new forms of interest representation that seek to exploit these channels of influence. In a nutshell, the EU political regime is a mismatch of formal political procedures exercised by elected or quasi-elected elites and a forest of other elites, both the institutional ones like the Ombudsman and the Court, plus many other transnational power elites (Kauppi and Madsen 2013) seeking to use all available platforms.

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26

Economic Elites

Michael Hartmann

The economic elite has featured prominently in social-scientific debates concerning elite formation for quite some time now. No other sectoral elite's relative position within the overall political elite is as controversial as that of the economic elite. Critical elite sociology has consistently regarded it as the most dominant of sectoral elites (Bourdieu 1986, 1996; Hartmann 1996, 2002, 2007a; Mills 1956). In contrast, functionalist elite research vigorously rejects this special dominance, but nonetheless tends to view the economic elite as one of the central elites, albeit on par with or even subordinate to the political elite (Dahl 1961; Hoffmann-Lange 1992; Keller 1963).

Current Research on Economic Elites

Research on the economic elite was relatively sparse up to the turn of the millennium; only a few solid empirical surveys existed, most of which were confined to Germany, France and Great Britain (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot 1996; Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1978; Giddens and Stanworth 1974; Hartmann 1996, 1999, 2000; Rothböck et al. 1999; Whitley 1974). This has changed considerably during the last decade. A large number of empirical

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surveys of economic elites in different (mainly West European) countries have since emerged pertaining to Switzerland and Austria, the Netherlands and Denmark, as well as the three dominant countries, Germany, France and Great Britain.

The vast majority of empirical studies of economic elites deal only with individual countries, such as Switzerland, Denmark, France, Great Britain or the Netherlands (Bühlmann et al. 2012, 2015; Cronin 2012; Ellersgaard et al. 2013; MacLean and Harvey 2014; MacLean et al. 2014; Timans 2015) or, at most, a very small number of countries surrounding the central states of Germany, France and Great Britain (Bühlmann et al. 2017; Davoine and Ravasi 2013; Dudouet et al. 2012; Hartmann 2000; MacLean et al. 2006, 2010; Schmidt et al. 2015; Schneickert 2015; van Veen and Elbertsen 2008; Yoo and Lee 2009). International comparative studies—either exclusively confined to Europe (as is the common case) (Heemskerk 2013; van Veen and Marsman 2008; van Veen and Kratzer 2011), or even with a more global scope (Carroll 2009, 2010; Hartmann 2009, 2015, 2016; Staples 2006, 2008)—are very rare. Comprehensive and up-to-date social-scientific studies—particularly on China, Russia or the USA—are equally hard to find. What we do find are updated editions of previous studies, such as the seventh edition of *Who Rules America* (Domhoff 2013) originally published in 1967, or smaller qualitative studies such as Schimpfoessel's research on the Russian billionaire class (Schimpfoessel 2014).

With a view to economic actors who are investigated, most studies only take members of boards as a whole into account, failing to distinguish between these members in terms of their respective positions—there is, after all, a huge difference between an ordinary board member, the CEO of a company, and the chairman of the board. Among the ordinary members, it would moreover be wise to distinguish between executive members and non-executive members. Both a member's relative authority and the extent of his or her actual on-site presence vary considerably depending on his or her position: the former between very extensive and quite modest and the latter between permanent and just a couple of days per year. Only a few studies address CEOs and chairpersons explicitly, and those which do are mostly limited to one or two countries. In terms of subject matter, there are two dominant areas of focus. Studies either deal with the question of nation-specific career paths into executive management and what these paths and educational degrees look like or studies focus on the extent to which we can actually speak of a transnational or even a global economic elite.

Elite Formation: Four Basic Types

With regard to economic elites in the advanced industrial states, we can discern four basic types of elite formation, the crucial variables of which include the existence of elite educational institutions, the significance of occupational positions within the state apparatus over the course of one's career, and the relative weight of corporate career paths. The first type's main characteristic is that degrees from elite universities and positions within the state bureaucracy are of crucial importance for a later career in management. In the second type, a close interlinkage often exists between degrees from elite universities and corporate careers limited almost exclusively to one corporation. Though elite university degrees play an important role in the third type, they are not dominant. With regard to the fourth type, none of these factors is of any significance.

The first type is represented by French top managers. In order to advance to the top of one of France's largest 100 companies, completing a programme of study at one of the *Grandes Écoles*, the country's elite universities, is imperative. The three most prestigious among them, the ENA, the École Polytechnique and the HEC, have been dominant in this respect for decades. As early as 1972, every other *Président-directeur général* (PDG) of the largest 100 French corporations had previously attended one of them. By the 1990s, this figure had risen to two-thirds. Currently, roughly half of PDGs graduate from one of these top three institutions, as was also the case a decade ago. Most graduates come from the Polytechnique, including 21 of current PDGs, followed closely by the ENA and, finally, with a bit of a gap, the HEC (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1978: 46; Hartmann 2000: 245–247; 2015: 46). If, however, we consider not only the last degree acquired but previous degrees as well, then the picture changes noticeably: out of 18 ENA alumni, five have already completed a degree at the Polytechnique and as many as seven have earned one at the HEC. Although this underlines the ENA's status as the most important of these elite universities, it simultaneously demonstrates that the other two are either at least as strongly represented (the HEC) or significantly stronger (the Polytechnique). If we add another half dozen elite universities, like the Sciences Po or the École Centrale, the share increases to more than 60 percent. Given that the ENA, the Polytechnique and the HEC together admit no more than 1000 new students per year, and the remaining prestigious *Grandes Écoles* combined amount to about the same figure, the enormous concentration of the recruitment pool is evident. Almost two-thirds

of PDGs went to universities that are attended by less than 1 percent of all French university students.

Following successful completion of studies at one of the elite universities, the career path is then narrowed even further. The top graduates, especially from the two leading *Grandes Écoles*, do not advance directly into large corporations but first take up a high-ranking position in the civil service. Among the 100 PDGs surveyed, one in four, and three out of five graduates of the ENA and the Polytechnique, attended one of the famous *Grands Corps*, the elite institutions of public administration. There are five administrative *Grands Corps*: the Conseil d'Etat, the Cour des Comptes, the Inspection des Finances, the Affaires étrangéres and the Corps préfectoral, as well as two technical Grands Corps, the Corps des Mines and the Corps des Ponts et Chaussées. Essentially, these institutions are reserved for the best French graduates of the ENA and the Polytechnique, awarded according to graduates' final ranking. The top ten from the ENA mostly go on to the Inspection des Finances, while the top ten from the Polytechnique usually enter the Corps des Mines, seeing as these two Grands Corps offer the best prospects of advancing to an executive position in the private sector. By and large, the move from a Grand Corps to a top position in a private company has become more or less an established rule (Hartmann 2007b: 99–102; 2010: 294–295; Rouban 2014: 722, 729). A second path is through high-level ministerial positions. A further 12 PDGs have served in such a position, mostly as members or even directors of a Cabinet Ministériel, a minister's core staff. What is true for the Grands Corps is essentially true for these positions as well, albeit less formally prescribed and with a more prominent role for other *Grandes Écoles*. An additional possibility is a former Minister of the Economy who, in an earlier phase of his career, spent four years in the Ministry of Education. At 42 per-cent, almost every other PDG took an administrative or political path. It appears to be the figurative 'silver bullet' for reaching the top of major French corporations, and a special term for it even exists: 'Pantouflage'.

In the second type, the significance of degrees from elite universities is the same, while that of career phases in the civil service is far less. This type is represented above all by Japanese top executives. The majority rely on a degree from one of the country's top-ranking universities as a vital precondition for recruitment by a major corporation; leading Japanese corporations recruit their future executive staff from the graduates of the elite universities and corresponding careers remain almost entirely confined to this one corporation (Rothacher 1993: 231–233; Schmidt 2005: 193–197; Watanabe and Schmidt 2004: 59). Initial recruitment occurs half-a-year prior to graduation from

university. Crucial, then, is not the final degree from, but rather the admission to a prestigious, elite university. After that, one does not leave the company ever again, at least in cases of large, well-known corporations. This remains by and large the only way to advance all the way to the top. Roughly 97 percent of the 98 Japanese presidents of the largest 100 Japanese corporations have never worked for another company than the one they lead today. Although the once dominant principle of ascending the career ladder in large corporations based solely on seniority has largely been replaced by a system that combines seniority and performance over the past decades, some things have nevertheless remained the same. A career that culminates in a top executive position continues to take place almost exclusively within a single corporation. For this reason, the significance of elite universities has likewise remained unchanged. More than half of CEOs (54.5 percent) attended one of the five leading universities of Todai, Kyodai, Hitotsubashi, Keio and Waseda, with almost one in four having completed a degree at Todai, Tokyo's imperial university founded in 1877, the oldest and most renowned of the five. If we include the five universities that follow the top five, among them Osaka and Tohoku, the share climbs to some 75 percent. This massive concentration of graduates from a small set of elite universities has likewise changed very little for decades (Hartmann 2007a: 77–78; 2015: 46; Ishida 1993: 153; Rothacher 1993: 249). The difference in comparison to France, however, is that the ten leading Japanese universities admit a total share of the national student body, that is, about ten times that of the French *Grandes Écoles*, implying that despite its undeniable exclusivity, the recruitment pool in Japan is significantly larger. The other important difference vis-à-vis France is that, while frequent change-overs between different sectors (known as 'Amakudari') occur here as well, these moves are confined to administration and politics with respect to top executive positions (Colignon and Usui 2003). Advancing from a high-ranking position in the civil service to the head of a corporation is nearly impossible due to the still influential principle of in-house promotion and seniority. Currently, only one such case among the CEOs of the 100 leading corporations can be found. That said, these career change-overs can be observed much more frequently in second- and third-level management.

The absence of such change-overs is an essential feature of the third type, represented by CEOs of British and US-American corporations. US-American and particularly British CEOs share at least one characteristic with their French and Japanese counterparts (at least on principle): the significance of an exclusive higher education degree. Traditionally, in the UK, about half of the CEOs of the largest 100 companies attended one of the 30 most-renowned

public schools (Eton Group and Rugby Group),[1] and likewise, about half attended Oxford or Cambridge. Roughly, one in four CEOs attended one of the Clarendon Nine, while one in 11 went to Eton, the country's most famous school. This has changed tremendously over the past two decades. Only one-third of CEOs today attend Oxbridge, and if we take into account that one-third of CEOs are from abroad, then the share is only about a quarter. Even if we include other leading universities, such as the three elite London universities (Imperial College, King's College and the London School of Economics) and the two traditional Scottish universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh, this picture does not change. The remaining share is only 40 percent of domestic and 27 percent of all CEOs. Additionally, the decline in the number of CEOs who have attended renowned public schools is even greater. By 2005, only four CEOs were 'Etonians', a dozen former Clarendon pupils (including the Etonians) and about 20 from the other 21 top-ranking public schools. Today, the figure is at only three Etonians and another three Clarendon graduates (Hartmann 2007a: 68; b: 116–117; 2015: 46, 50; 2016: 186–187). The total proportion of former public school pupils has decreased by half over the past two decades, from three-quarters to barely a third. When foreign CEOs are included, this number drops to even less than a quarter. The private schools and especially the prestigious public schools have largely forfeited their former centrality for the economic elite; although Oxford and Cambridge may have been able to prevail to a greater degree, their former position resembling that of French or Japanese educational institutions has also been lost. They now move on a level which has been common for CEOs in the USA for quite some time already.

About one-third of CEOs of the USA's 100 largest companies attended one of the Ivy League universities, first and foremost Harvard. If we include another dozen elite universities like Stanford, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or Berkeley, this share rises to nearly 50 percent. In contrast to Great Britain, this figure has not changed over the past 20 years to any significant extent (Hartmann 2007a: 74; 2015: 46). Although this percentage is only about ten points below that of the French *Grandes Écoles*, it is not nearly as selective due to these universities' roughly ten-fold share of the total student population. Besides (and this is the more important distinction), there is no direct link between graduating from one of these elite universities and accessing top management positions in the private sector. Though such degrees do facilitate career advancement to a noticeable degree, they are, unlike in France and Japan, by no means a precondition for most top-ranking positions. The same is also true for British corporations today. If entryways

were once closely related to attending one of the renowned public schools, followed by a degree from Oxbridge, this is no longer the case. As in the USA, these days they represent little more than 'career boosters'.

In the fourth type, represented by top executive staff in a multitude of countries including larger countries like Germany and Italy, medium-sized states like the Netherlands and Poland, or smaller countries such as Austria, Sweden, Switzerland or Denmark, neither elite educational institutions nor particular career paths are decisive. Correspondingly, even though some 38 percent of German CEOs have attended only ten universities, one in five German students was enrolled at one of these universities at the time those CEOs attended them. Moreover, a large share also pursued an in-house career. However, the figure (44 percent) is not only 10 percent lower than a mere decade ago but also hardly differs from that found in large US corporations (Hartmann 2015: 43, 45). In Switzerland, the ETH in Zurich and the universities of Bern and Zurich traditionally educate and train domestic CEOs. This role, however, cannot be compared to that of the French *Grandes Écoles* or even that of Oxbridge. Traditionally, the Swiss model was very similar to its German counterpart (Bühlmann et al. 2012: 214–219; Davoine and Ravasi 2013: 155–157). Despite the fact that various changes to this have occurred as a result of the far-reaching internationalisation of top management over the past two decades, the assignment of Switzerland to the fourth type remains beyond scrutiny. The same is true for Denmark (Ellersgaard et al. 2013: 1068), Austria (Kurom 2013: 131–143), the Netherlands (Timans 2015: 159–168) and Italy (Hartmann 2009: 296–297; 2015: 43). All differences aside, especially with view to the dominant courses of study, the significance of PhDs and the share of in-house careers, all these countries belong to the same type.

Finally, if we turn to some larger countries that do not properly correspond to any of the four types, then the most striking similarity between career paths in large corporations exists between South Korea and Japan (Pohlmann 2009: 520–522). Certain parallels can also be observed between Chinese, Spanish and French recruitment patterns. For instance, a relatively high number of former civil servants can be found among Chinese and Spanish CEOs. This is true for one in three CEOs in China and applies to at least one in four CEOs in Spain. While Chinese CEOs' former positions in the public sector were mostly mid-level, those of Spanish CEOs are closer to that of their French colleagues. Here, too, the vast majority come from the elite corps of state administration—a model based, in fact, on similar institutions in France (Hartmann 2007b: 102–104; 2015: 43). At the time the current CEOs were

students; however, no explicitly elite universities existed in either of the two countries. This has remained so in Spain ever since, while the Chinese state has financed the emergence of such an elitist system since the late 1990s. It is thus quite plausible that China may move even closer to the French model in the future.

As great as the differences between top managers in the two countries may be in terms of career paths, they are relatively minor with respect to recruitment. No matter whether French, British, US-American, German, Italian or Dutch corporations, everywhere we find an overwhelming preponderance of people whose parents belonged to the top 4 percent of society—the upper class or upper middle class. That said, exact percentages vary from one country to another; in the present studies, they do so according to sample size and sample composition as well. The most exclusive social backgrounds can be found among French top managers, where almost 90 percent come from the upper or upper middle class. Next are British, German and Spanish CEOs, among whom just above four-fifths, are from this exclusive segment of society (Hartmann 2000: 246–248; 2007b: 97, 119, 220).[2] Current research suggests that this value has remained constant to this day in France, while a slight decrease among British and German top managers can be observed. Percentages of CEOs coming from the upper and upper middle class in US-American and Italian corporations, then, are quite a bit lower, at three-quarters and two-thirds, respectively (Hartmann 2007b: 220, 237). The figure for Danish and Dutch CEOs also lies at around two-thirds (Beekenkamp 2002: 40; Ellersgaard et al. 2013: 1053; Timans 2015: 161). Career paths to becoming a CEO seem to be the least socially closed in Sweden, Switzerland and Austria in particular, where only about half of CEOs are from the upper and upper middle class (Hartmann 2007b: 220; Korom 2013: 124–126).[3]

As the varying recruitment criteria in the different countries show, although a link between the type of elite formation and social composition of the economic elite may indeed exist, this link is by no means obligatory. That French top managers would exhibit the most exclusive social background is to be expected given the country's extremely selective selection mechanisms for access to elite institutions in higher education as well as in state administration (Hartmann 2007b: 68–71, 90–91). Neither do the figures for British and Spanish CEOs come as a surprise. The same is true for the relative social openness of executive management in Sweden, Switzerland and Austria. It appears that opportunities for social advancement are greatest where there are no elite educational institutions to be found and vice versa. That this is not necessarily always the case, as illustrated by CEOs in Germany, who are recruited from the upper and upper middle class to the same extent as their British counterparts. Nevertheless, mechanisms of social selection are in some

ways different. As no such pre-selection is facilitated by elite educational institutions (public schools), selection only occurs according to social similarity, that is, according to the class-specific habitus during one's occupational career, particularly where access to top positions is concerned (Hartmann 1996: 107–133; 2002: 118–131).

Quite strikingly, there is no detectable link between a specific type of elite formation and the share of men and women CEOs in a given country. Correspondingly, in terms of the specific manner of elite formation, corporations in countries as diverse as Germany, Italy, Spain or Japan are headed exclusively by men. A still very marginal figure of 2–5 percent of female CEOs can be found in countries as diverse as France, Great Britain and China. The only country in which women represent a significant proportion of CEOs is the USA. Here, every ninth CEO is a woman. However, this likely has very little to do with the specific type of elite formation but is rather a result of very strict anti-discrimination laws. I for my part have no other explanation for the large difference compared to Great Britain and its generally quite similar elite education system.

A Transnational Economic Elite: Reality or Myth?

The second question occupying elite formation studies for the better part of the last two decades is about the existence of a transnational or even global economic elite. The answer to this question is the subject of a heated debate. On the one side are authors who answer this question, more or less explicitly in the affirmative, and their most prominent face is Leslie Sklair (2001). On the other side we find a multitude of researchers who consider such an affirmative answer to be false, or at least premature, given the available empirical data. If the former position was dominant until the turn of the millennium, this has completely changed over the past ten years. Most studies tend towards the sceptical position these days.

The few empirically well-grounded studies supporting the hypothesis of transnational economic elite substantiate this claim via analysis of the board members of multinational corporations. Correspondingly, in his analysis of the 80 largest corporations worldwide, Staples bases his argument on the fact that the number of boards with at least one foreign member has increased sharply from one-third to three-quarters between 1993 and 2005 (Staples 2006: 314). In the largest 148 corporations, this was still true of at least 70 percent of boards. Nevertheless, this process currently remains largely confined to Europe. According to Staples, it is therefore fundamentally correct to speak

of the emergence of a 'transnational business or capitalist class', but one should do so with caution, as thus far, no convincing evidence that top managers belong to a closed, self-reproducing elite that reproduces itself has emerged (Staples 2008: 45f.). The caution Staples calls for is most carefully heeded by Carroll, who stands out from other proponents of a transnational business or capitalist class for having presented one of the most empirically thorough and comprehensive analyses yet, examining interrelations between the board members of the 500 largest corporations worldwide for the years 1996 and 2006. He concludes that we can indeed speak of a 'global corporate elite' (Carroll 2009: 298, 308; Carroll 2010: 34). His findings show that between 1996 and 2006, the transnational network of top managers had grown tighter instead of loosening. However, this network of 'transnationalists' was not yet truly global, but essentially more of a North Atlantic network extending to Europe and North America, with internal European interrelations growing in significance. Here, then, this network was highly integrated. The national networks, however, continued to function as the backbone of the 'global corporate elite', as corporate management and the life of the 'haute bourgeoisie' remained embedded in national and regional structures and cultures. According to Carroll, an increasing division into two camps can be observed among the large multinational corporations: a growing number of (mainly Asian) corporations is isolated from inter-company contact networks, while a similarly increasing number is integrated into a transnational contact network. By and large, these 'transnational interlocks' tend to be tenuous and weak, carried by individual external board members (Carroll 2009: 305, 308; 2010: 224–236). Heemskerk is even more reserved in this regard, though he does confirm the development of a transnational network in Europe, it remains in his view largely confined to north-western Europe. He is by all means optimistic about its future development, however: 'But if the trend of growing European elite cohesion continues there might soon be the structural base for a genuine European corporate elite' (Heemskerk 2013: 96).

The overwhelming majority of contemporary studies remain significantly more sceptical. Davoine and Ravasi illustrate this already in their title: 'The relative stability of national career patterns in European top management careers in the age of globalisation'. They conclude that the increase in foreign top managers in British, German, French and Swiss corporations is indeed eroding respective national career models but that this erosion is occurring at a very slow pace and national models remain 'highly relevant' (Davoine and Ravasi 2013: 161). Similar findings have been produced in studies conducted by Bühlmann et al. (2017), Dudouet et al. (2012), Schmid et al. (2015) as well as van Veen and Elbertsen (2008). A recent study by Timans is particularly

interesting in this regard as it does not analyse board members as a whole but only CEOs, which would appear far more conclusive when trying to detect an internationalisation of top management and the emergence of a transnational business elite. In two distinct samples, Timans examined, firstly, the CEOs of the 133 largest Dutch corporations (including 33 large subsidiaries of foreign corporations) and, secondly, the CEOs or managing directors of the 107 largest companies legally registered in the Netherlands, among them 44 companies based in the Netherlands to avoid paying higher taxes in their countries of origin. While the share of Dutch nationals among CEOs amounts to 80.5 percent in the first sample, this is only true of 47 percent in the second one (Timans 2015: 155–159, 228–230, 236). Foreign top managers are in charge mainly in cases where a company is based in the Netherlands for tax reasons but actually has their operational headquarters in a different country. The vast majority of corporations that are not just formally, but also operationally, based in the Netherlands are headed by Dutch nationals.

These findings correspond to my own recent investigation of executive management of the 1000 leading corporations worldwide (Hartmann 2016). Of these 1000 company CEOs, a mere one in eight is foreign born. However, massive differences exist between individual countries. The percentage of foreign CEOs ranges from zero not only in the large Asian countries of China, India and South Korea but also in Italy, Russia and Spain, to a peak of 72 percent in Switzerland. In between, we find countries with low percentages from one to eight percent, such as Japan, France and the USA, and some with high percentages from 30 to 45 percent, such as Canada, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Australia (Table 26.1).

That said, these large differences are put into perspective when we exclude foreign CEOs from the same or a similar linguistic and cultural background and focus instead only on those from a distinct linguistic and cultural background. In this case, Switzerland is the only country whose large corporations continue to exhibit a high share of foreign CEOs (44 percent). In Great Britain and the Netherlands, this perspective lowers that share to 14 and 12 percent, respectively. The same is true for almost all other countries with foreign CEOs. This narrower view reduces their share by at least half but mostly by more, that is, by two-thirds and up to more than four-fifths in some cases. The average value for all 1000 companies then drops to a mere 4.6 percent. Foreign CEOs in their great majority do not really come from foreign cultures but mostly from other Anglo-Saxon countries in the case of Anglo-Saxon companies, from the neighbouring countries of Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands or Denmark in the case of German companies and from Belgium or Germany in the case of Dutch companies.

Table 26.1 Inter- and transnationality of CEOs of the 1000 largest companies worldwide in 2015

	CEO	Foreigners (in %)	Foreigners coming from a different language area and cultural environment (in %)	Foreign experiences of national CEOs (in %)
USA	306	27 (8.8)	8 (2.6)	26 (9.3)
Japan	99	2 (2.0)	2 (2.0)	30 (30.9)
China	94	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (7.4)
UK	50	22 (44.0)	7 (14.0)	7 (25.0)
France	45	2 (4.4)	2 (4.4)	15 (34.9)
Germany	32	5 (15.6)	2 (6.3)	20 (74.1)
Canada	32	9 (28.1)	1 (3.1)	5 (21.7)
South Korea	27	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (29.6)
Switzerland	25	18 (72.0)	11 (44.0)	2 (28.6)
India	25	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (24.0)
Hong Kong	25	2 (8.0)	0 (0.0)	9 (39.1)
Australia	20	9 (45.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (18.1)
Netherlands	17	5 (29.4)	2 (11.8)	6 (50.0)
Spain	16	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (18.8)
Taiwan	16	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (25.0)
Sweden	15	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)	6 (46.2)
Italy	14	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (57.1)
Russia	12	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)
Brazil	10	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (33.3)
Ireland	10	6 (60.0)	2 (20.0)	0 (0.0)
Saudi Arabia	10	3 (30.0)	2 (20.0)	0 (0.0)
Other countries	102	13 (12.7)	5 (4.9)	28 (31.5)
Total	1002	126 (12.6)	46 (4.6)	197 (22.5)

Source: Author's own research

The second criterion for internationality, namely the extent of a given CEO's foreign experience, yields better results. At a rate of 22.5 percent, more than one in five CEOs has lived abroad for at least six months at a time. Though great differences exist between individual countries in this respect as well, they are substantially less pronounced than in the percentage of foreigners. Germans rank the highest for this criterion at a rate of three-quarters, followed by their Italian, Dutch and Swedish colleagues, all at around 50 percent. Most other countries exhibit values between barely 20 and about 30 percent. Only the two largest economic powers in the world, China and the USA, reach less than 10 percent. Linguistic and cultural similarity to a given CEO's native country is of minor importance during foreign stays.

If we narrow down the circle of companies to the 100 largest in each of the six leading economic powers, then only two significant changes appear. In Great Britain, the share of foreigners drops by one-quarter to 33 percent, while

in Germany and France the same is true for foreign experience, which decreases by a third to about 46 percent and by a quarter to 26 percent, respectively. As could be expected, the degree of internationalisation drops in accordance with company size. Even more interesting are changes over time. Between 1995 and 2015, these occurred to a highly varying extent, depending on the specific country. In British and German companies, the share of foreigners rose five to sevenfold, while almost a doubling in foreign experience can also be observed. For Chinese and Japanese CEOs, however, we find a regression, as the percentage of domestic CEOs with foreign experience decreased noticeably and the number of foreign CEOs, at a total of only two individuals, stays extremely low (Hartmann 2015, 2016).

Percentages for inter and transnationality of CEOs actually become somewhat less relevant if we consider one important aspect that Timans and Heilbron also addressed in their study: a significant number of foreign CEOs lead corporations that are binational or have their legal headquarters in one country for tax reasons but their actual operational base in another. If we exclude all CEOs of binational companies who are nationals of one of the two countries of origin, or who in companies with a structure split across two countries are active at the actual operational headquarters, then the share of foreigners once again decreases by another fifth to under 10 percent. This suggests that there is truly no reason to speak of an unequivocal tendency towards, let alone the existence of, a transnational economic elite. Only the CEOs of Swiss corporations are truly international, and only in five other countries can we identify a clear trend towards internationalisation: Australia, Great Britain, Canada, the Netherlands and, to a limited extent, Germany.

The picture is a bit brighter with view to the board members of international corporations. This is the group within management displaying the highest degree of internationalisation. But even in this group, the average share of foreigners is only one in six. Moreover, three important restrictions must be added to this figure. Firstly, several large industrialised countries are far below the average value; this includes the two largest industrial nations, Japan and the USA. The boards of large US-American corporations exhibit a share of foreigners of only 8 percent (as do their Italian counterparts). In Japan, this figure is only 2 percent. Taking into account the two largest emerging economies, India and China with a share of foreigners of 7 and 1 percent, respectively, then, the average value of one-sixth must be strongly relativised. Secondly, in most cases, this figure refers only to non-executive board members and not to executive members. The percentage of foreign executives is for the most part far below that of non-executives. It ranges between 0 and 8 percent, with an average of a mere 4 percent. Only in four European

countries (Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain) and Canada is the figure of one-quarter reached. Yet, as executive members are the ones in charge of operative business, while non-executive members only attend a limited number of brief meetings, mostly lasting only a day or two, between six and twelve times per year, depending on the respective country, the former group is decisive in terms of internationalisation. Thirdly, the share of foreigners in the most powerful position among non-executives, who is also the only non-executive member present at company headquarters for longer periods at a time, the chairman, is markedly lower than that of remaining non-executive members. In Dutch and Swiss corporations, it is one-quarter lower, in British and Canadian companies one-third and in German ones almost two-thirds lower. As is the case with CEOs, the share of foreigners decreases the closer one is to crucial positions of power.

Economic and Political Elites

In the overwhelming majority of scientific studies, relations between the economic and the political elite feature only marginally or are dealt with in more detail only in rather journalistically oriented books such as Freeland (2012) or Rothkopf (2008). These relations are, at most, indirectly referred to when substantial portions of the economic elite have also held high-ranking positions in the public sector over the course of their career. Yet because this phenomenon is restricted to France, it goes largely undetected. Only three recent studies address the relation between these two central elites explicitly. That said, aspects discussed vary greatly.

   In their analysis of the Danish power elite, guided by Mills' thesis about a "power elite," Larsen, Ellersgaard and Bernsen in fact address the sectoral composition of this power elite directly. They find that it is clearly dominated by representatives of the private sector, while politicians are relatively under-represented in contrast to the power elite conceived of by Mills. Of the 423 people they include in the central network, 184 are from the private sector, increasing to 221 if trade associations are included, but only 34 are from the political sphere (Larsen et al. 2015: 28–29). The economic elite is, with a share of 53 percent, represented almost sevenfold when compared to politicians (8 percent). This enormous difference is rather puzzling. It once again demonstrates how important national traditions and peculiarities are as regards elite formation and, moreover, the emergence of potential transnational elites. The latter aspect takes center stage in the study by Bühlmann et al. The authors show that the extensive internationalisation of the Swiss economic elite over the past two decades has led to an ongoing erosion of

traditional ties to the country's political elite. Common traits such as a law degree, or the once widespread membership in the Swiss army's officer corps (previously true of one in two top managers or politicians), have declined in significance dramatically. Even more important, only 3.4 percent of administrative board members of the 110 largest Swiss corporations are also members of the federal parliament, compared to almost 11 percent in 1980 (Bühlmann et al. 2015). So far, however, this growing estrangement between economic and political elites is an exception. In a whole range of countries, inside as well as mostly outside Europe, the trend is in the opposite direction. This is corroborated by the most recent German elite study, conducted in 2012. Although sectoral divisions between the economic and political elites in Germany remain prominent, some tendencies towards a more frequent fluctuation across sector boundaries can be observed, albeit in almost all cases from politics to the private sector and only rarely the other way round. This can be observed in a broad range of senior politicians over the past years. In fact, it has almost become the rule for undersecretaries at the Ministry of Finance. Some of them have even pulled off a double boundary cross-over, first from the private sector into the Ministry and then back again (Hartmann 2013: 91–97). Quite clearly in Germany, though, there is no sign of the growing estrangement evident in Switzerland.

Notes

1. In their 1995 survey of the CEOs of the largest 200 corporations, Bauer and Bertin-Mourot indicated a share of 36 percent for the 20 most prestigious public schools (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot 1996: 105, 110).
2. Owing to their distinctive sample and survey period, MacLean et al. (2006: 91) do in fact arrive at lower figures for French (three-quarters) and British (two-thirds) CEOs, yet the essence of the statement and the (more general) distinction between the two countries remain unaffected by this.
3. The percentages may not always be directly comparable, because the samples used in these studies vary in size and composition; but they nevertheless indicate the respective national economic elite's position.

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27

Media Elites

Eva Mayerhöffer and Barbara Pfetsch

It is hardly controversial that media executives, high-ranking journalists and editors can be seen as the elite of the media societal sector. However, the question of whether media elites possess the resources to influence major development in society and thus assume the status of "strategic elites" exerting political influence and power in a broader sense (Keller 1963, p. 20) has been more open to debate. In particular, scholars committed to the ruling class paradigm and proponents of pluralist elite theory have taken different stances on this issue.

Exponents of the ruling class paradigm or a unified power elite tend to deny media elites broader political or social influence (see e.g. Mills 1956; Domhoff 2009; Hartmann 2007), even if they include a few prominent media commentators acting as public intellectuals and more business-like media tycoons in the circles of traditional "status elites" (Milner 2014). Rather, the media is seen to exert a counter-vailing role in relation to the power elite and to "serve as a final check on elite transgressions" (Rothacher 1993, p. 273).

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By contrast, pluralist elite theory views media actors as elites with significant impact on politics and society (Hoffmann-Lange 1992; Etzioni-Halevy 1993; Keller 1963; Moore 1979; Higley et al. 1979). This proposition finds common ground with communication research suggesting that political authority has become increasingly dependent on the media (see e.g. Bennett and Entman 2001; Cook 1998; Meyer 2002). By virtue of their privileged control of news and information, media elites must be seen as politically relevant and strategic elites in addition to their position as a sectoral elite.

Theoretically and empirically, the political role of the media has traditionally been associated with the effect of media content on public opinion and the attitudinal orientations of voters. Such effects can be said to grant the media an agenda-setting power (McCombs and Shaw 1972), meaning the ability of the media to create public awareness about political and social issues, shape the public and political debate and thus the premises for political decision-making. In particular, the media's priming and framing of political information[1] (see e.g. Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Entman 1993) has been found to have effects on attitudes toward parties and candidates, as well as long-term effects on political trust, political interest and political participation (see e.g. Norris 2000; Zaller 1992).

Whereas the agenda-setting power of the media can largely be conceived as a matter of *indirect* effects on political actors, decisions and election outcomes, recent studies also suggest that the media may exert a more *direct* form of political influence if political actors alter their behavior as a reaction to actual or anticipated media reporting, rather than as a reaction to changes in public opinion (Kepplinger 2007). Such effects are generally subsumed under the phrase "mediatization of politics," implying that politicians and their advisors adapt to the "media logic" ingrained in journalistic news criteria, media technology and the work routines of media organizations (Altheide and Snow 1979; Strömbäck 2008; Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999).

In accordance with these insights, we take the view that media elites must be seen as strategic and politically relevant elites, not merely as elites limited to the particular sector of the media. From this departure point, we discuss the relevant literature in three steps. First, we identify media elites based on a review of relevant criteria of inclusion and exclusion. Second, we revisit theoretical approaches to the relationship between media elites and political elites. Third, we take stock of empirical findings about the social composition of media elites, their attitudes and relation to political elites. We conclude our assessment by pointing to open questions and suggesting lines of future research.

Identifying Media Elites

Media Elites Versus Elite Media

Political and social science have been surprisingly hesitant to approach the societal role of media from an actor-based or elite perspective. US studies in particular have displayed a tendency to focus on *the* media as an institution, that is, on rather general characteristics of media content or organizations, while the role of individual media actors has been neglected (Clayman et al. 2012, p. 101). Consequently, *media elites*, understood as the highest-ranking actors of their field, have only slowly begun to receive scholarly attention, and even so, relevant studies often assign elite status to all journalistic actors within *elite media* organizations rather than identifying media elites by their individual position and status (Lichter et al. 1986).

There is of course a close relationship between *elite media* and *media elites*. Just as the power of political elites stems from their affiliation with a powerful political institution or organization, the elite status of a media organization and that of an individual media actor is strongly related. However, the elite status cannot be inferred directly from the impact associated with the media content of leading outlets. Many media elites do indeed work for media organizations that are considered elite media, such as the leading national quality newspapers, political magazines and, with some restrictions, the largest broadcasting corporations. However, some journalists working for a prestigious outlet fall outside the elite circle, just as the top hierarchy of second-tier media may qualify as media elites (see also Hess 1981, p. 24).

One Sector, Many Elites

Media organizations are characterized by two loosely coupled organizational hierarchies and thus by two rather distinct groups of elites: *executive media elites* and *journalistic elites.*

In private businesses as well as public/state-owned media organizations, executive leadership as well as the publishers and media owners determine how media companies are run as business enterprises or public (non-profit) organizations (Christiansen et al. 2001, p. 164). While not in direct charge of news production, these elites also exercise general influence on media reporting, be it through the effects of budget cuts or through the definition of an overall editorial line (Hoffmann-Lange 1979).

Despite their resemblance with other business or organizational elites, executive media elites remain a distinct elite group due to the fact that their societal influence is essentially based on the control of symbolic resources that translate into economic and political power. In fact, many media enterprises are too small to qualify as powerful organizations in an economic sense (Christiansen et al. 2001, p. 166). This is even true for the most prominent cases, where individual media owners control a particular large share of the media market. Even "media moguls" and "press barons," who receive a good deal of scholarly attention (see e.g. Fowler 2015; Eldridge et al. 1997, pp. 27–44; Alger 1998), use their control over symbolic resources in their presumed attempts to promote their interests, intervene in political decision-making and pressure political elites.

A similar argument applies to the executive media elites in public- and state-owned media. The executive elites of public media are found at the top of broadcasting corporations and their governing bodies but exclude the representatives of parties, interest groups, government or administration that fill the seats of corporative bodies or supervisory boards. Again, their position as strategic elites depends on the control of symbolic resources invested in them, which indirectly translates into political resources.

Whereas executive media elites are similar to, albeit not identical with, conventional business and administrative elites, editors, leading reporters, columnists and correspondents constitute a *journalistic elite* that is highly distinct and fully invested in the day-to-day production of the media content that defines the political and societal role of the media in the public sphere. Journalistic media elites are regularly in charge of selecting and producing news content and thus at the heart of processes of public agenda setting and opinion formation.

In private and public media organizations alike, the journalistic elite is subdivided into different groups. At the top level are the professionals who perform *editorial functions*, in particular the editor-in-chief and his or her deputies. Within leading media outlets, the highest-ranking *reporters, correspondents and columnists* may furthermore qualify as elites. On the top of the hierarchy are journalists associated with the political section, the economy section and the editorial section (see e.g. Diezhandino et al. 1994, p. 154). An additional sub-group of media elites comprises the leading *political correspondents*, referring to foreign correspondents as well as to members of the parliamentary and/or presidential press corps (Hess 1981; Tunstall 1970). While their organizational position does not place them at the top of the hierarchy in a conventional sense, they stand out by their privileged access and level of interaction with elites of the political and economic sector. In many ways, they

can therefore be regarded as specialized sub-elites of the media sector, bestowed with the special task of liaising with political elites (Mayerhöffer 2015).

This circumscription of the media elite excludes prominent freelance media commentators and editorialists described by some authors as "publicist elites" (Hachmeister 2002), "media personalities" (Christiansen et al. 2001, p. 163) or more broadly as "public intellectuals" (Milner 2014). While we should not deny that these actors are influential in certain respects and may indeed qualify as cultural or intellectual elites, there are good reasons to exclude them from the circles of the media elite. Political influence of media is a cumulative process that develops over time and depends on continuity in decision-making positions within a media organization (Pfetsch et al. 2004).

Moreover, the proposed definition of media elites takes a rather restrictive view of the impact of new media. On the one hand, leading actors within online news outlets are naturally considered media elites, as long as their organization displays an editorial structure and as long as their platform can be considered influential. On the other hand, social media elites, such as bloggers, are seen to represent the modern-day equivalent of the publicist elites or public intellectuals, whose influence stems from a prominent voice in mediated communication, not from an organizational position within media organizations.

Relations Between Media Elites and Political Elites: Theoretical Approaches

The relation between media elites and political elites has long been understood in terms of a *checks-and-balances relationship*. In media sociology and journalism studies, this idea is expressed by the concepts of the fourth estate and watchdog journalism. The normative conception of the news media as a "fourth estate," according to the classic eighteenth-century writings of Edmund Burke (Carlyle 1841), implies that journalists should carry out an investigative "watchdog" function on behalf of the public, keeping an objective, distant and critical eye on government action and performance as well as on other power holders in society (Norris 2012). The checks-and-balances perspective is, however, a normative blueprint rather than a research tradition as such. Turning our attention to the latter, we can identify three relatively distinct approaches to the relationship between media elites and political elites:

the *propaganda perspective*, the *social interaction perspective* and the *communication culture perspective*.

The Propaganda Perspective

The propaganda perspective reflects a long-standing concern about political and governmental instrumentalization of the media. This literature argues that media content is biased in favor of governmental interests and perspectives and hence serves to manufacture, manipulate or distort public opinion. Although authoritarian and repressive regimes provide the archetypical example of this problem, the propaganda perspective suggests that journalists acting within a system of constitutional and institutional media autonomy often defer more or less voluntarily to governmental perspectives (Bennett et al. 2007, p. 179). Despite freedom from direct political control, media elites establish a cooperative relationship with the governing elites, which potentially threatens journalistic norms and in a wider sense the democratic function of the media. Attempting to account for the democratic failure of the media, individual relations between high-ranking political and media actors, as well as their common integration into an "elite public sphere," come into focus (Entman 2003, p. 164).

The propaganda function of the mass media is, in such cases, not primarily a result of political control or force, but of elite subjugation and collusion in political communication (Etzioni-Halevy 1993, p. 113). *Subjugation* as a governmental infringement of sectoral resources borders on forms of control insofar as it fundamentally threatens the autonomy of media elites. *Elite collusion*, on the other hand, refers to cases where actors in a more or less symmetrical relationship interact in a way that threatens their autonomy.

Contributions within this perspective often point to a shared ideology as a source of collusion between media and political elites, ranging from patriotism (Zandberg and Neiger 2005; Liebes 1997) to conflict-specific ideologies such as "anti-communism" (Herman and Chomsky 2002; Hallin 1986) or the "war on terror" (Domke 2004). The resulting relationship between government and media fosters reliance on officials as the main news source, making news content largely determined by the political state of affairs. Only when events occur beyond the control of elites, such as culturally ambiguous or highly dramatic events, oppositional and truly independent media coverage is possible (Bennett et al. 2007). Other scholars within this tradition argue that institutional and social affiliations of media elites to other influential societal

organizations and groups determine whether the media forms a part of the power elite (Dreier 1982).

The most critical variation of the propaganda approach is provided by political economy and neo-Marxist media theory, focusing on power structures, class and *hegemony*. In contrast to the watchdog perspective, media elites are seen as "guard dogs" to serve and maintain the dominant economic and political interests (Donohue et al. 1995), charged with the dissemination of a "hegemonic ideology" and the engineering of mass consent (Gitlin 2003, p. 253). Within this approach, media deference is often associated with the fundamental capitalist nature of the media business as well as with a broad ideological alignment within the given hegemony. In this view, executive and journalistic media elites "[are] committed to the maintenance of the going system in its main outlines [and] [⋯] want to honor the political-economic system as a whole; their very power and prestige deeply presupposes that system" (pp. 258–59).

The Social Interaction Perspective

Studies of the media-source relation between political and media actors focus on the functional relationship between high-ranking journalists and politicians and their exchange of publicity for information (Tunstall 1970; Fico 1984; Hess 1991). The various studies conducted in this tradition often refer explicitly to political actors and media actors as elites. However, the tradition is not driven by theoretical interest in elite relations as such. Rather, the sociology of professions, the sociology of knowledge, symbolic interactionism and (new) institutionalism are applied in order to better understand how news production and policy-making are intertwined in contemporary society.

In his study on "Reporters and Officials," Sigal (1973) was one of the first to empirically focus on the interdependent relationship of politicians and journalists as a determinant of both news content and policy-making. While news making is a consensual process within the media, it amounts to a bargaining process between journalists and officials who "use each other to advantage in their own organizations" (p. 181). This process ultimately shapes policies as well as news (pp. 185–7). In addition to the potential effects on news and policy, this approach raises the question of whether the interplay between journalists and officials can be described as "a relationship governed by trust, norms, control, and balance" (Larsson 2002, p. 27) or rather as a struggle between journalists and their political sources, with both parts trying to keep the upper hand in the exchange relationship (e.g. Strömbäck and Nord 2006;

Ross 2010). In these studies, the interplay between media and politics has been characterized as "symbiosis" (Miller 1978), a "tug of war" or a "tango dance" (Gans 1979; Strömbäck and Nord 2006).

Further studies have more specifically focused on how the relationships between politicians and journalists become quasi-institutionalized, "as both sides (⋯) come to incorporate the other within their everyday thinking, decision-making and behavior" (Davis 2009, p. 215). A broader version of this argument can be found in the widely cited notion of "negotiation of newsworthiness" (Cook 1998, p. 12), defined as "the constant if implicit negotiations between political sources and journalists" (p. 90) on what makes suitable news.

The Communication Culture Perspective

Although the issue of institutionalization provides a point of contact between the social interaction and the communication culture perspectives, the former is generally "more concerned with *ad hoc* variations in the relationship than with its enduring regularities and structure" (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995, p. 30). In attempt to come to terms with these enduring regularities and structure of the relation between media and politics, the communication culture perspective draws from sources in political sociology and studies of political culture (Almond and Verba 1963) as well as political systems theory (Easton 1965; Luhmann 1984). Communication culture is, correspondingly, more or less consistently related to questions of systemic autonomy, reproduction and development.

Empirically, culture is manifested in cognitive orientations, interpretive frames, as well as roles that guide specific relations, and becomes primarily manifest in elite communication (Hoffmann 2003, p. 63). Such a shared culture is seen as a mixed blessing: On the one hand, it prevents self-referential sectoral elites from secluding themselves from each other (p. 161). But even though such shared culture does not constitute a power elite, it creates "self-referential elite structures" (p. 228) across sectors that detach the political-journalistic elite milieu from citizens/non-elites and lead to the exclusion of "the mass of consumer-citizens" (Davis 2003, p. 673).

Pfetsch (2004, 2008) applies the political culture model proposed by Almond and Verba (1963) specifically to the relations between media and politics. Hence, a country's political communication culture includes attitudes toward "(1) the institutions of exchange relations between politics and the media; (2) the input side of political communication, such as public opinion,

(3) the output side of political communication, such as the agenda-setting processes that are triggered by political PR, and (4) the role allocations and norms of professional behavior" (2008, p. 3684). The primary research interest lies in determining specific types of political communication cultures and their match with structural/systemic conditions (Pfetsch 2014).

Empirical Study of Media Elites

When compared to political elites and business elites, empirical inventories of media elites are scarce and predominantly part of general stocktaking of societal elites. Moreover, large-scale elite studies have been conducted predominantly in northern and western Europe (Ruostetsaari 2007, 2015; Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997; Christiansen et al. 2001; Hoffmann-Lange 1992; SOU 1990), as well as to some extent in Australia and the USA (Higley et al. 1979; Lerner et al. 1996). Most of these studies are rather outdated since they have been conducted in the 1990s or earlier.[2]

Even though the state of the art in empirical research on media elites is lopsided, selective and therefore rather unsatisfactorily, we do have results in some areas: (1) From survey research and document analyses, we have some insight into the socio-demographic and professional background of media elites, including family and educational status and to some extend also professional mobility. (2) From surveys on journalists that distinguish between hierarchical levels and from studies comparing media elites with political elites, we know about their political attitudes and professional identity. (3) Another set of studies attempts to locate media elites' position in general elite networks, based on social network analysis and large-scale data sets. (4) Finally, on the basis of in-depth interviewing, observation studies and surveys, political communication research has been concerned with the relations between media and political elites, both in terms of interaction and culture.

Socio-demographic and Professional Characteristics

The most recent analysis of media elites' social background, based on Finnish data, shows that media elites tend to be somewhat younger, more urban, more female and relatively lower paid than members of other elite groups (Ruostetsaari 2015, pp. 55–70). At the same time, Finnish media elites come from rather highly educated homes, as well as from families with a

high socio-economic status, not only when compared to the general popula-
tion but also to other elite groups (pp. 79–85). More than two-thirds of all
Finnish media elites identify as upper middle or upper class, in comparison to
47 per cent of cultural elites, 44 per cent of business elites and only 22 per cent
of political elites (p. 91).

Evidence from earlier studies conducted in a number of different countries
demonstrates, however, that the upper-middle-class status of the Finnish
media elites is by no means a universal phenomenon. Similar backgrounds
are found in countries where media elites most closely resemble cultural elites,
such as Sweden (SOU 1990, pp. 317–29) or France (Rieffel 1984). In other
countries, media elites' social background is decisively more middle class, such
as in Denmark (Christiansen et al. 2001), Germany (Schnapp 1997), Austria
(Kaltenbrunner and Bichler 2010) or Spain (Diezhandino et al. 1994).

Although journalistic education systems vary between countries, they share
the basic premise that the entry into the journalistic profession does not
require a specific degree or academic qualification. Rather, it is organized
through training in news outlets or through formalized vocational journalism
schools characterized by high entry levels and a notable elite orientation (see
e.g. Christiansen et al. 2001, pp. 164–7; Hoffmann-Lange 1979). As a
consequence, not all European journalistic elites hold an academic degree,
although the number of media elites without a degree has been steadily
declining.

Data from a number of national elite studies conducted in the 1990s
illustrates that this trend proceeds at quite a different pace across Europe. In
1999, 65 per cent of editors-in-chief and 80 per cent of other journalistic elites
in Denmark had not finished an academic degree but reached their position via
professional journalism education only (Christiansen et al. 2001, p. 167). In
contrast, the vast majority of German media elites had a university degree
already by 1995, although not primarily in journalism but in social sciences,
more generally (Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997, p. 177). In Spain, practically all
journalistic elites had a university degree, which, in two-thirds of the cases, was
journalism related (Diezhandino et al. 1994, p. 67).

In the USA, virtually all media elites hold a college degree and many also an
undergraduate and/or graduate degree from one of the leading universities
(Lichter et al. 1986, p. 21). At the same time, the difference in education to
regular journalists is in continuous decline. In two studies on the "Washington
reporters," the gap between capital-based elite journalists and other US Amer-
ican journalists has narrowed significantly from 1978 to 1988 in terms of the
schools attended and the degree obtained (Hess 1991, pp. 111–3).

One of the consequences of the recruitment from journalism schools and the journalistic career path is the low professional mobility of media elites (see most recently Ruostetsaari 2015, p. 190). Already in their 1979 study on Australian elites, Higley et al. (1979) found the media elite to be "the most inward-looking and self-contained elite investigated" (p. 55). Professional mobility is generally higher for executive media elites than for journalistic elites, but even among the former group, elite actors with no work experience from other sectors are by no means uncommon (Christiansen et al. 2001, p. 168). Despite the general lack of cross-sectoral ties for journalistic media elites, we do find some accounts of a so-called revolving door between the media and the political sphere in the USA (Shepard 1997; Hassan 2002). In corporatist Europe, the revolving door can also be an expression of party affiliation-based recruiting mechanisms (Fabris 1995).

Political Attitudes and Professional Identity

Journalistic attitudes are well researched, in particular with regard to their political viewpoints as well as their professional self-understanding. Indeed, one of the main (and most controversial) claims made by the early Lichter et al. (1986) study on the US American media elite was that due to their liberal orientations, high-ranking journalists were out of touch with the general citizenry. In contrast to the notion of a left-leaning, liberal media elite, Weaver et al. (2006, pp. 17–20) show that in 2002, executive journalists in the USA were somewhat more right leaning than rank-and-file journalists and in fact not more "Democrat" than the average population. However, the results also suggest that Democratic Party identification has been steadily declining among high-ranking journalists since the 1980s, while increasing among regular journalists, suggesting a growing gap between media elites and other media professionals in this respect.

In Europe, the existence of a "left-liberal bias" of media elites varies strongly between countries and applies least to the Nordic welfare states. In the Finnish case, Ruostetsaari (2015, p. 158) shows that media elites most strongly endorse "neoliberal" values (such as liberalization and deregulation), providing a counterweight in particular to the more etatist political elites. Nordic media elites also place themselves furthest to the right on a political left-right scale in comparison to their central or southern European colleagues. By contrast, media elites stating a political alignment even moderately right of the political center are virtually absent in southern Europe (Esmark 2014; see also Diezhandino et al. 1994, p. 210). In Germany, media elites have traditionally

exhibited an above-average preference for the Green party, vastly exceeding those of other societal elite groups as well as of the general population (Hoffmann-Lange 2006, p. 37).

Although there is a considerable literature on the professional self-perceptions of journalists available (see e.g. Hanitzsch et al. 2011; Weaver and Willnat 2012), only a few contributions provide findings about role perceptions of journalistic elites more specifically. Meyen and Riesmeyer's (2011) results for Germany suggest that high-ranking journalists are relatively committed to serving the demands of their audiences but rather conservative regarding the media's capacity to foster social and political change.

Whereas journalistic roles such as the "watchdog" draw close to universal commitment also among elites, substantial differences emerge regarding the role of an "advocate," expressing his or her own opinions. In western Europe, commitment to advocacy is expressed only by Spanish elites, while it is almost universally rejected in northern Europe and is highly disputed in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (Esmark and Blach-Ørsten 2014). Despite these differences, European media elites are rather reluctant to acknowledge their influential position in setting the political agenda, as well as in shaping the career paths of individual politicians (Lengauer et al. 2014).

Most studies on media elites focus on countries with a relatively well-established democracy. Only few studies include media elites' attitudes and values in younger democracies. The volume by van Beek (2010) finds that media elites in both new and established democracies are most secularized, display the most liberal socio-political beliefs and have the most intrinsic value to democracy, when compared to political elites as well as the general citizenry. In contrast to their peers in established democracies, however, media elites in transformation democracies appear reluctant to express satisfaction with and trust in current democratic institutions. Evidence from Bulgaria and Poland suggests that journalists have strong reservations about the integrity of political actors in these countries and that the political culture in which the interaction of the elites takes place is still overshadowed by the history of the regime change in the late 1980s (Pfetsch and Voltmer 2012).

Relations with Political Elites

In general, the integration of media elites in the larger elite circles of society remains an open question. There is some indication that executive media elites are somewhat more integrated into elite networks than journalistic elites (Higley et al. 1979; Dreier 1982). A recent Danish study adhering to the notion of a

unified power elite finds that very few media actors belong to this elite and that those included can only be found at the margin (Larsen et al. 2015). However, the integration of media elites into a larger elite network appears to be somewhat higher in both Sweden and Finland (Ruostetsaari 2007). Interestingly, media elites seem to be more integrated in transnational and foreign policy-related networks, such as the Bilderberg group, than in domestic circles (Krüger 2013; Entman 2003). This conclusion must be interpreted with caution, however, given that research on this matter is still scarce.

A rather different picture emerges, if one looks more specifically at the ties between media elites and political elites. A number of studies point to the existence of tight networks between political and media elites, developed through regular interaction and reflection (Entman 2003, p. 164). Based on interviews with elite news sources and top political and financial journalists in London, Davis (2003) argues that the "development of small elite communication networks which include top journalists" creates a situation in which "elites are simultaneously the main sources, main targets and some of the most influenced recipient of news" (p. 673). It seems that the frequent interaction in specific policy circles also results in convergence of political orientations, enabling coalitions among elites in different policy sub-fields (Wenzler 2009, p. 59). For instance, Krüger (2013) shows that high-ranking journalists who are well integrated in the foreign affairs community also support government frames.

Whether media professionals have adopted the viewpoint of political elites through the participation in these circles or whether they were invited to the circles because of their foreign policy stance is open to interpretation. In fact, Reese et al. (1994) point out that media and political elites in policy-specific source networks may very well hold opposing views without compromising the relationship. The recurring encounters of politicians and journalists around a specific issue lay the ground for similar interpretations of political problems. For instance, research conducted in Germany suggests that a number of commonly identified frames in political communication apply both to political and journalistic action, thereby providing a cross-sectoral frame repertoire that stabilizes communication between the two parties (Hoffmann 2003, p. 123). These frames seem to be flexible enough to permit diverging positions about the same issue.

The specific sets of attitudes that underpin the formal and informal interaction of political and media elites have been at the core of a number of studies on political communication cultures in different policy fields and countries (Lesmeister 2008; Burgert 2010; Baugut and Reinemann 2013; Pfetsch and Mayerhöffer 2011; Mayerhöffer and Pfetsch 2011). In a systematic

comparative study of communication cultures in nine European countries, the volume by Pfetsch (2014) links the attitudes of media and political elites to the conditions of the media system and political system, in which the actors are embedded. The results show that professional identity, work restraints and mutual interaction differ between the Nordic, German-speaking and southern European "country families." Additionally, Mayerhöffer (2015) presents evidence for a systematic relation between structural conditions of political communication and attitudinal cohesion of political and media elites: When moving from northern to southern Europe, she finds that decreasing sectoral elite autonomy, sectoral plurality and social mobility results in an increasing level of attitudinal cohesion between media and political elites. At the same time, media elites in northern Europe display a particularly high level of internal congruence in their attitudes. This can be traced back to their high level of professionalization and autonomy from political interference.

Perspectives for Future Research

Even though there is a large number of studies about various issues and countries, our knowledge of media elites is fragmented, selective and in need of new data. Part of the explanation for this situation is that studies of media elites fall between accounts of media business executives in general elite inventories on the one hand and descriptions of high-profile editors and reporters in journalism studies on the other. In addition to the scientific homelessness of media elite studies, our knowledge about this particular group of actors is compromised because available data are mainly from a few Western countries and, for the most part, rather outdated. Given the strategic role of media elites as agenda setters and gatekeepers of political information, public voices, commentators and watchdogs of government, updated and systematic studies of media elites are needed. Moreover, it is necessary to broaden their scope beyond the Western countries and extend research to media elites in transition democracies and countries where democratic institutions and governance are under pressure.

Two issues are particularly critical in this respect. First, the role of media elites in political and media system change is essential. Processes of democratization are highly vulnerable and communication is a crucial variable for short-term processes of political transition as well as for their long-term consequences. The fact that changes of government are frequently accompanied by the dismissal and replacement of media elites, even in well-established democracies, alerts us to their key role in political processes. This role is even

greater in cases of radical system transformations when old orders collapse, when democracy is threatened or when political cultures are subject to fundamental change.

Second, the development of new communication technologies and platforms poses new challenges to the study of media elites. Although we maintain that media elites are still based predominantly in "old media," we concede that media organizations and public communication undergo dramatic changes. Online media, the blogosphere and digital communication platforms create new functions in media leadership, as well as new roles of public communication located at the boundary of professional journalism. These developments may very well change the composition of media elites and their relation to political elites.

The key issue is whether the increasing political relevance of social media strengthens or weakens the status of media elites in modern societies. On the one hand, web-based research and publication networks of journalistic actors and public-sphere activists gain more and more political leverage. The case of *Wikileaks* is just one prominent example of the emerging "networked fourth estate" that has the power to challenge the political role of prestigious media organizations and their journalistic elites (Benkler 2013). Furthermore, recent studies suggest that the use of social media in political communication not only allows political elites to bypass the journalistic gatekeepers but, as journalistic source material, also directly influenceing the content and tone of media coverage (Parmelee 2014). On the other hand, the increasing political relevance of social media may strengthen the position of traditional media elites as the established "watchdogs" of politics and society that heighten public awareness of issues through publicity and transparency. How today's media elites will deal with these challenges are crucial questions for future research.

Notes

1. *Priming* describes a process in which, "by calling attention to some matters while ignoring others, television news influences the standards by which governments, presidents, policies, and candidates for public office are judged" (Iyengar and Kinder 1987, p. 63). *Framing* or the use of news frames means "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman 1993, p. 52).

2. A recent inventory of US elites includes some media actors but focuses on general leadership traits rather than on comparing media elites with other groups (Lindsay and Hager 2014).

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28

Models of Elite Integration

Fredrik Engelstad

At the gateway to modern elite research stands the following formulation by Raymond Aron: "A unified élite means the end of freedom. But when the groups of the élite are not only distinct but become a disunity, it means the end of the State" (1950, p. 143). Between these extremes, the integration of elites involves a precarious balance between unity and disunity at the apex of power. A recent response to problems of elite integration is inherent in the concept of "consensual elites" elaborated by Higley and Burton (2006). Their point of departure is two or more competing elite camps or factions that differ in their interests and resources. If the camps or factions nevertheless recognize a common interest in coexistence and cooperation, they form a consensually integrated elite. The elite's integration has a dual structure: a basic and constitutive agreement, a kind of "constitution," and sets of interests tied to the specific positions and sector locations of elite persons and factions. By contrast, elite camps and factions may be poisonously disunited, fighting for dominance at any cost and with any means. Or again, an elite may be monolithically united, allowing no public expression of diverging interests and requiring its members to express fidelity to a single ideology or creed. In the Higley-Burton perspective, consensual elites are a necessary but not sufficient condition for stable democracy, in which elites engage in three forms of integration: (1) in relationships between distinct groups or factions,

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(2) in relationships within each group or faction, and (3) in relationships between elites and mass publics.

The concept of elites has, of course, a variety of meanings, some of which emphasize superior abilities and talents, some wealth and privilege, and some high social status and prestige. In this chapter, I associate elites with the possession of decisive political power that gives them disproportionate influence on political and social outcomes. Two opposing views of elite power in democracies are found in the literature. One is of a coalescent power structure or "power elite" and the other is of a pluralistic power structure consisting of elite groups located in diverse economic, governmental, military, media, scientific, and other sectors. I will treat the accuracy of these two conflicting views of elite power as an empirical question and take the pluralist view as my point of departure without, however, ruling out the coalescent view.

The number and power of elite groups and factions relative to each other shapes their mode of integration. In his classic book, *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills singled out economic, executive political, and military elites as most powerful elites in the United States, and he consigned all other elites, such as national legislators, to subordinate power positions (Mills 1956, p. 6; Hartmann 2015, p. 396). A contemporary observer describes the American elite as an interlocked constellation based on economic capital combined with forms of social capital (Khan 2012, p. 362). Other observers describe a more differentiated elite consisting of "top position holders in parties, professional associations, trade unions, media, interest groups, religious groups" in the US power structure (Higley and Burton 2006, p. 7). In Germany, Denmark, Norway and Finland, comprehensive empirical studies have identified between seven and ten distinct, more-or-less co-equal elite groups (Rebenstorf 1995; Christiansen et al. 2001; Gulbrandsen et al. 2002; Roustetsaari 2006).

"Agreeing to disagree" is a core aspect of consensual elite integration. However, agreements are volatile if they are not institutionalized. Studies by Mills (1956) of post-World War II US elites and by Ralf Dahrendorf (1959) of West German elites during the 1950s underlined the salience of institutionalization, albeit with different foci. Mills concentrated on the institutionalized power of large business organizations and enterprises and Dahrendorf focused on institutionalized bargaining relations between capital and labor. Recent theoretical treatments of institutionalization depict it as self-reinforcing, because actors adjust to changing circumstances (Pierson 2004). Institutions are arenas for elite agreements and disagreements as well as for elite conflicts about how institutions should be configured and how they should operate (Mahoney and Thelen 2009).

Mechanisms of Elite Integration

Elite integration implies the ability to directly or indirectly communicate with and summon elite persons and groups to collective action. Integration refers to a *status praesens* when persons or groups are about to act. Integration is anchored in social background factors, such as family or social mobility patterns, which may serve as indicators of integration's extent without constituting integration as such. In accordance with Durkheim's concepts of solidarity, the notion of elite integration may have two distinct meanings: (1) similarity consisting of common orientations, attitudes, and social views among members constituting a majority of a given elite group or set of groups and (2) complementarity consisting of reciprocal dependencies among the members of a group or number of groups. Both are necessary but neither is alone sufficient for integration.

Additional aspects of elite integration are six dimensions identified by Robert Putnam: social homogeneity, common recruitment patterns, personal interaction, value consensus, group solidarity, and institutional context (1976, p. 107). Putnam's list can be made more precise by drawing on Durkheim's distinction. *Similarity* depends on (1) common constitutive values, (2) common political and social opinions, and (3) a common "language." This splits Putnam's "value consensus" into factors that pertain to support for a basic constitutive arrangement among elites and factors that are objects of a political tug of war. Both sets of factors vary in importance within and between elite groups, although variations do not necessarily accord with differences between elite sectors. A common "language" refers to the capacity for communication that transcends sector boundaries. *Complementarity* depends on (4) professionalization, (5) sector interests, and (6) trust. The effort is to capture how elite groups differ yet nevertheless cooperate, at least indirectly or tacitly. Professionalization refers to norms that are specific to an elite sector, whereas "sector interests" refer to competition between sectors. For collective action to occur, elite actors must recognize their differences and yet be confident that differences are not fundamentally incompatible with their own interests and values and hence the salience of trust in cementing "group solidarity." Trust may stem from similar social backgrounds and from conventions in behavior, dress, and tastes (Kanter 1977; Bourdieu 1984). Alternatively, trust may stem from shared expectations shaped by repeated negotiations among persons and groups (Gulbrandsen 2007). Among the other dimensions of elite integration identified by Putnam, interactions are a precondition for collective action,

Table 28.1 Models of elite interaction

	Modes of action/interaction	Bases of action	Institutional context
Organizational model	Production	Specific interests	Professional norms Political regulation
Hierarchical model	Democratic governance	Constitutive values	Political authority
Culture model	Socialization Social homogeneity	Common language Trust (signs)	Formal education Stable career tracks
Negotiation model	Bargaining	Common interest Trust (repetition)	Agreements Sanction systems
Network model	Across group communication	Common language Trust (recognition)	"Committees" Institutional regulations
Public Sphere model	Generalized communication Indirect contact	Political opinion Social values	Media structure Access to information

even if they are indirect, whereas "social homogeneity" and "recruitment patterns" cover the background factors mentioned above.

The notion of *institutional context* is of special importance because elite actions occur mainly in institutional arenas. Even when elite persons or groups act unilaterally, by entering into bargaining agreements with other persons and groups, their interactions are mediated by the state or framed by legislation. Hence, governmental institutions as well as degrees of government regulation almost always affect the forms of contact and coordination among elite persons and groups. Based on the foregoing mechanisms of interaction, six models of elite integration are summarized in Table 28.1 and outlined in what follows. All six models have a partial character; they are not mutually exclusive, and they usually occur in combinations.

An Organizational Model

Modern societies are differentiated functionally and socially. Exerting decisive power in them presupposes control over major organizations, each with its own mode of operation, such as business enterprises, government bureaucracies, universities, mass media, and so on. The power of top position holders in these organizations is exercised in three directions: inward toward the organization they head, externally toward "constituencies" of contract partners, customers, clients, and competitors, and externally to other elites and the

state. Acting on behalf of their organizations, elite persons are confronted with complex tasks, and they face institutional restrictions and specific professional norms (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). In their external relationships, elite persons stand accountable for outcomes they are employed to reach as well as for the legitimacy of their organization as conditioned by market regulations and professional competencies (Meyer and Rowan 1977). Common views stemming from similar organizational positions and professional competencies are a precondition for intra-elite integration and for achieving a balance between competition and cooperation between organizations. Central to this is building common platforms for an elite sector via professional associations and meeting places. Equally important is the challenge to represent that sector as a whole vis-à-vis the public at large and not least vis-à-vis other elites. In this respect, building organizational legitimacy is of overarching importance.

Empirical data on these processes are scarce, though some data can be found in a large study of Norwegian elites conducted in 2000 (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002). Hardly any of the variation in the socio-political opinions of elite persons studied could be ascribed to their class backgrounds, whereas their sector positions were linked to opinion variations (Gulbrandsen and Engelstad 2005). A recent longitudinal analysis of the cultural elite in Norway reveals strong efforts by its members to copy the practices of other elite persons and groups in relationships with the state and in media strategies (Engelstad 2015).

A Hierarchical Model

For a society to be democratic, non-elected elite groups exerting leadership in various parts of the state apparatus must be subordinate to the political authority of elected elites. Typically, civil service and military elites are under the elected political elite's control. Other groups, such as churches, universities, or media, may also be partly or wholly subject to the elected elite's authority. But there are always tensions between the political and subordinate elite groups. It is a commonplace that military elites may stage coups and rule as juntas, as happened in Greece, 1967–1974, and in Turkey for long periods during the twentieth century's second half. Less drastically, top-level civil servants regularly shape political decisions through their control of policy planning and implementation. Although the power of civil service elites may be viewed as incompatible with democracy, there are also strong democratic arguments for a high degree of civil service autonomy. Instrumentally, in a democracy, political leaders are dependent on the professional competence of civil servants to implement decisions arrived at democratically. In addition,

only a strongly professionalized civil service can guarantee equality of treatment among citizens, a core democratic value (du Gay 2000).

Among democratic countries, the power of civil service elites varies quite widely (Aberbach et al. 1981). In the United States, holders of top civil service positions are changed with each successive president. In France, relationships between political leaders and top bureaucrats are extraordinarily close and lasting. Among other reasons, the top echelons of the French civil service function as a recruitment pool for top positions in politics and state-owned enterprises, thus creating a governing class of *mandarins* (Dogan 2003). At the other end of this particular continuum, in Britain, a strict division between politics and the civil service is formalized. During their careers, British civil servants are required to stay within their fields of expertise (Kavanagh and Richards 2003). Over time in Britain, however, specialized civil service careers spawned resistance to political governance, which has been one reason for the energetic introduction of the new public management system aimed at increasing political control of the civil service (du Gay 2000).

A Cultural Model

Culture is understood as common values, socio-political opinions, attitudes, and modes of communication. Cultural commonalities are essential for both intra- and inter-elite integration. They reduce uncertainties in interaction (Kanter 1977) and underpin a common "language" among elite persons and groups (Rebenstorf 1997). Cultural commonalities are generated by similarities in primary socialization, especially early school experiences. They are reinforced by professional education and career tracks, manifested in the selection of "dependable" candidates for important positions. How cultural commonalities combine varies between societies. Writing about France, for example, Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1996) observed that basic attitudes and a specific *habitus* are induced early in the family and in the public school system. Similar socialization commonalities have been identified in American upper-class boarding schools (Khan 2011).

Three different patterns of professional education are found in Europe (Hartmann 2010). The road to elite positions in France goes through the *Grandes Écoles*, especially the *École nationale d'administration,* leading to top positions in the state administration but thereafter also in politics and in state-owned enterprises (Dogan 2003). Attending elite schools plays a considerable role for private business careers as well (McLean et al. 2006). Similar, albeit less

extreme, patterns are found in Spain. By contrast, the British schools and universities preparing for entrance into the elite are less centralized and more often private, whereas subsequent career tracks are more strongly segmented, as noted earlier. Switzerland to some extent displays the British pattern. In northwestern Europe, however, such clear patterns of elite education and professional training are not found (Hartmann 2010).

Application of the cultural model is most plausible where the number of elite groups is low. In *The Power Elite* (1956), Mills described circulation between top positions in US business, the political executive, and the military that produced an intertwined elite. The pattern he described is to some extent confirmed by a quick glance at recent US political history: Since 1980, four out of five US presidents were graduates of Yale and Harvard, two military generals have served as secretaries of state, and most treasury secretaries have been recruited from key Wall Street firms. Moreover, instances of successful businessmen entering American politics at the top level abound, and a large number of CEOs of major firms have served in important cabinet posts. US political institutions do much to produce an intertwined elite. The loose structure of American political parties makes it possible to reach the highest political posts without close party ties, while appointments to top civil service positions are decided by the party that wins a presidential election. A third factor is the role of the military due to the dominant position of the United States in world politics and, accordingly, a large defense industry that contributes to the overlaps between business, executive politics, and the military. By contrast, Scandinavia and Germany display more segmented elite structures. Top politicians are recruited via party channels and only occasionally from leading positions in business, to which politicians seldom move when they leave politics. There is virtually no political elite recruitment from the military in these countries (Rebenstorf 1997; Christiansen et al. 2001; Gulbrandsen et al. 2002).

A Negotiation Model

In contrast to the organizational and cultural models of integration, a negotiation model focuses on foundational agreements between elite persons and groups on the basis of an assumed common interest (Higley and Burton 2006). But in order to flourish and persist, foundational agreements require institutional support. For example, the US Supreme Court functions as guarantor of the Constitution, and it plays a dynamic role in constitutional interpretation and re-interpretation to meet the needs of a changing society.

Alternatively, a foundational elite agreement may be reinforced by secondary agreements between a few key elite groups that in the long run transform state policies (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002).

In Scandinavian countries, a neo-corporatist system has emerged that is rooted in so-called Basic Agreements that regulate bargaining between labor and capital. This has laid the groundwork for tripartite wage bargaining systems at industry or national levels, most clearly in Norway where the state has a strong role as the bargaining facilitator and coordinator (Dølvik et al. 2015). The triadic relationship stretches to comprehensive market regulations and conditions of employment as well as to considerable state ownership shares in private business. One effect is a high degree of trust between the business and trade union elites, as compared with Germany, which relies more on agreements about employee participation in private and public organizations (Gulbrandsen and Hoffmann-Lange 2007). Recently in Norway, secondary elite agreements were negotiated in the form of the country's membership in the European Economic Area instead of full membership in the EU. Other secondary agreements have been negotiated to allow for equal gender opportunities that amount to "state feminism" (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002).

Tripartite agreements involving the state, employers, and trade unions unfold in other European countries, especially in Italy, Ireland, Portugal, and Finland (Avdagic et al. 2011). When a crisis arises, be it a monetary crisis or a pressing need to reform a pension system, the relevant elite groups come together to negotiate "pacts" that are more or less satisfactory to all signatories. However, the "pacts" do not have the same institutionalized and stable character as negotiated tripartite agreements in Scandinavia, and they, therefore, have fewer long-term effects. In a comparative study of elite negotiations during the transatlantic financial crisis before and after 2008, the United States and Norway were located as opposite poles, with Italy located in a middle position (Engelstad 2014). The financial crisis was to a large extent the consequence of deficient communication among American economic and political elites. When the crisis reached Norway, however, elites were able to find common and efficient solutions, whereas solutions negotiated by Italian elites proved difficult and problematic, despite the greater communication between relevant elites in Italy than among American counterparts.

A Network Model

In a network model, elite negotiations occur and decisions are made in a large number of committees, commissions, and boards. In many respects, these entities function as nodes in wider elite networks that connect related issues and overlapping members. In the United States, Australia, and West Germany, aggregates of network connections have been seen as important sources of elite integration within or between sector elites that are also linked by mutual recognitions and trust (Moore 1979; Higley et al. 1991). The model's premise is that related issues are linked in ways that approximate Wittgenstein's (1953) conception of family resemblance—some family members have the same eye color and shape of the nose; others share a nose shape, but also the shape of ears and so on. In a similar way, issues needed to be decided, and persons who make the decisions may be "related." A common example is interlocking directorates as sources of coordination between enterprises via information transmitted by directors who hold positions in several boards simultaneously (Burt 2000). Even if each board acts independently, by being tied to a wide network of directors, information is transmitted across sets of enterprises. Higley and his colleagues (1991) utilized a network model to explain elite integration at the societal level. They uncovered a wide chain of very different issues that were effectively merged through network membership. Elite respondents named the one national issue to which they had devoted the most attention during the previous year as well as persons they had the most contact with when dealing with that issue. Responses were found to form issue chains that aggregated into networks of several hundred elite persons in each country studied.

The structure of large elite networks depends, nevertheless, on the structure of institutions. Moving from informal issue chains to actual decisions presupposes supplementary information about the factual meeting points where decisions are prepared and made. In the business sector, for example, market regulations and ownership patterns are decisive (Scott 2003). They vary from strict regulations and concentrated ownership in today's Germany to lax regulations and dispersed ownership in the United States and United Kingdom, with Canada somewhere in between (Ornstein 2003).

Elite integration fostered by issue chains and networks does not presuppose a common culture or a common mode of understanding. Diversified elites do not have to interact directly outside their relatively restricted domains. The model merely assumes reciprocal recognitions, mutual trust, and a certain amount of empathy for other elite persons and groups. Professional

organizations are central to these networks, whereas meeting places for networking are often temporary single-issue committees, expert commissions, and boards. Despite their ubiquity in democratic societies, the density of such bodies varies between societies. Except for Austria, the highest density is found in Scandinavia's neo-corporatist system where there are extensive policy-discussing bodies appointed by the state. Together with broad hearing processes connected to revisions of legislation and various reforms that mobilize interested parties, these bodies form a broad system of "input democracy" (Goodin 2004). During recent decades, however, the number of such bodies in Scandinavian countries has decreased and they have been replaced by direct lobbying. For example, the Swedish Employers Association withdrew from all kinds of direct neo-corporatist cooperation in the early 1990s (Sejersted 2011), while lobbying has been increasing greatly in its incidence in Denmark and Norway (Rommetvedt et al. 2011).

A Public Sphere Model

A public sphere is the social arena between civil society and the state. Not a unitary social space, it is "a very complex network stretching out to a large number of overlapping international, national, regional, local, and sub-cultural arenas" (Habermas 1996, p. 373). These arenas establish contacts between elites and the general public as well as internally among elites (Davis 2003). Institutional prerequisites for the public sphere are democratic media and cultural policies that provide general and wide access to information (Benson 2009). Communication in the public sphere is not restricted to political interests and issues; it includes the arts, sciences, and religion. Deliberations in the public sphere are mediated by news media, books, journals, white papers, artworks, and so on. For elite integration, the media holds a central position, given that it is a core channel for the transmission of information. Consequently, the media elite is of great importance and influence (Roustetsaari 2006, p. 32). Actors in the public sphere are to a large extent constrained by the logics of media and what is regarded as "news" (Schudson 1989).

In contrast to the network model, information in the public sphere is not transmitted from one node to the next, but simultaneously to all prospective readers, listeners, or viewers. Similar to the network model, however, elite cohesion does not presuppose full agreement between different elite groups; it is sufficient that their views are compatible and invite tolerance and trust. At the same time, the public sphere has space for the development and debating

of complex matters, such as constitutive norms that would otherwise be confined to arenas with limited public access. The public sphere's openness is somewhat restricted by the capacity of elites to influence constitutive norms through small steps that may together have extensive consequences (Mahoney and Thelen 2009).

Media structures vary between societies, of course. In a broad comparative study, Hallin and Mancini (2004) distinguish three structures: democratic corporatist, polarized pluralist, and liberal. The first is characteristic of Northern Europe, the second of Mediterranean Europe, and the third of the Anglophone world. In both democratic corporatist and liberal structures, there is a low degree of fidelity to political ideologies and parties. The extent of elite exposure to the public sphere correlates with the intensity of communication strategies. In the Norwegian elite study, for example, all elite groups and most respondents reported strategies centered on being interviewed by media interviews and writing opinion articles (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002; Engelstad 2015). These strategies have been somewhat altered by employing public relations consultants in business enterprises, voluntary organizations, and even state bureaucracies during the past two decades (Schillemanns 2012).

Nevertheless, despite the openness of public spheres to elites and publics, suspicion and distance between them have increased in most of Europe and North America. Sizable variations between regions of Europe are notable, with the highest political and social trust in elites exhibited by publics in the Nordic countries and the lowest by Southern European publics and by publics in the post-communist countries (OECD 2016, figure CO1.1). Simultaneously, the distance between media oriented toward the general public and media oriented principally toward elite groups has been increasing. Media catering primarily to elites contribute, on the one hand, to elite integration via nationally "leading" newspapers such as *Le Monde* or *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and, on the other hand, by *niche* media exemplified by a business press that also covers issues of general interest. *The Financial Times* is a prominent example, being a daily newspaper that contributes to elite cohesion in its society of origin (the UK) and to the cohesion of European elites as an entity (Corcoran and Fahy 2009). Catering to elite groups does not mean that media behave uniformly because struggles over agenda setting occur constantly among elites, especially between specific elite groups and explicitly political elites. One mechanism influencing political agendas is leaks to the media that are the bane of many elite persons and groups (Gulbrandsen 2010).

Societal Integration: Elites and Mass Publics

The relationship of elites to mass publics is customarily measured in two ways: by the relative chances that various persons in the public have of attaining elite positions and by differences between the socio-political opinions and cultural preferences of elites and the public. The most common pattern is that of a wide gap between citizens' occupational chances and attaining elite positions. However, observations of this gap may rest on discretionary judgments, because few data sets allow precise measurement. Based mostly on indirect observations of recruitment and entrances into educational institutions, Hartmann (2015, p. 399) judges that in France and Great Britain the overwhelming majority of elite persons come from the most privileged 4 percent of the population during their fathers' generation. Large-scale elite studies from Germany and Norway give a somewhat different picture. In 1995, 65 percent of the German elite had backgrounds outside the upper-middle or upper classes (*obere Dienstklasse*), which constituted 6 percent of the population in their fathers' generation (Schnapp 1997, p. 77). In Norway in 2001, 63 percent of some 2000 elite position holders grew up in lower-middle and working-class families (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002, p. 79). Such percentages become more meaningful if they are not confined to a static picture and reflect changes. For example, Hartmann (2015, p. 399) assumes that "In most European countries social recruitment [to high-status positions] has become more exclusive." Khan (2012) makes the same guess about the United States. But such assertions are contradicted by studies showing that between 1981 and 1995, the Duncan Index of Dissimilarity decreased from 45.5 to 38.5 in Germany (Schnapp 1997, p. 77), and while data on Norway are not fully comparable to German data, they show a robust decrease in dissimilarity from 1969 to 2001 (Gulbrandsen and Engelstad 2005). It is not certain, of course, that decreases will continue. When comparing countries, percentages must be treated with caution, because definitions of social classes vary considerably. As regards socio-political opinions of elites and mass publics, data indicate moderate differences between Norwegian elites and the public. In particular, Norwegian elite groups on average hold somewhat more liberal views on questions connected to gender equality and migration policies (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002). Cultural divides between elites and publics pertain to differences in tastes and appearance. Tastes may reflect differential power positions, but they may also reinforce common elite identities and cohesion. Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) is the *locus classicus*, although later research has indicated greater pluralism in class-based tastes, particularly at higher social

levels than Bourdieu posited (Peterson 1996). In Scandinavia, modesty in appearance is the social norm for politicians and to a large extent for other elite groups, but in France, there is a good deal of more ostentation (Daloz 2010). Differences in political style also separate Scandinavia from France. In France, for example, top female politicians suffer strong tensions between political power and gender, whereas in Norway, politics has a more inclusive and caring style (Krogstad and Storvik 2007).

Normative Limits to Elite Integration?

Elite integration involves a normative question: which patterns of integration are legitimate and which are not? In discussions of elite integration, however, normative questions remain mostly implicit if not ignored entirely (Engelstad 2010). Thus, it is important to specify norms against which patterns of elite integration may be judged. In the literature on elite integration, four specifications can be discerned. Eva Etzioni-Halevy specifies a strong liberal norm. The only way to maintain individual freedom, she insists, is to neutralize elite power through a plurality of competing elites, each with maximal autonomy (1993, p. 97). To the extent that elite cooperation is necessary, it should be based on elites' self-interests, not on an encompassing elite consensus. Hence, norms relevant to elite integration are those applied by external observers, not by elites themselves. Second, a strong "critical" norm is specified by Hartmann (2015, p. 397) with reference to Mills (1956) and Bourdieu (1996). They combine Etzioni-Halevy's suspicion of elite integration with a focus on social closure. Patterns of social distance between elites and publics are held to be illegitimate according to an implicit norm of social equality. However, as in "critical theory" more generally, problems of balancing equality against other normative considerations are not addressed.

Third, a normative specification associated with Higley and his colleagues (1991) is linked to Schumpeterian democracy, that is, that citizens choose governing political elites in free and fair elections but between elections the chosen elites make decisions and citizens stand at a distance. Here, democratic accountability emerges as the normative issue: governing elites are accountable in elections. By introducing the concept of consensual elites, pluralism also becomes explicit as a norm. But in line with the network model, elite integration also involves many non-elected elites, and how the norm of accountability applies to non-elected elites is unclear. Finally, a specification of norms with which to judge elite integration draws on the public sphere model (Habermas 1996; Engelstad 2010). This underscores the importance of

public openness as necessary for a legitimate integration of elites. Public communication is held to be a core value, inviting public deliberation about constitutive issues, the structure and actions of elites, as well as the state's key features.

Mechanisms of Elite Disintegration

If elite integration dissipates, one reason lying near to hand is that an initial elite agreement was not broad or strong enough to sustain a tacit elite consensus over time. This appears to be the case in some post-communist countries of Central Eastern Europe, where increasingly bitter elite rivalries have surfaced since their transitions from state socialism (Baylis 2012). It is argued that in Hungary, for example, democratic values were to a large degree only simulated during the transition (Lengyel and Ilonszki 2010). Disintegration may also occur without initial agreements being broken or fragmented, because institutions change constantly, and elite agreements are, therefore, always precarious.

Accordingly, theories of institutional change, in the form of aggregate effects or path dependence, are relevant. They illuminate processes of integration and disintegration. A theory of aggregate change explains how institutions may be undermined by gradual and continuous re-interpretations of rules or by significant decreases in their social relevance (sometimes labeled institutional "drift"). Re-interpretations of rules sometimes re-invigorate institutions by "layering" new rules on to extant ones or by creating a completely different institutional arrangement (Mahoney and Thelen 2009). An example is the fate of printed newspapers during the past two decades in Western countries. The Internet's development has led to serious declines in readerships and advertising revenues. Layering the printed and Internet versions of newspapers has been widespread, and a change in media elite power may be a consequence. An example of institutional replacement is the abolition of the state church in Sweden in 2002 and its recreation as the autonomous Church of Sweden, which is largely though not fully independent of the state.

The theory of path dependence (Pierson 2004) is consonant with the Higley-Burton conception of foundational elite agreements or "settlements." The theory assumes that crises occur from time to time, but each crisis opens a "window of opportunity" to reform earlier elite understandings and arrangements. A difficulty is, however, that such "windows" may point in several directions: to reinforce the old order but just as likely to eradicate it. An attempted military coup in Turkey in July 2016 apparently afforded an

opportunity to reinforce the existing rule, whereas the continuing financial crisis in Greece has afforded an opportunity to eradicate the old order. When it became clear that Greece could not ever pay off its loans, the result was a far-reaching political change, a reconfiguration of Greek elites, and a surrender of their decisional autonomy to the apparatuses of the EU Commission and European Central Bank.

Elite Integration and Disintegration at the European Level

Despite globalization, elites, even business elites, remain relatively integrated within national boundaries (Hartmann 2015). The EU is a fertile field for studying ongoing elite integration and disintegration. The EU's constellation of elites, populations, and social institutions is much more volatile than in the member states, and it is dependent on complex negotiations characterized to a large degree by trial and error (Best et al. 2012). Measures to strengthen elite integration at the European level are numerous. Paralleling political ambitions to create an "ever closer union," Europe-wide sector elites have emerged. Civil service employees are active in the Commission. The Bologna process of harmonizing European universities, along with increased funding of research, reinforces the formation of a Europe-wide academic and scientific elite. Economic elites are Europeanized by the creation of enterprises operating throughout the single market, a Europe-wide employer association, and a common regulation of labor markets. But examples of elite disintegration also abound in Europe. In addition to Greece, huge budget deficits afflict Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and Italy. The 2016 referendum on the United Kingdom's exit from the EU emphasizes another aspect of elite disintegration. Although economic arguments in favor of "Brexit" are not compelling, the lack of political trust in the EU among British elites exemplifies a disintegrative trend. Both examples, different as they are, illustrate weaknesses in the constitutive values of European political and economic elites. Most national elites in EU member states favor European integration, but their justifications are different and only partly overlapping (Best 2012). This makes the EU a fragile construction, exacerbated by the fact that it has always been an elite construction built at a considerable distance from national populations (Cotta 2012). Moreover, the EU lacks additional institutional support such as a strong Supreme Court that guarantees the constitution or a series of secondary elite compromises that involve both elites and mass populations.

Conclusion

Elite integration is a *sine qua non* for stable, reasonably peaceful political governance. Yet there is no guarantee that integration can occur everywhere or that it can succeed where it does occur. Integration is a complex matter, powerfully demonstrated by the growing number of failed and failing states in today's world. Less dramatic, but still problematic, are the challenges to elite integration in well-established democracies. Among the three forms of integration discussed in this chapter, that of integration of sector elites is the least demanding, yet it is dependent on a difficult balancing of competing actors' diverging interests and coordinating interests. This balancing is eased, but not necessarily solved, by the formation of professional associations, chambers of commerce, and diverse agreements. More challenging is the integration of sector elites into a comprehensive, pluralist elite structure. In a democratic society, elites must navigate between the Scylla of fragmentation and the Charybdis of autocracy, between reciprocal recognition and narrow professional perspectives. In the past, this was possible within the framework of the national state. In today's world, elites must operate at both national and international levels, confronting national institutions that often are too narrow and international institutions that are usually too weak. These challenges to elite integration are exacerbated by complex relationships between elites and mass populations. Without sufficient legitimacy in these relationships, elite integration is in danger of breaking down. When elites also operate internationally, they risk being overwhelmed by complexities, as the current international scene in Europe and beyond clearly illustrates.

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Section V

Elite Attributes and Resources

Jean-Pascal Daloz and Ursula Hoffmann-Lange

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Elite Attributes and Resources

Jean-Pascal Daloz and Ursula Hoffmann-Lange

Political and social elites are distinguished by their institutional power and their influence on (political) decisions of national importance. Since power and influence are continuous rather than dichotomous concepts, elites do not constitute a distinctive social category or class. The distinction between elites and non-elites depends on the application of criteria defined by investigators instead. The same is true for the attributes and resources of elites discussed in this section of the handbook. Elites command more power and influence resources than other members of society, but this is a matter of degree. While some of their attributes and resources such as gender, ethnicity, religion or wealth are ascribed or inherited, most of them—in particular influence resources deriving from leadership positions in political institutions or civil society organizations—are acquired during the lifecourse. This is even true for many personality attributes since the actualization of the genetic potential of an individual is conditioned by experience. Moreover, the opportunities for the acquisition of elite attributes and resources are rooted in relatively stable social and political structures of a society. Access to elite positions depends on both institutionalized political rules and social traditions that cannot easily be

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changed by individual choice. A particularly pertinent example for such mechanisms is the inequality of educational opportunities. While the impact of family background on the educational opportunities of children varies considerably across societies, attempts at eliminating it completely, for instance by communist regimes, have been unsuccessful (Best 2012).

The chapter on personality attributes of elites by Gian Vittorio Caprara and Jo Silvester discusses the impact of elites' personality traits, motivation and cognitive abilities on their values and behavior. It reviews a broad range of empirical studies that have mainly dealt with politicians and used different methodological approaches, among them psychoanalysis, content analysis of printed or recorded materials (official documents, books, periodicals, audio or video recordings) as well as survey research. The latter studies have customarily relied on personality scales developed by clinical psychologists. Given the widespread suspicion of politicians' trustworthiness, it is not surprising that the propensity to seek power and to engage in manipulation (Machiavellianism) has received a great deal of attention by elite researchers. While personality traits of elites played a central role already in the writings of Pareto and Michels, they were neglected by empirical elite research until recently. So far, the accumulated evidence is still sketchy and its theoretical basis has not been systematically developed. In order for the field to move forward, it would be important to develop and test theoretical assumptions on differences in personality traits between elites and citizens as well as between elites working in different sectors that would help understand their importance for political representation and democratic legitimacy.

The social and political backgrounds of elites have received much more attention by elite researchers instead. Numerous single-country and comparative studies provide a good basis for drawing conclusions on the factors determining the ascent into elite positions. Non-democratic polities as well as defective democracies frequently impose formal barriers against the recruitment of certain segments of the population to political positions of command. In traditional monarchies, access to the elites of the state used to be reserved for members of the aristocracy. The abolition of all formal and informal barriers for elite recruitment has always been a central demand of democratic movements. Democratic theory holds that political recruitment ought to be based on open and fair competition. Only elite recruitment based on meritocratic criteria is considered as legitimate in modern democratic societies. While most formal barriers have been abolished in the course of full democratization, empirical research has regularly demonstrated the continued underrepresentation of women, ethnic minorities, and the offspring of lower-status families among political and social elites even in consolidated democracies. Where formal barriers are absent, such underrepresentation may be the result of two

fundamentally different mechanisms, inequality of educational and career opportunities, or active discrimation. Discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, or religion continued to be widespread practice until recently. Discriminatory practices restricting the voting rights of African Americans existed in the United States until the Voting Rights Acts of the mid-1960s. In Switzerland, women were granted the right to vote only in 1971. While such formal discrimination can be fought by legislative means, the inequality of educational opportunities is a universal pattern based on the inequality of cultural, social and economic capital that increases the chances of children from families with higher social status to achieve higher education and to enjoy better chances of entering a successful career. This mechanism leads to what Robert Putnam (1976) called "the law of increasing disproportion" which implies that the share of individuals from high-status families increases with the social status of a position. Daniel Gaxie's chapter deals with such selection effects in modern democracies, but takes a much broader perspective by also discussing the professionalization of politics, the relevance of political parties for political careers and the impact of political recruitment on the political linkages between political elites and their voters.

The contribution by Jean-Pascal Daloz provides reflections on symbolic dimensions of superiority as constituting a crucial resource for political elites within both pre-democratic and democratic settings. Drawing mainly from the anthropological and historical literature, various configurations of the past are discussed. Daloz then shows how in contemporary democratic systems, the issue of the symbolic superiority of top-level political actors is framed in specific terms. Even though they still have to stand out and above, political elites also need to remain close enough to the voters they claim to speak for. From a bottom-up perspective, they have to appear to be "one of us" in contexts of (at least formal) egalitarianism. They thus have to constantly reconcile opposing imperatives of eminence and nearness. However, comparative research shows that it is crucial to take into account the highly contrasted systems of meaning within which political actors operate. In some contexts, projecting an image of distinction is expected, while this would constitute a properly unthinkable notion in some others. In between, we find a whole spectrum of more ambiguous situations where fulfilling the duties of representation may demand both proof of and transcendence of proximity.

The chapter on norms and orientations of political elites by Bernhard Weßels discusses the necessity for elites to balance contradictory role expectations as well. It focuses on two aspects, the relationship between the demographic and attitudinal representation of citizens by elites as well as the responsibility of elites for the stability of democracy. With respect to

representation, Weßels discusses three contradictory expectations. On the one hand politicians are expected to satisfy the needs and political interests of their voters. Therefore, a high degree of attitudinal congruence among politicians and voters is frequently interpreted as indicator of representation. On the other hand, the pluralist nature of modern democratic polities implies that politicians are confronted with demands by a large number of other elite groups which increases the possibility of elite-mass divergence. Ultimately, everyone expects them to take decisions in the long-term interest of the entire society.

Under normal circumstances, elite policy-making can rely on routine procedures to balance contradictory role expectations. Such routines are insufficient, however, for coping with domestic crises based on deep economic recessions, the emergence of violent opposition movements or even with international conflicts. In times of crisis, political elites have more freedom of movement and may even have to deviate from previous behavioral patterns in order to overcome crises. In his contribution, Weßels draws on the work of scholars such as John Higley (Higley and Burton 2006) and Juan Linz (Linz and Stepan 1996) who emphasized the role of elite settlements or elite pacts as a way out of an impasse among contending elite factions.

The final chapter in this section by David Knoke (Chap. 34) deals with elite networks as a resource for influencing policies. It complements two other handbook chapters dealing with elite networks, that is, the chapter on methods for studying elite networks and the chapter on elite integration. The theory of the *organizational state* (Laumann and Knoke 1987) is based on the assumption that policy-making in modern democracies involves close-knit elite networks of representatives of resource-rich private organizations (business, interest associations) and government agencies, with no clear-cut boundaries between the two types of actors (private and state). In their seminal empirical study *Comparing Policy Networks*, David Knoke et al. (1996) have studied such policy-making networks comparatively. The chapter also addresses other aspects of power networks, among them economic elite networks in transitional markets (Knoke 2012), global elite networks, analytical power elite models as well as methods for identifying power network positions.

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The Personality Attributes of Political Elites

Gian Vittorio Caprara and Jo Silvester

The relationship between personality and politics is one of the oldest and most frequently debated topics in political psychology (Caprara and Vecchione 2016). On the one hand, proponents argue that personality characteristics, such as extraversion, Machiavellianism, cognitive ability and self-efficacy, can influence an individual's likelihood of attaining political office, as well as their performance and style once elected (Deluga 2001; Dietrich et al. 2012; House et al. 1991; Silvester et al. 2014; Simonton 1988). Others, however, invite more caution, arguing that as political actors operate in highly ambiguous and contested environments, individual differences in personality may have less impact on political outcomes than the constraints of situations and the actions of coalitions or groups (Greenstein 1992). In this chapter we return to this debate by examining evidence that personality attributes influence the behavior, decisions and potential success of political elites.

In adopting a psychological perspective, we conceptualize personality in terms of individual characteristics that predispose people to act in particular

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ways, but which also interact with environmental factors (e.g., actions of others, political context) to shape the behavior and decisions of members of political elites. Our aims are to provide the reader with an overview of the personality constructs with most relevance for explaining political behavior and therefore for our understanding of political elites.

It is likely that certain personality attributes such as intelligence, ambition and will are important for achieving positions of power and for becoming effective leaders in most organizations. Yet one may wonder in which degree and combination they are required in situations where individuals must gain support to be elected and need to forge consensus within constituencies and coalitions to be successful. For this reason we will confine our analysis of personality attributes to elected members of national and local political bodies in modern democracies. Our reasoning will rely primarily on empirical findings of psychological research.

Defining Personality and Its Features

Personality involves patterns of behavioral habits and qualities, expressed through physical and mental activities, that characterize individuals as purposive agents and distinguish them from others with whom they interact (Caprara and Cervone 2000). Modern notions of personality address the functioning of the entire person and cover phenomena that, in the past, were traced to the notions of *temperament*, *character*, *intelligence* or *will*. Indeed personality can be thought of as a dynamic system of psychological structures and processes that mediates the relationship between individuals and their environment; accounting for what a person is and may become.

One may trace personality functioning and development to three main sources of causation: nature, nurture and choice. Over past decades, personality psychologists have come to recognize that the development and functioning of personality cannot be properly understood without addressing its biological roots. Recent years, in particular, have witnessed considerable progress in our understanding of the genetic factors that function as distal determinants of personality, and of the brain systems that are more proximal determinants of personality functioning and development. At the same time progress has also been made in understanding how social environments and interpersonal relations shape a person's endowments. This development involves continuous and reciprocal interactions between the person as a bio-psychological system and the social context in which the person lives.

Thus genetic endowment and brain systems equip individuals with a vast potential, the actualization of which will be conditional on their experiences.

Early contexts in particular set the conditions for developing the knowledge structures, emotional patterns and habits that confer unity, continuity, coherence and 'agentic power' to people. Agentic power implies the display of unique properties like awareness, self-reflection and self-regulation that allow people to accord their behavior to personal goals and standards and to constantly challenge the boundaries set by biological and social constraints. Over the entire course of a person's life, internal structures (i.e., cognitive and affective mental representations), experiences, behavior, and the environment all operate as interacting determinants of what personality is at any moment, creating a network of reciprocal causation in which people are active agents in charting their life course.

Looking at personality as a living system in relation to the environment, it is possible to take two perspectives, focusing either on its observable expressions or the function it serves in development and adaptation. The first view leads to an examination of the architecture of qualities in observed behaviors that distinguish individuals from one from another.

The second view leads to an examination of the properties of personality as a self-referential and regulatory system that accounts for how people think of themselves, and how they align their behavior with personal goals, values and self-image. Ultimately, traits, cognitive abilities, motives, values and self-beliefs all provide a means for examining the personal qualities of political leaders including their ambitions and accomplishments.

Personality Traits

A personality trait is defined as a relatively stable and defining feature of an individual that allows us to distinguish people from one another. Traits can also be viewed as habitual behaviors associated with stable patterns of thoughts and feelings. Central to the theory of personality traits is the assumption that traits are psychological qualities that are, for the most part, normally distributed among members of the general population. The extent to which an individual demonstrates a particular trait can be assessed using standardized questionnaires, where individuals are asked to rate their own personality, or where observers are asked to rate the personality of others. Trait theory sits within a positivist epistemology, because it assumes that individual differences in traits can be quantified and therefore individuals and groups can be compared. Another important component of trait research concerns the extent

to which different traits predict outcomes such as individual behavior, effective performance of tasks or roles, decision-making, and leader emergence. Researchers interested in personality traits of political elites have explored questions about the relationship between personality and political outcomes (e.g., political effectiveness) and explored differences in personality between groups with different political roles (e.g., political elites and voters). Broadly trait research can be divided into two areas: studies focusing on *single trait theories* of personality and studies that use *multi-trait theories* of personality. Whereas *single trait theories* concern a specific area of personality and behavior, *multi-trait theories* seek to describe the full structure of personality in terms of a finite number of traits that are consistent across both cultural contexts and populations.

Researchers investigating personality traits and political elites have adopted both approaches. Machiavellianism is a good example of a single personality trait that has interested researchers trying to understand the propensity to seek power and to engage in cunning and manipulation to retain power (Christie and Geis 1970; Drory and Gluskinos 1980; Silvester 2017). People who score highly on Machiavellianism typically have a less conventional view of morality, show lower levels of empathy, and are more willing to lie and exploit others in order to achieve personal goals. In contrast, people who score low on Machiavellianism are usually more easily persuaded, prefer to accommodate others, and tend to be more idealistic and moral.

While the extent to which the items of the Machiavellianism scale really reflect Machaivelli's original ideas is debateable, most of the research has investigated Machiavellianism in the workplace (e.g., Biberman 1985; Grams and Rogers 1990; O'Boyle et al. 2012); only a few studies have explored the relevance of Machiavellianism for the actions of political elites. Simonton (1986), for example, asked experts to rate biographical materials for 39 presidents using a range of adjectives. He found a positive correlation between the level of Machiavellianism demonstrated by a president and both the total number of acts passed during their administration and the number of their legislative victories. More recently, Deluga (2001) asked raters to assess the Machiavellianism of US presidents by reading and then rating anonymized profiles of each president using an adapted version of the most widely used Mach IV scale. Finding a positive correlation between Machiavellianism and charismatic leadership, Deluga suggests that higher levels of Machiavellianism may help presidents to depersonalize their decision-making, allowing them to be more detached and confident when advancing their goals.

Researchers using a multi-trait approach are usually interested in understanding how the different facets of an individual's personality work together

to influence the behavior of others and the outcomes of collective decision-making. Multi-trait theories assume that personality as a whole can be described in terms of a small and finite number of basic traits; and that individuals vary in the degree to which they manifest these traits.

Among the early studies using multi-trait theories of personality, Costantini and Craik's (1980) study of members of California's presidential delegation slate across five US presidential campaigns (1968–1976) was probably the first to capture self-ratings of personality from politicians using the standardized personality questionnaire developed by Gough (1960). Their research compared self-ratings of politicians with those of the general public, making it possible to investigate differences in personality traits between these two groups. They found that members of the presidential delegation were higher than the general public on *dominance, self-confidence and achievement*, but lower on *deference, abasement* and *succorance*. This means that they were more likely to be assertive, outgoing, ambitious and determined to do well, but less likely to take on subordinate roles in relation to others, express feelings of inferiority or seek sympathy or emotional support.

A similar approach has been used by researchers studying politicians' personality using a taxonomy of personality traits commonly referred to as the 'Big Five' or the Five Factor Model (FFM: Wiggins 1996). A substantial body of research now exists in support of the FFM, which describes five basic traits: extraversion (or energy), agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience (or intellect). Extraversion refers to an individual's tendency to behave and react vigorously in different situations and is usually described by adjectives such as sociable, active, and dynamic. Agreeableness refers to an individual's concern for altruism, generosity, and loyalty and is usually described by adjectives such as honest, sincere and kind. Conscientiousness refers to the tendency to pursue order and to meet one's obligations, and is usually described by adjectives such as diligent, reliable and precise. Emotional stability refers to control of impulses and emotions and it is usually described by adjectives such as calm, patient and relaxed. Finally, openness to experience refers to an interest in culture and curiosity for new experiences and is described by adjectives such as innovative, imaginative and creative. Each of these higher order traits (e.g., extraversion) encompasses several lower-level tendencies (e.g., sociability), which in turn predispose lower-level behavioral habits (e.g., the tendency to organize social gatherings) and account for specific behaviors in given situations. The FFM has demonstrated high predictive validity in several domains of human behavior, including health, academic attainments, work achievement and politics (Caprara and Cervone 2000).

Intelligence and Cognitive Styles

Although intelligence is not usually equated with personality, it is a stable individual characteristic that impacts significantly on the way individuals behave, solve problems and navigate challenging environments. Intelligence encapsulates a variety of cognitive abilities, including the mental operations required to perform numerical, verbal and spatial tasks, manage symbols and ideas, engage in reasoning and planning, and learn from own and others' experiences. Thus it is central to performing activities that are dependent on the capacity to process, organize and critically analyze new or complex information and to make the best use of knowledge and experience. A distinction has been made between *fluid* intelligence (i.e., the ability to solve novel problems without depending heavily on previous knowledge), and *crystallized* intelligence (i.e., an individual's store of knowledge and learned operations: Cattell 1963). Whereas heredity accounts for a large portion of the variability of intelligence, the contribution of environment is equally decisive in fully actualizing individuals' intellectual potential.

The relevance of cognitive ability for political elites has long been discussed, with many researchers arguing that cognitive capacity is important for effective performance in political office (Simonton 2006). To date, however, only one study has evaluated the relationship between intelligence and political performance by directly comparing the scores achieved by politicians on a standardized measure of cognitive ability and their subsequent performance in a general election. In a longitudinal study of parliamentary candidates in the 2005 British general election, Silvester and Dykes (2007) asked individuals to complete a critical thinking questionnaire (Watson and Glaser 1991) prior to the general election as part of a party assessment procedure to select prospective parliamentary candidates. The questionnaire consists of five sub-tests (inference, recognition of assumptions, deduction, interpretation and evaluation of arguments), each requiring the application of reasoning skills likely to be important for a politician's ability to grasp competing arguments and deduce potential solutions. Silvester and Dykes found a significant positive association between critical thinking skill and both the percentage of votes and percentage swing in votes that candidates achieved during the general election. This finding mirrors findings from studies in work contexts that document a consistent and significant relationship between employees' cognitive ability and job performance (Schmidt and Hunter 1998).

Other researchers, such as Tetlock and Suedfeld, have taken a different approach to exploring cognitive ability in political elites by investigating the

importance of cognitive styles and integrative complexity for political performance. Individuals scoring high on integrative complexity are more likely to interpret events in multidimensional terms and are better able to integrate a variety of sources of evidence when making decisions. Those low on integrative complexity tend to rely on one-dimensional evaluative rules to interpret events, and base decisions on a few salient items of information. Research investigating transcripts of speeches, interviews and political debates (e.g., Suedfeld 2010; Tetlock 1984) has found that integrative complexity is particularly important for performing aspects of political roles that involve the necessity to scrutinize complex information and to reconcile competing arguments.

Motivation

Complementing traits and cognitive abilities, motivation constitutes another important area of personality, with individual differences in needs, motives and values being linked with political behavior and success. Political theorists have long regarded ambition as central to democratic politics; the desire to achieve power through political office driving the development of political careers and the need to be responsive to public views (Owen 2007; Renshon 1998; Rogow and Lasswell 1963).

Psychological approaches to motivation usually adopt a multidimensional approach, differentiating multiple psychological characteristics that predispose individuals to seek power through and in political office. Needs, motives and values are features of personality that concern both the nature of goals pursued by individuals and the ways in which these are pursued. These aspects of personality can often be private and more guarded, and as such are more often accessed only indirectly through what people decide to disclose. Needs and motives are associated with people's conscious and unconscious wishes and desires, influence social behaviors and provide the impetus for action, choices, decision-making and achievement of goals. However, it is worth noting that the term 'need' usually refers to an individual's internal drive to pursue certain goals, while 'motive' more often refers to the value an individual assigns to different incentives. Both are core to various theories of motivation, accounting for the enactment and direction of behavior.

Deci and Ryan (2002), for example, identify autonomy, competence and relatedness as universal basic needs; the pursuit and satisfaction of which is at the core of self-determination and personal development. Similarly, McClelland (1985) identifies achievement, affiliation, and power as basic

motives that largely parallel these basic needs. Much of the influence exerted by these needs and motives over the course of an individual's life results from early experiences and socialization. These gradually turn satisfaction of basic biological and social needs into mental representations of desirable states and, subsequently, into principles that guide a person's life. However, when the appeal of certain incentives prevails over others, the corresponding motive can become so dominant in some people that it comes to characterize their personality and influence the entire course of their life. The achievement motive, for example, is frequently associated with pursuit of success at school and at work, whereas the power motive is seen as a major determinant of ambition in politics.

Gradually people appropriate general principles (i.e., values) that orient their life and guide how they behave and live in communion with others. Values refer to what people consider important and help to define self-respect and respect for others. Values also operate as standards for judging behavior, events and people. With regard to traits, needs and motives, basic values cast a bridge between the functioning of individuals and of society. On the one hand, values attest to the pervasive influence that socialization practices and belonging to different groups, such as family, class and community, exert on an individual's development, identity and functioning. Through socialization and cognitive development, basic needs are represented cognitively, taking the form of values. On the other hand, values attest to the crucial role individuals play in preserving and changing the guiding principles and the functioning of social systems (Caprara and Cervone 2000; Hitlin 2003)

Results from more than 300 samples from 83 countries led Schwartz and colleagues to a comprehensive theory which includes ten distinct values: achievement, power, hedonism, stimulation, self direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security. The ten values have demonstrated high predictive validity for numerous behaviors in several domains of functioning including political orientation and activism (Bardi and Schwartz 1996; Barnea and Schwartz 1998; Caprara et al. 2006; Schwartz 1992, 1996; Schwartz and Bilsky 1990; Schwartz et al. 2014; Vecchione et al. 2015).

Self Beliefs

Personality systems include concepts, beliefs and ideals about self, which together integrate self-representations and memories of experiences into personal narratives and identities. These mental structures and processes enable people to express and shape spontaneous propensities in accordance with

environmental constraints and opportunities to achieve full realization of their personalities. Interactions with the social world in early years, traditionally within the family, lay the foundation for turning genetic potentials into capacities that allow people to acknowledge one's own actions and their outcomes, to become aware of themselves as agents able to influence the outside world and thus to take charge of the development of their own capabilities in pursuit of their own goals.

The pervasive influence of self-beliefs on development and social adjustment is widely documented. Findings from diverse lines of research point to a positive association between self-esteem and high levels of aspiration, resilience, tolerance of rejection, optimism, life satisfaction and popularity. In politics, preliminary findings from a recent study of members of the Italian Parliament corroborate previous assertions by Sniderman (1975) that politicians demonstrate higher levels of self-esteem than the general population (Caprara and Vecchione 2016). To succeed, however, self-esteem must be complemented by self-efficacy beliefs, which attest to the confidence people hold in their own capacities and mostly result from learning opportunities and experiences. Self efficacy beliefs are, in fact, both indicators and determinants of what people can do and what they expect to accomplish in given domains of functioning (Bandura 1986, 1997). In politics, in particular, it is very unlikely that someone would become a successful leader unless he or she believes themselves capable of gaining consensus, navigating negotiations and being resilient in the face of adversity.

Epistemologies, Methods and Findings

Over the course of time, different epistemologies and theoretical perspectives have led researchers to use a variety of methods in their study of personality in political elites. Much of the early work draws on psychoanalytic theories based on the idea of human behavior as largely determined by unconscious drives and mechanisms. Classic examples of this approach include research by Adorno and colleagues on the authoritarian personality (1950), and earlier work by Lasswell (1930, 1948) viewing political power as a means to repair and compensate for defective self-esteem.

Psychoanalytic theories have also been a major source of inspiration for psychobiographers (Post 2013). Studies by Erikson (1958, 1969) on great leaders like Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi illustrate the merits of qualitative approaches placing great emphasis on the importance of childhood experiences for later vicissitudes (Post 2013). The study by George and George (1956) of US President Woodrow Wilson provides an example of the analysis

of leaders' memoirs, archival documents and available historical data such as speeches and decision-making.

While single case studies can provide useful insights, interpretations can be challenged by alternative narratives. For this reason, many researchers investigating personality and behavior in political elites have utilized at-a-distance methodologies to systematically evaluate and compare the personality characteristics of significant public figures (and US presidents in particular) by analyzing secondary source material describing their behavior in office such as biographies or diaries, or by analyzing political speeches and interviews.

Studying Personality

One group of researchers (Barber, Etheredge and Greenstein) attests to earlier use of psychological knowledge and personality constructs to make sense of political leadership by analyzing politicians' performance in office. Barber (1972, 1992), for example, identified three major personality components of US presidents, namely character (i.e., an individual's approach toward life, the main thrust and broad direction), style (i.e., their habitual way of performing their political role and dealing with political tasks) and world view (i.e., the individual's belief system and cognitive map of politics). Barber identified two further dimensions along which individuals vary, namely *activity/passivity* and *positive/negative affect*, which influence the level of energy and optimism directed toward activities conducted as part of the role.

Etheredge (1978) adopted a slightly different approach by examining the role of interpersonal traits like dominance and introversion-extraversion in affecting the foreign policies advocated by political elites. From his review of 36 US presidents, secretaries of state, and presidential advisors serving between 1889 and 1968, Etheredge identified four types of leaders based on a cross-tabulation of introversion versus extraversion and high versus low dominance, each of which influenced foreign policy preferences and orientation. Greenstein's (2004) work examining the leadership style of US Presidents from F.D. Roosevelt to G.W. Bush identified a further six dimensions of analysis, including communication style, organizational capacity, political skill, policy vision, cognitive style and emotional intelligence.

This research documents the importance of individual-level factors in understanding the behavior and style of political elites. However, it can be difficult to unpack the relative contributions of personality versus environmental and historical factors, such as the political and societal context in which the political leader operates. Moreover, the lack of a common theoretical

framework makes it difficult to draw comparisons across different studies in order to determine features of personality that are potentially more salient in determining political style.

These limitations can be overcome by the use of novel methods to assess and compare politician personality. For example, Simonton (1986, 1988, 2006) engaged political scientists and historians to assess the personality of 42 US Presidents from George Washington to George W. Bush, by applying standard psychological constructs to the analysis of biographical materials. Machiavellianism, forcefulness, moderation, poise and polish, and flexibility, as well as leadership styles characterized by charisma, creativity and intellectual brilliance including originality of ideas, profoundness of apprehension, pervasive cognitive activity and drive, and intellectual versatility turned out to be salient determinants of performance. Rubenzer et al. (2000) also engaged experts to rate the personality profiles of US presidents, but they adopted a slightly different approach by using structured questionnaires and adjective lists related to the FFM of personality. They found that presidents showed higher levels of conscientiousness and extraversion compared to the average American population. Moreover, while openness to experience was the most valid predictor of presidential success, conscientiousness demonstrated the strongest association with ethical behavior in office.

A similar 'at-a-distance' approach to studying individual differences has also been used to assess motives and cognitive styles of presidents and presidential candidates. For example, building on established theories of motivation and cognition, researchers have analyzed written and spoken material like private and public documents, and presidential speeches. An important example of this is the work by Suedfeld and colleagues who used archival materials to investigate the role of cognitive complexity in the success and failure of political and military leaders. They analyzed the complexity of information processing by political leaders before, during and after critical decisions during important political and diplomatic events including the international crises that preceded World Wars I and II, the Cuban missile crisis, and the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (e.g., Suedfeld 2010). Felix Thoemmes and Lucian Conway (2007) applied a similar methodology to evaluate and compare the cognitive complexity of several US presidents. Their research suggests that one contributory factor in becoming a successful leader is a match between one's own level of cognitive complexity and the characteristics of the situation.

Margaret Hermann and David Winter have focused on motives of world leaders using content analysis of speeches, interviews and other sources. Hermann (1977) and Hermann and Preston (1994) examined leaders' needs for power and affiliation in combination with self-confidence (e.g., beliefs in

one's own ability to control events), interpersonal style (e.g., degree of distrust or suspiciousness of others), and decision-making style (e.g., complexity in structuring and processing information). Need for power, overstated self-confidence, suspiciousness, and low complexity were found to be often associated with aggressive rather than conciliatory relations with other nations. Winter's research program spans over 40 years and has generated and refined a scoring system to identify and rate power, achievement and affiliation motives, using content analysis of public documents like interviews, speeches, and memoirs (Winter and Stewart 1977). Winter examined the motives of US Presidents from Washington to Obama, and other political leaders (e.g., former Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, and Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein) and compared these with major achievements, ratings of greatness, charisma, and success during presidential campaigns (e.g., Winter 2013). Although he found that achievement motivation did not play a distinctive role in political leadership, those leaders scoring high in power motivation were more inclined toward strong and forceful actions, whereas leaders scoring high in affiliation motivation were more predisposed to cooperation.

Politicians' Self-Reported Traits and Values

Observers' ratings provide an important perspective on the personality of political elites, but they tell us little about how political leaders perceive their own personalities and whether these self-perceptions are similar to how others see them (Silvester 2008, 2014). Despite the fact that politicians can be reluctant to give access for this type of research, recent studies have achieved some success in capturing self-report data from politicians using questionnaires based on the FFM (explained above) to examine the contribution of basic traits to political preference and political participation, and for comparing politicians with ordinary citizens. For example, Caprara and his colleagues (2003, 2010) used a well-established measure of FFM to collect and compare self-reports from members of Italian and European Parliament, and of Regional and Provincial Councils (n = 230) with members of the general population (n = 3249). They found that politicians scored significantly higher on the traits energy/extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness after controlling for the effects of age, gender, education, and political orientation.

Certainly high agreeableness scores accord with the need for politicians to please and engage with voters. Indeed, politicians are unlikely to be successful in politics unless they are able to convey a fully trustworthy image of themselves to their voters. Likewise higher scores on energy/extraversion accord

with the intuitive belief that energy is required to mobilize and motivate others. As Silvester and her colleagues have found in their analyses of different political roles (Silvester 2012; Silvester and Dykes 2007; Silvester et al. 2014) being a politician requires the capability to persuade and influence others, take the initiative and to lead, as well as the capacity to handle multiple activities, relationships and pursuits concurrently. Therefore, regardless of their political orientation, to be successful, politicians have to be proactive, persuasive and influential with their electorate, their colleagues within their party and among political opponents.

Best (2011) conducted a study in Germany where he administered the Big Five index to politicians via computer-assisted telephone interviews, comparing personality data from German members of the Federal, State and European parliaments (N = 1223) with data from a large, representative sample of the general population (N = 17,300). Results showed that German politicians displayed higher levels of extraversion, openness, and emotional stability than members of the general population, in accordance with findings from Italian politicians. Contrary to what has been found in Italy, German politicians showed lower scores on agreeableness and conscientiousness than the general population. In this regard, one may only speculate about the reasons for these differences which seem to be rooted in cultural differences between the two countries.

In an effort to explore the relationship between personality and political performance, Dietrich et al. (2012) asked US legislators to complete on-line personality and role attitude questionnaires. They found that legislators who scored higher on extraversion and emotional stability were also more interested in standing for higher political office, and suggest that these traits influence political performance via an impact on political ambition. However, in their study Silvester et al. (2014) argue that while certain personality characteristics may lead individuals to be more attracted to political roles, they may not necessarily be associated with increased performance once elected to those roles. They explored this possibility in a unique study involving 231 British politicians who completed the 240-item NEO-PIR, a personality questionnaire that is very widely used in personality research, together with measures of Machiavellianism and political skill. They compared politicians' self-ratings with anonymous performance ratings provided as part of a multisource review process by more than 1000 political colleagues and officials working with these politicians on a day-to-day basis. The researchers examined the possibility that certain personality characteristics might be associated with observers' ratings of performance in political office. They found significant positive relationships between politicians' self-rated conscientiousness and political skill, and

performance ratings provided by their colleagues. The researchers also found a significant negative relationship between politician self-rated neuroticism and performance ratings. No significant relationship was found between extroversion and performance ratings, leading the researchers to argue that, while extroversion may increase the propensity for individuals to stand for election to political roles, there may be less relationship between this aspect of personality and success once elected to office.

In a further development of this work, Caprara and colleagues have considered basic personal values in addition to basic traits. Using the personal value questionnaire which assesses Schwartz's ten personal values, self-ratings were collected from 330 Italian MPs (224 males, 106 females) and compared with the values prevalent in the general population. Controlling for basic sociodemographic variables, Italian politicians were found to score significantly lower than voters on the values *security* and *hedonism*. At the same time, politicians scored significantly higher than voters on universalism and benevolence, suggesting a stronger commitment to public welfare.

Differences associated with ideological self-placement among politicians of opposite coalitions largely paralleled and amplified differences among voters. The value hierarchy of politicians was remarkably similar to that of the general population: Universalism obtained the highest score, followed by benevolence and self-direction, with power at the bottom of the hierarchy. A similar order of importance has been found in a wide range of cultures around the world (Schwartz and Bardi 2001).

Subsequent analysis showed that Italian politicians scoring high on agreeableness attributed more importance to self-transcendence values and less importance to self-enhancement values. Whereas conscientiousness led politicians to attribute more importance to conservative values, energy/extraversion led them to assign more importance to self-enhancement values. However, these traits contributed only indirectly to party preference through the mediation of basic values, for politicians and voters. The higher the politicians' scores on universalism values, the higher the probability that they belonged to left-wing parties. In contrast, the higher they scored on tradition, security and power values, the higher the probability that they belonged to right-wing parties. Ultimately, elected officials with high levels of education, expertise and political sophistication showed distinctive traits and values that were congruent with their ideologies and replicated the same pattern of relations between traits and values found in voters. Moreover, the relationship between self-reported personality traits and values on one side and political affiliation on the other was much closer for politicians than for voters. These findings further corroborate the hypothesis that traces the links between personality

and political choices to a basic need for cognitive coherence and congruency (Caprara and Zimbardo 2004). Whereas certain traits and values may predispose people to favor specific ideologies, social pressures require politicians to present themselves in accordance with the ideological principles they preach. Therefore while people in general try to keep a certain degree of coherence in the way they think, desire, behave and describe themselves, this need increases with the level of congruency between thought, aspirations and actions that is required by the office.

Conclusions

Despite an abundance of literature, we doubt it is possible to come to firm conclusions about what political elites' personalities have in common or about what distinguishes their personalities from the personalities of others holding other types of leadership positions in society. Most likely, education still represents an asset that accounts as much as personality to the functioning of political institutions and their components. Higher education has become a common precondition of elite recruitment in modern society, reflecting social endowments in addition to personal ones. Likewise a paucity of research means that it is not possible as yet to determine the extent to which political elites differ from other social elites regarding cognitive abilities, traits, motives, values and self-beliefs. Typically political elites tend to score slightly higher than citizens in traits like extraversion, emotional stability, openness and self-esteem, all of which are particularly important for fulfilling the requirements of their position. Moreover, it seems intuitively plausible that people cannot be successful in democratic politics unless they are confident in their capacities to negotiate and persuade convincingly and resilient in coping with setbacks and confrontations.

Ultimately one may conclude that on average politicians' personality traits do not differ much from those of citizens with good schooling, decent habits and desirable purposes. Many findings have shown that politicians' self-reported personality largely reflects the profile that makes them more appealing for their voters (Caprara and Vecchione 2016). People do not engage in politics unless they value the political influence associated with political office. Yet opportunities count more than traits, motives and ideals as context and contingencies are decisive in actualizing individual potentials and orienting their talents. To understand the qualities that help to achieve success in democratic societies one should take into account the qualities that are required to get elected, as well as the qualities that sustain striving for political

success and motivation for confronting competition and possible failures. This leads to taking into account two conflicting perspectives: that of the electorate and that of the candidate (Wyatt and Silvester 2017). While voters expect quality of service and their evaluations mostly rest on the tangible results of politics, the view of the latter is primarily guided by the benefits they expect from achieving a political office which mostly rests upon a mixture of motives, values, aspirations and self-beliefs.

The content and the influence of these views may change across time and context, depending on the different obligations, challenges and benefits associated with holding political office. Whereas competence and honesty are the qualities that critical citizens of modern democracies expect from politicians (Popkin 1991), the former is easier to be assessed than the latter.

Stability of traits and of values, in fact, does not exclude changes, nor is it possible to predict how situations may prevail over people's personalities, in particular when self-interest is at stake. Assessing personality once does not guarantee that the presumed abilities that have been valued by the voters at the time of the election will last over the entire political career, especially as far as moral reasoning and conduct are concerned.

Self-indulgence, self-deception and moral disengagement (Bandura 2015) may help to understand how capable and promising candidates may turn into unreliable and corrupted politicians intent on saving their face, their families and their career. As democratic electorates desire competent and honest politicians, politicians' talents and ambitions have to accord with the expectations of different segments of electorate as well as with the difficult tasks of government.

To satisfy simultaneously the demands of the electorate, the requirements of the political office and own ambitions under challenging contingencies, however, may turn out to be an impossible task unless one possesses extraordinary capacities of negotiation, adjustment and change. These capacities involve clusters of individual characteristics that operate in concert rather than single traits.

Still biographical and clinical studies can show how different personality traits and different combinations of such traits may be relevant for successful leadership in different contexts and times. This however should not discourage the search for conceptual models that allow to generalize across contexts on the basis of sufficient knowledge regarding the criteria that guide citizen choices. Democratization carries an opening of political societies that makes voters sceptical of professional politicians (Best 2007) and calls for mass engagement, exact representatives' competence and critical citizenship (Caprara and Vecchione 2016).

Critical citizenship, in particular, calls for the political knowledge, vigilance and commitment of many rather than for the professionalization of a few.

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Political and Social Backgrounds of Political Elites

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The very notion of political elites is linked to several theoretical hypotheses. Political elites are men and women specialized in political affairs. The existence of such a group of specialists is a consequence of a division of labor within the whole society between those active in politics and others who are necessarily more passive (Weber 1946). This group has also been built through a process of division of labor within the power elites or ruling categories. Political elites occupy high positions and wield power in the political domain, but not, or not necessarily, in others. Political elites are distinct from economic, administrative, intellectual, and other specialized elites. All of them appear through a process of structural differentiation that is characteristic of "modern" societies (Parsons 1991; Luhmann 1982).

We need, however, to distinguish several categories, indeed an increasing number of categories, of *specialists of political affairs*. There are political journalists, pollsters, advisers, communication experts, spin-doctors, NGO, lobbyists, analysts, and political scientists. Some of these categories did not exist four or five decades ago. They result from an ongoing process of differentiation within what can be labeled as *political worlds*, by analogy with the art worlds analyzed by H. Becker (1982).

Within these political worlds there is a hard core of agents directly involved in competitions for the conquest of political power positions who can be

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labeled political elites *stricto sensu.* They are known as *politicians* or, in French, as *hommes* (or *femmes*) *politiques,* which suggests that they are the true political specialists, and that other men and women are not "political".

Political Background of Political Elites

Max Weber contended that the modern politician appeared along with the modern state. Political elites are the product of an additional process of differentiation and division of labor within the state between members of the bureaucracy and political agents who are recruited through non-bureaucratic mechanisms, and are supposed to control and impulse the state bureaucracy from outside. But politicians also appeared through a successful struggle against their predecessors: the *notables* (Weber 1946; Garrigou 1992).

From Notables to Professional Politicians

The *notables* were dignitaries whose appointed or elected political positions and power derived from their general social power. They enjoyed a set of *personal resources*, especially economic (wealth, lands, plants), cultural (studies and degrees, at a time when they were reserved to a tiny minority), social (easy access to other notables, especially to local and central state representatives), and moral (good repute), that they were able to mobilize to get support, especially electoral support, from their fellow citizens.

Thanks to their economic resources, they could devote themselves to political activities without living off politics. They also could get support through mainly "material" exchanges, with limited specific, symbolic, political interests. They mobilized voters through distributions of divisible goods, mainly money, jobs, lands, protections, and personal services. They did not belong to a political party. The spontaneous, or more or less forced, confidence granted by voters through their votes was attached to their very person. They therefore accumulated and enjoyed a personal political credit. Each election, including each parliamentary election, was a local contest.

Newcomers belonging to the middle classes, such as physicians, lawyers, or journalists, started competing with established notables during the last third of the nineteenth century. They did not have sufficient economic means to enter in the client-patron exchanges favored by the notables. They organized themselves in a more collective way, around newspapers as a first step, and then

within political parties. They began or, at least, they claimed, to mobilize voters with new types of goods, mainly symbolic collective goods, such as programs and worldviews. They also called for a more "moral" way of doing politics, in which exchanges between candidates and voters were said to be based on "general political considerations", and not on the "sale" and "purchase" of votes. They denounced the traditional electoral practices and sued established candidates for "corruption". They struggled to impose the use of envelopes and voting booths in order to create conditions for a secret ballot, and to protect voters from the influence of their patrons.

After several decades of harsh parliamentary and political battles, politicians progressively prevailed over notables. They therefore created various conditions of modern representative democracy.

Politicians also entered in a process of *professionalization*. Unlike notables, many politicians lacked a personal fortune to engage in full-time political activities. They needed to practice an occupation outside of politics, or to find ways to earn their living off politics. They asked for allowances associated to representative mandates, first parliamentary mandates, and then mandates in sub-national representative bodies. They then struggled to find ways to increase parliamentary allowances, while seeking to avoid being accused of corporately defending their personal interests. The creation of strong mass political parties with a large number of party bureaucrats was a second way to transform party activists into *full-time professional politicians.*

According to Max Weber's famous definition, politicians progressively have become professional politicians living for and off politics. They engage into a *political career* after abandoning, often early, their previous employment. Since it is often difficult for them to find again a job outside of politics, many of them are concerned about remaining within the political microcosm.

Politics as Career

The political career is structured as a *cursus honorum*, even though there are several types of political ascents. A first ideal-type is an ascent through elected offices, first at the local level—often as town or regional councilor, next as a mayor or a president of a regional or provincial assembly—and then at the national level—first as a parliamentary backbencher, later as a parliamentary leader, and sometimes as a member of a government. A second ideal-type is an ascent in a party hierarchy from the local to the provincial or regional, and finally at the national level. A third type is more recent. Young people are

recruited as assistants or advisers to MPs, mayors, presidents of regional assemblies, or ministers immediately or shortly after their university studies. Their leader is a political selector who can promote their designation as candidates in a local or national election, and some of them will progress in turn in the political hierarchy.

These ideal types are frequently entangled in political reality. Elected representatives often need the support of a political party at certain points of their career. They adhere to a party and they may enter in a party career which, however, remains of secondary importance when compared to their electoral career in their case. Symmetrically, party leaders are regularly chosen as candidates for their organization in local or national elections and they may thus engage in an electoral career, even though their party position prevails in the eyes of many of them. Similarly, as previously mentioned, even those who start their career in the entourage of a leader need at some time to enter in a party and/or an electoral career.

Although different in their starting point and in their progression, all political careers lead at certain point to political power positions within the state.

Political careers are also increasingly and paradoxically dependent on political parties. It is commonly taken for granted that political parties are weakening. Most of them, especially governing parties, have lost members, voters, identifiers, and the trust and confidence of many citizens. However, they remain, and they are even increasingly, strong when it comes to candidates' selection. In most western countries, almost all MPs have been candidates of political parties, often of established political parties. It has become very difficult to be elected to a parliament as an independent candidate. The same is increasingly true for the election of mayors of many towns or for members of provincial and regional elected assemblies.

Politics as an Individual or a Collective Enterprise

Because political elites are mainly professional politicians nowadays, political activities have taken the form of an *enterprise*, that is to say "a continuous rational activity of a specified kind" (Weber 1978, 55), and politicians need to be considered as *political entrepreneurs*. In the past, however, many of them were *small independent entrepreneurs*, mobilizing their own personal resources, for instance their own money or the money they had collected, to pay for the expenses of electoral campaign, as well as their relatives, friends, and clients to canvass their constituents. They also decided about their political orientations,

program, alliances, and votes in representative institutions by themselves. Independent political entrepreneurs enjoyed a *capital of confidence attached to their person*. Voters knew them personally and backed them because they believed in them and were grateful for the services they had rendered.

All transactions by which individuals, groups, or organizations, grant (or seem to grant) their confidence and support for a political actor, whether individual or collective, can be labeled "*political capital*" (Gaxie 2003). Independent political entrepreneurs accumulate political capital on their own and for their own account. They use their personal initiatives, efforts, time, money, and resources to maintain or increase the symbolic capital of trust, recognition, and support from citizens, voters, clients, believers, debtors, and peers.

There are few fully independent political entrepreneurs nowadays, at least in European political systems. Most politicians belong to a political party, and are (more or less) dependent on the collective resources of their organization. They rely on funding from their party and on the assistance of its activists, and they also lean on its doctrine, program, and the collective ideological work developed throughout its history. They especially need the collective capital of confidence, recognition, and support accumulated by their party and its main leaders within the general public and political worlds. Most candidates in general elections—parliamentary or presidential—and increasingly also in "local" elections, are representatives of a political party or are backed by a political party or a partisan coalition. They may enjoy a *personal political capital,* but they cannot do without the *collective political capital* of their party and, increasingly, of its main spokespersons.

Today, in most European countries, political activities are developed through *collective enterprises*. We may still observe individual political enterprises, but they are developed within collective enterprises or thanks to the benevolent neutrality of a collective enterprise. For instance, leaders are fighting for their own account when they participate in a primary election or when they seek the support of party members or parliamentarians to conquer the leadership of a party or of a government controlled by a party. However, these competitions are internal to parties or coalitions.

Most often, elections oppose local representatives of national parties, and also, increasingly, of the leaders of national parties. They are (more or less) structured by the same cleavages, and candidates develop almost the same arguments everywhere. For these reasons, many elections, especially general parliamentary elections, have lost a great part of their local components, even though candidates try to adapt the general discourse of their organization to the specificities of their constituency. Local political markets have been

progressively more or less unified within a national space of political exchanges, and general elections are increasingly national.

Although there are now few fully independent political entrepreneurs, there are also few representatives of collective political enterprises without personal resources and political capital. A newcomer with a limited visibility may be elected as a mayor, an MP, or a chief of a representative institution thanks to the capital of sympathy enjoyed by the organization that has invested in him or her, but, when elected in a given position, he or she will accumulate support, recognitions, as well as disappointments, resentments, and defections in his or her own name. The larger the number of mandates or offices exercised or held by elected officials, the more likely they may rely on personal resources, including personal symbolic political capital. All politicians may be characterized by the amount of resources, and, first of all, the amount of political capital, that they enjoy, and also by the relative share of personal and collective resources that make up their total volume of assets. The greater their shares of collective resources, the more politicians are dependent on their organization and, consequently, the more they are inclined or constrained to respect its discipline. Conversely, the more politicians are able to mobilize personal resources, the more likely they are to take their distances with, and in some cases, to free themselves from, their party's decisions. The growing importance of collective political resources is a decisive, though often ignored, factor of disciplines of votes of parliamentary groups, and thus, of the functioning of contemporary political regimes.

The Relative Autonomy of Political Activities

Political elites are now professional entrepreneurs, specialized in political affairs. They develop their activities in relatively separated and independent worlds, which are labeled in the academic literature as sub-systems, sectors, spheres, spaces, or fields. These worlds enjoy a *relative autonomy*. It means that they more or less obey their own rules. However, when we say that their autonomy is relative, what is meant is that it is real and can be observed, but also that it is limited.

This duality is at the basis of the contradictions of political representation. In representative systems, politicians seek support of ordinary citizens through political competitions. They therefore need to take into account their expectations, reactions, and interests. At the same time, through political, especially electoral, exchanges, elected officials earn the right to speak on behalf of their voters, which also entails that they deprive "ordinary" citizens of the possibility

to express themselves directly. Representation is a mysterious mechanism that is said to make present, for instance within a parliament, those who remain absent, for instance the "sovereign citizens" (Pitkin 1967; Bourdieu 1991). Political elites enjoy a monopoly, or at least a quasi-monopoly, of political initiatives, and by the same token, they dispossess citizens of opportunities of independent interventions. This dispossession of represented citizens is a necessary consequence, or at least a consequence difficult to avoid, of the existence of official legitimate representatives. Those who are not satisfied with their representatives can just choose others, stop participating in their election, or try to become representatives themselves. Because ordinary citizens are generally absent from the political scenes, their representatives enjoy a large autonomy and freedom for maneuver in their daily activities.

These activities are necessarily focused on issues specific to the political worlds, and first of all on struggles about the strength, that is to say about the political capital, of individual and collective enterprises. Due to the relative autonomy of the political field, there are both heteronomous and autonomous "mechanisms" of accumulation of political capital.

As previously mentioned, modern societies are increasingly differentiated. This means that they are organized through an increasing set of distinct and partially independent sub-units. Pierre Bourdieu added that positions in these sub-units, which he labeled as *fields*, depend on the volume of a *specific capital*, that is to say a particular resource, specific to each field (Bourdieu 1980). This specific capital is a kind of asset and trump that gives weight and power in a certain field, and that is at stake in the struggles of the field. For instance, within the political field, there are differences in size, weight, and power between players, whether individual or collective. There are low and high positions, "small" and "large" organizations, established and fringe parties, front and backbenchers, and leaders and followers. These differences are a consequence of the *volume of specific political capital* accumulated by individual or collective actors.

As mentioned above, this specific capital may be defined as the *amount of support* that a given individual or collective enterprise is supposed to enjoy.

A first set of support is "*external*". Ordinary citizens who do not directly participate in political competitions within the political field grant politicians and parties with their support, in the form of votes, answers to opinion polls, participation in meetings or street demonstrations, funding, memberships, and so on.

"Internal" support comes from peers of the political field, and specialists in the political worlds. Some MPs progress in the parliamentary hierarchy and become, for instance, chairpersons of a committee, thanks to the votes of their

peers. Heads of governments select the politicians who access to the rank of minister. Journalists decide about those parties and politicians who deserve to be invited to TV news and major radio and television programs. Pollsters chose politicians that they include or exclude in their "popularity ratings".

Many political activities are autonomous in the sense that they are oriented by concerns about ways of maintaining and, if possible, of increasing the amount of support at the basis of the weight in the political worlds. They are doubly autonomous when support is sought through internal games of political worlds.

The hypothesis that a field is a *system of structured positions* determined by the volume of specific capital accumulated by individuals or group of agents is completed by the hypothesis that specific interests, perceptions, and ways of acting are associated with the position occupied in a field (Bourdieu 1980). Different *positions* in the political field—that is to say different *ranks in political hierarchies*, for instance those that distinguish fringe from established parties, or leading politicians and second fiddles—lead their occupiers to adopt different *positions* in the sense of opinions, views, arguments, and strategies. It follows that ideological, political, and programmatic orientations of a given party are not only linked to its beliefs and worldview, or to its social bases, but also to its (changing) positions as a governing, an established opposition, or a fringe, party. To mention but one example, so-called "populist" parties are not only nationalist radical right-wing organizations, but also parties that, in many cases, have never been fully in charge of a national government, yet are strong enough electorally to enjoy large access to the top media.

Joseph Schumpeter who was also eager to stress the autonomy of political activities against Marxism, contended that when we analyze a party or a politician as a representative of the interests of a social class, we only provide a partial view of political realities. Another aspect, equally relevant, is that parties and politicians have their *own interests* (Schumpeter 1942) depending on their position in the political field. Interests of political entrepreneurs are threefold: *individual, collective, and corporative*.

Politicians necessarily take their own situation into account. Many of them are for instance personally concerned about their re-election if they are elected officials. Some of them are eager to reinforce their position and to progress in the *cursus honorum*. Politicians who are engaged in a collective enterprise of any kind, for instance a party, a fraction, or a government, are anxious to contribute to its success. In some circumstances, all politicians forget their divisions and conflicts, and act in concert to safeguard the common interests of the entire profession, whether, among others, to restore a weakened collective respectability, to reaffirm the relevance and significance of political struggles,

to improve the remuneration of elected officials, or to limit opportunities to question their responsibility.

Social Background of Political Elites

Contradictorily, the heteronomous face of political activities also derives from the need to obtain, maintain, retain, and increase citizens' recognition and support. Access to institutional positions at all levels depends more or less directly on elections. Between elections, governments, parties, and politicians have to wage a continuous struggle to win the public opinion battle. Political camps need to have opinion polls or street demonstrators in their favor. Politics is a kind of game for specialized players, but political actors need to establish links with the outside social world. Even though political actors are professional politicians living in a world apart, they maintain personal ties with the social world, for example through their family members, friends, members of the local organization of their party, and voters they encounter in their constituency. Some of them have had a non-political occupation before entering the political career.

The social backgrounds of party members are a way to make connections with some sectors of the social world. Significantly, workers' parties were built on the premise that "the emancipation of the workers must be the task of the workers themselves". More generally, there is a kind of link, even distant, between the respective social backgrounds of party candidates, and elected representatives, and those of their voters.

Therefore, in a representative democracy, political representatives' social backgrounds are a debated issue. Many voters consider the family and region origins, education, religious affiliation, ethnicity, and occupation of the candidates, when they think about their votes. Media provide such information when a new government is formed or after each general parliamentary elections. Parliaments publish statistics about various characteristics concerning their members. Many ordinary citizens observe that most politicians belong to the privileged strata of the population to justify their feelings of distrust. Members of independent professions and business organizations lament that there are too many public servants and too few businessmen and managers among MPs. Some businessmen emphasize their economic success to convince citizens that they have the relevant skills to lead the government. It happens that organizations from the civil society endeavor to challenge the social composition of representative institutions. For instance, feminist movements have long denounced the under-representation of women in politics. In several

countries, they have contributed to the introduction of laws aiming at a more equal representation of the sexes in public, and sometimes private, institutions. Party leaders and selectors are aware that, independently of political and programmatic positions, the social roots of their candidates are a factor taken into account by voters. Wherever possible, they try to make up lists of candidates belonging to the categories which they seek to address. Political representation is also a theatrical presentation through which political worlds try to demonstrate that representatives mirror their fellow citizens.

Political Representation as a Mirror of Society

Through various complex channels, connections are established between political representation and society. They may be observed through the relative parallelism between social and political transformations. There is much evidence of such a parallelism. Politicians with a noble origin were numerous in the past, when the nobility was still a significant group, and when belonging to noble circles was a relevant resource. They represented around 20% of all MPs in France, 30% in Italy, 40% in Germany and the UK, at the end of the 1860s and at the beginning of the 1870s. By contrast, there are currently less than 5% of MPs with noble titles in almost all western parliaments (Best and Cotta 2000; Rush 2007). A relative "democratization" of political recruitment has followed the "democratization" of societies. Politicians, mostly belonging to middle or upper middle classes, have replaced political elites from upper classes. Similarly, the decline in religious affiliations is accompanied by a virtual disappearance of clerics among political actors. One may also observe a parallelism between transformations of the economic system and political recruitment. There is, for example, a close correlation between the decrease of the workforce in agriculture and the diminution of the number of farmers or former farmers in parliaments. There were up to 20% of MPs related to the primary sector in France and Italy, 30% in Germany, and 40% in the UK during the second half of the nineteenth century, but only a few percentage points of them in contemporary parliaments. By contrast, the increase in the number of former public sector servants within the political field is to be related to the enhanced importance of this sector in the economy. There also seems to be a relationship between transformations of the education system and political recruitment. On the one hand, since the end of the World War II, there has been a rise in the average level of education, with an increase in the percentage of people of the same generation who follow higher education. At the same time, in most countries, we observe a diminution of the number of

politicians with only primary or intermediate education, and an increase in the number of those who have received higher education. The increase in the number of university students is, to a large extent, the result of higher enrollments in "young" disciplines such as economics, public administration, social sciences, and humanities, rather than in more traditional academic specialties such as law. It is significant that, at the same time, the weight of MPs with legal training is declining, while those who chose economics, public administration, humanities, and social sciences, are on the rise in almost all countries (Gaxie and Godmer 2007). In another domain, a long-delayed and still limited participation of people from ethnic and religious minorities in public life, politics, and representative institutions is a consequence of the increase in the number of citizens of immigrant origin in many countries (Fassin 2010; Avanza 2010; Audickas 2016).

Selection Effects and Distortions in Representation

But these mirror effects of political representation have their limits because of the very logic of political competition. Conquest and exercise of political power are among the most prestigious and valued activities. And like all valued activities, access to political positions is subject to intense competition. People who engage in such competitions need resources, all the more so because the position being sought is higher in the hierarchy. Relevant resources to win in political competitions are highly variable. They depend on the nature of the positions at stake, and of the rules of political games that exist at a given period in a given country. It also means that they change over time. It is empirically difficult to observe the reasons and causes leading countless selectors and voters to choose between contenders. It is easier to start from the observation of the distortions induced by competitions. Some of them are common to many competitions. The compositions of parliaments, governments, and elected bodies show that younger and older age categories are under-represented. The same is true (until now) regarding women compared to men, for people with low or intermediate level of education, and for members of lower and intermediate social classes, and of minority ethnic and religious groups. It is as if there was a division of political labor that qualifies some agents to take care of political affairs because of their age, gender, education, social class, and affiliations. This division of political labor is general and seems at work at all levels of political involvement. The seminal survey conducted by Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) showed, several decades ago, that when it comes to politics,

people turn for advice toward male friends and relatives, a bit older, with a slightly higher occupational position.

Selection effects induced by political competition are all the more strengthened that positions whose control is one of the issues of the competition are higher up in the political hierarchy. It may be observed in this sense that social characteristics (e.g. education or occupation background) of elected representatives at any level are higher, on average, than those of the candidates. The same is true when comparing members of governments to parliamentarians, or members of territorial representative institutions according to the position of their institution in the hierarchy, for example demographic, of territorial elected bodies. The selection of political elites is obviously not solely submitted to these unwritten social factors. It also depends on political factors. It may for instance be observed that the higher the political capital of agents in a given position, the more likely they are to progress in the political career. We know for instance that MPs are all the more likely to progress in the parliamentary hierarchy—for instance to be elected as president of a parliamentary committee—that their seniority is higher. Such an interweaving of social and political factors of ascent of political elites confirms that political fields are both autonomous and heteronomous, or, in other words, that they display a relative autonomy.

Whether political or social, these unwritten principles of selection of political elites are not inevitable. Some political parties managed in the past to recruit leaders and MPs from the working classes, even though many of them had been blue-collar workers only for a few years before becoming full-time politicians, either as a party employee, or as an elected representative (Pudal 1989). The same was true for farmers, including small ones, within agrarian parties (Pedersen 2000; Ruostetsaari 2000). Even though women remain under-represented in the political realm, their weight in representative institutions is on the rise almost everywhere, due to unremitting denunciations of sex inequalities, including political ones, by women's movements for decades. Mobilizations in favor of ethnic minorities seem to develop in a similar way and start producing the same effects, for instance in the USA (McClain and Stewart 2014).

However, even though they are not inevitable, usual selection "mechanisms" are powerful. As soon as efforts to thwart them loosen, they take over again, as the near disappearance almost everywhere of parliamentarians from the working class demonstrates. The increase in the weight of women among political elites can be interpreted as a weakening of an outdated division of political labor between the sexes. But it can also be a translation of the traditional division of labor, to the extent that women seem mostly confined

to more fragile and "feminine" specializations and positions (education, social, health), and are presented in the media through gender stereotypes (Achin et al. 2007).

Due to the weakening or disappearance of agrarian and workers' political parties, the recruitment of political elites seems, in some respects, to have shrunk. There were some in the past, but there are currently very few MPs or ministers with a lower or lower middle class background. However, from another perspective, it is arguable that social selections have been diluted. Most politicians belong to high civil servants, business leaders, or liberal or intellectual profession circles. However, at the same time, the number of members of such categories in the whole society has significantly increased over the last decades. Political elites come from relatively narrow circles, but these circles are less narrow than they were in the past.

Political Divisions and Social Oppositions

All political parties, at least all established ones, are experiencing a social selection of their political personnel. However, everything happens as if such a selection favored different social classes or categories according to parties, as shown by recurring differences in social characteristics of politicians from various parties. These differences are relative. There are for example, members, or former members, of free professions at the head of many parties, but they are in greater numbers within liberal parties. Following this logic, in most countries, owners of small or large businesses (and former owners), private sector managers, and former agents of business organizations, are more numerous in the ruling circles (for instance within parliamentary groups) of liberal and conservative parties than in others. Politicians coming from the primary sector, including farmers, are mostly within conservative, liberal, and agrarian parties in parliaments. By contrast, during the last decades, public sector employees, teachers, professors, and former leaders of trade unions, are more likely at the head of left-wing parties (either communist, socialist, social-democrat, or labor organizations), and also, in some cases (Italy, the Netherlands, Norway), among christian democrat parties. In the past, politicians without university education, or those coming from the working class, were also mainly among the ranks of left-wing parties. As previously noticed, there are very few of them today, but they are still in the same parties. Likewise, politicians from the nobility were mainly conservative. They are not very numerous nowadays, but more likely among conservative and far-right parties.

Therefore, taking social properties of politicians as indicators, we observe a relationship between political oppositions and social divides. Oppositions between left- and right-wing parties, or between communist, socialist, social-democrat, labor, and green parties, on the one hand, and liberal, conservative, and nationalist parties on the other, are in line with divides between, lower, and upper classes and groups, employees and employers, employees and self-employed, public and private sector agents, intellectual and economic bourgeoisies, and so on.

Such correspondences between political and social oppositions are complex. It is too simplistic to posit that a cleavage theory should require an exclusive alliance between a party and a social group. However, it is arguable that because of the social origins and ties of its politicians, a party or group of parties is closer to certain social groups than other organizations. Such proximity is usually associated on the politicians' side with a greater sensitivity to the interests of the social group or groups to which they are more or less linked. From the group members' points of view it favors inclination to support the party or parties whose personnel are more or less connected to them.

It would however be naïve to contend that a given party defends in all circumstances the interests of the social groups to which its politicians are linked. The possibility that a party or a government takes charge of interests of a social category depends on the inclinations of its members, but also on many contextual elements, including countless political, but also legal, economic, financial, budgetary, or international conditions. More precisely, politicians' inclinations are activated or inhibited by numerous contextual elements. When it comes to professional politicians, inclinations are not only "social", but also political. Regardless of their spontaneous sympathy for a particular cause, politicians will decide to act politically in favor of it as long as they believe that it is politically beneficial, or at least, that it would not be too damaging politically. A difference between parties in power and those in opposition, or between leaders of a political party sitting in a government and those who remain at the head of the party, is that the former must (just as the latter) consider the political consequences of their actions, but also (more than the latter) all other consequences, whether legal, economic, financial, budgetary, international, and so on. It follows that parties in the opposition and, even more, fringe parties, or leaders of a ruling party who stay away from power, are more sensitive to expectations of the groups they feel close to, and more inclined to seek to satisfy them.

Consequently, differences between fringe and established governing parties are twofold. A first difference lies in the value of partisan positions. The more a political party approaches power, the more its leadership positions are looked

for. The strengthening of internal competition reinforces the selection and tends to favor the ascent of new elites better endowed with personal resources. The ascent of a party usually leads to a change in the recruitment of its leaders, as shown, among other examples, by the history of workers' parties. At the same time, the access of a party to governmental responsibilities tends to multiply and complicate the elements that its leaders must take into account when acting. The combination of the two factors thus tends to weaken the links between a party and its social bases.

These hypotheses help to understand the changing relationships between left-wing parties and their social bases. At the beginning, workers' parties were led by former workers. It was one of the signs, and one of the factors, of the close links established between these parties and members of the working classes. There was at that time a clear connection between conflicts opposing left- and right-wing parties, and divisions between lower and upper social classes.

Due to the complex interplay of position homologies that structure the social space (Bourdieu 1979), left-wing parties were also (more or less) attractive to those occupying lower positions within intermediate and even higher categories, such as intellectuals, artists, and teachers.

The strengthening of the political weight of working-class parties has been accompanied by a change in the origins of their political personnel. Journalists, teachers, civil servants, lawyers, and doctors, have gradually replaced former blue-collar workers. Differences with politicians of right-wing parties have narrowed without disappearing. Compared to their opponents on the right, political elites of the left-wing parties are more often coming from lower fractions of higher categories, especially from intellectual circles, that may be analyzed as dominated fractions of ruling categories (Bourdieu 1979). But there has been a translation toward upper categories, and, thereby shrinkage of the differences in social origins between left- and right-wing politicians. Oppositions between them still echo divisions between lower and upper categories, and also between lower and upper fractions of many categories, but the distance between lower categories and their (would-be) political representatives has been widened.

The professionalization of political activities is another factor that broadens the distance between politicians and, not only lower, but also all, categories. In this perspective, a distinction should be made between two professionalization waves. Over the first wave, as previously mentioned, professional politicians progressively replaced traditional *notables.* However, most of these politicians began their working life outside of politics, such as workers, teachers, civil servants, lawyers, or businessmen. This is still the case, today, for part of them.

But a new element is the multiplication of agents who have always lived for and off politics. Some of them enter political organizations or think-tanks, others become collaborators, assistants, or advisers to mayors of big cities, presidents of regional councils, or MPs, immediately after university. They are then in a position to be presented as candidates in various elections and to be elected in turn. All social connections resulting from a vocational activity before entering a political career are thus weakened.

A third factor likely to broaden the distance between political agents and social groups is the change of the position of their party within the political field. When a party progresses in the internal hierarchy of the political field, for instance from a low position as fringe organization to a higher position as established governing party, their leaders face all kind of difficulties and constraints that are associated with the exercise of power. They have to deal with the aspirations of their social bases, but also with those of opposing groups. Their new position in the political field leads them to more realistic and moderate attitudes. They oppose their ethic of responsibility to the unabated ethic of conviction of those in fringe or lower positions within the political field or within their own party.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the autonomous aspect of political activities. First, parties cannot be uniquely characterized by their political and ideological leanings, or even by the social roots of their leaders and members. Their orientations also depend on their position within the political field in a given context. Workers' parties were able to mobilize workers, because of their pro-workers program, and the links of their leaders and members with the working classes, but also because of their fringe position within the political field. It is significant that many or, in some cases, most workers no longer vote for parties coming from the labor movement. Many of them often support so-called populist parties, particularly because of their "anti-establishment" leanings. Such leanings are obviously deductible from various dimensions of the economic and social context, but also from the relatively marginal positions of these parties, which, for most of them, have not or not fully acceded to government responsibilities.

As a result, dispositions of political elites have their origins in a complex set of factors indivisibly social and political. However, political activities are not only a consequence of the dispositions of political actors. These complex dispositions also interact with many complex contextual factors that contribute to explain why, in the current period, the political world as a whole is subject to strong distrust feelings.

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32

Political Elites and Symbolic Superiority

Jean-Pascal Daloz

Since the Neolithic era, it appears that political elites have attached great importance to the manifestation of their dominant position. As anthropologists and historians have amply demonstrated, awe-inspiring prestige goods and all sorts of rituals intended to elicit deference are a prominent feature in most pre-democratic systems. Many scholars have contributed to expose significant mechanisms involved here and provided valuable analyses on the matter.

In contemporary democratic settings, however, the issue of the symbolic superiority of top-level political actors is framed in somewhat different terms. Even though they still have to stand out and above, political elites also need to remain close enough to the voters they claim to speak for. From a bottom-up perspective, they have to appear to be 'one of us' in contexts of (at least formal) egalitarianism between citizens. They thus have to constantly reconcile opposing imperatives of eminence and nearness.

In what follows, we are going to see that if symbolic superiority has always been a crucial *resource* for elites, this does not necessarily lead to similar practices and underlying logics. A comparative perspective brings to light a multiplicity of scenarios within both non-democratic and democratic systems.

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The Symbolics of Political Power in 'Traditional' Settings

Accounts from Political Anthropology[1]

As various ethnological works illustrate, 'traditional' elites frequently endeavored to appropriate the most impressive items available in their own environment. It has for instance been shown that in Oceania, sub-Saharan Africa and lowland South America, necklaces made from the canines of the most impressive animals known—for example lions, leopards, jaguars, sperm whales, crocodiles, boars—were used as symbols of rank and power by local rulers (Pickenbaugh 1997). In certain places, goods obtained from afar (through conquest and looting, tributes, exchanges or purchase) could also confer a special prestige (Helms 1988). Some communities did challenge status distinctions though. Differences in this respect are often presented along an evolutionist line of reasoning emphasizing several stages. The first is that of hunters/gatherers operating in small units. This category, although useful from an analytical point of view, incorporates rather different types. Nonetheless, it appears that, in most of them, egalitarian ethics prevail. Many ethnographic monographs clearly indicate that prestige may exist in such 'foraging' communities but strictly in connection with activities that benefit the whole group. For example, high regard is likely to be accorded to good hunters, but this does not lead to formalized differences in rank. Actually, leveling mechanisms are frequently resorted to in order to prevent any thought of institutionalized superiority (Wiessner 1996). Nevertheless, the wearing of some trophies may mark out some members of the set to a limited extent.

A second stage is that of communities with no hereditary status but in which 'Big Men' leading factions emerge. Neither exploitation nor differentiated political positions exist as yet, but individuals demonstrating their mastery of skills, thus commanding respect, are able to construct a following and to earn rank. They amass and redistribute valuables with a calculated generosity so as to create a network of obligation. The circulation of such valuables—which are both the signs and means of superiority—is considered a key to power within 'prestige goods systems'. As is shown in classic works on the gift, generosity which is not reciprocated occasions unequal relationships. On the other hand, within the context of endless competition to attract followers, dominant actors may fall prey to blackmail by those supporting them, especially when they do not regularly allocate accumulated goods.

The next stage of this evolution—necessarily presented in a simplified way here—is that of the first stratified societies, able to generate surpluses and store riches that rulers convert into power. The most prestigious goods are then usually monopolized by elites. These items serve to distinguish their bearers from the bulk of the population and may be passed from one generation to the next. Dominant roles tend to be associated with the ownership, sometimes with the ostentatious consumption, of goods difficult to obtain which fulfil a purpose of hierarchy construction. What matters is not only to establish authority over 'one's subjects' but also within the framework of regional elite interaction—which may involve alliance building, gifts and counter-gifts, conquests and tributes. In the second case, prestige goods operate as powerful statements of status helping to raise the standing of the group as a whole.

Reflections upon these themes have been dominated by specialists of Economic Anthropology favoring a Marxist standpoint: in terms of causal precedence of relations of production, surplus turned into social advantage, proto-class, and so on. However, many anthropologists have, with good reasons, warned against the universal pretensions of economistic theories, and commented on the necessity of supplementing their evolutionist approaches with an examination of the relativity of the embedded conceptions implied. This begs a full consideration of wide cross-cultural variation in prestige logics and related meanings transmitted through socialization. In this regard, evidence provided by ethnologists enables us to view a degree of the complexity and richness of representations related to 'elite goods'. In many 'traditional' communities, marine shells, for instance, have functioned as status markers, decorations or money, and they were often displayed, gifted or circulated between people not only because they were prized for their shapes, colors or sheen, but also because they were imbued with several symbolic meanings, from fertility to peaceful exchanges (Trubitt 2003).[2]

It is of course quite acceptable to go no further than an analysis focusing on control of the raw materials, possible value added from the labor that transforms them into shaped ornaments, and eventually exhibition/distribution seeking to maintain hierarchical systems. Likewise, some anthropologists dealing with the questions of elites, power and symbolic superiority have been eager to posit universal invariants in terms of 'dominant symbols' (Turner 1967), 'theatrocracy' (Balandier 1980) or 'cults of eliteness' (Cohen 1981), for instance. Yet in the anthropological literature, we equally find authors who importantly shed light on themes such as elite surpluses being compulsorily shared or destroyed by their owners (as in the famous potlatch system of north-west American Indians), and public events being used as levies for redistributive purposes. Besides, quite a few researchers seek to point to

significant differences: supremacy being conveyed by ostentation or rather by a strong sense of mystery, by elitist hindrances or the exhibition of a superior level of comfort, and so forth.[3]

Historical Insights

Many historical descriptions are also rich in information about expressions and processes of symbolic superiority.

   These include for example the practice of euergetism—common in Hellenistic Greece and later in ancient Rome—whereby elites took on at their own cost important amounts of expenditure incurred by their city. Oftentimes, this entailed generous endowments meant to cover the building of public structures. Moreover, donators could offer up various ceremonies and popular displays or banquets to the enjoyment of the entire citizenry. Analytically, it is crucial to emphasize that this kind of private provision of public goods differs from restrictive forms of patronage directed at a particular network of clients, chosen individuals, or targeting a category of the population such as 'the poor'. During the antiquity, it was intended to benefit free members of the community indiscriminately. Nevertheless, euergetism did not amount to universalistic philanthropy since it concerned the people of one's city exclusively. It should be added that it was a highly conspicuous practice, involving a maximum of publicity, and was very different in this respect from discreet forms of liberality. Evidently, euergetism was aimed at strengthening the unity of the city. It appears that its main purpose, however, was to express the giver's superiority with regard to other elites or to predecessors who could not afford to be so generous. Here, symbolic superiority was strongly associated with the ability to afford colossal expenses and to break new ground.[4]

   The study of the assertion of status during the Middle Ages introduces us to quite other configurations. With Christianity beginning to pervade all aspects of life, any attempt to stand above others theoretically brought instant disapprobation. Overtly pious discourses readily referred to the sin of pride and to the Christian ideal of humility. The exemplary figure was that of the Saint— the perfect incarnation of the virtues advocated by the Church—and, to a lesser extent, that of the monk, who was supposed to banish any sign of distinction. It is worth recalling, however, that Christian doctrines also held that social inequalities should be considered as natural and indeed as the will of Divine providence. This sought to justify high levels of ostentation for the glory of God and that of his intercessors. More precisely, there was a crucial distinction made between a legitimate splendor, which the Church did not

associate with sin (insofar as it was organically linked to a sacred transcendence), and the pursuit of luxury (that which was unrelated to the official hierarchy of differentiated estates ordained by God, and therefore condemned). There were serious debates, however, between those who firmly believed that the 'salvation of the soul' was the ultimate purpose and those priests sensitive to the grandeur of the church.[5] The universe of chivalry which could tend toward knightly ascetic honor or involve great pride and display was also fairly ambivalent.

An important theme studied by historians is that of sumptuary laws. These laws can be found in vastly different environments. Occasionally providing for 'positive injunctions' (e.g. to dress up in accordance with one's rank), they more typically take the form of negative prohibitions: forbidding some social categories to acquire and display certain items. Various purposes may be distinguished. Above all, however, sumptuary laws can be analyzed as a defensive reaction by established elites concerned with preserving an exclusive access to what 'materializes' their upper position. A classic example is found in the symbolic rivalry between the nobility and the rising merchant class in Western Europe, during those centuries witnessing the long transition from social structuration through predefined privileges to new logics based on socio-economic achievements. Whereas for time immemorial prestige goods had often been used to confirm pre-existing hereditary statuses, with the advent of capitalism and the strong upward thrust by new socio-economic forces, they became status markers regardless of the owner's original background. The aspiration of the bourgeoisie to a more dignified presentation of themselves led many to purchase conspicuous signs of social position. What sumptuary laws endeavored to counter was not only such a desire to adopt emblems deemed 'above their station' but, more fundamentally, the subversion of the old system of stratification. For rulers and aristocratic elites constantly expecting deference from subordinates, immediate recognition through conventional signs was crucial in so far as it was perceived as a guarantor of proper status identification. Yet, with the advent of new wealthy groups wishing to be confused with the upper circles and able to emulate their external appearance, the whole symbolic system was disrupted, hence the attempts at official regulation.

Historical studies dealing with political rituals, ceremonial pomp, pageantry or the grandiosity of some courts prove particularly valuable. Usually of a monographic nature, they have sometimes led to debatable structuralist or deconstructionist generalizations.[6] Against those inclined to make rapid ahistorical statements, or retrospective judgments based on the assumptions of one favorite explanatory scheme, historians calling attention to key dimensions frequently prove helpful however. To take just one example, some have

questioned ready-made thinking about the so-called 'symbolic violence' of imposing monuments (such as Trajan's column in Rome, or the hall of mirrors in Versailles) underlying not only that the repertoires of the carvings or paintings were beyond most visitors' capacity to decipher, but that they were placed much too high to be clearly seen (Veyne 1988; Sabatier 1999).[7] Historians also take more recent cases into consideration and for instance the interesting issue of revolutionary episodes endeavoring to undertake complete breaks. The interrogation here is in what measure the advent of new elites is accompanied by symbolic upheavals. Despite significant differences from one situation to the next (possibly including the conservation of some symbols of power), it appears that regardless of the nature of the new regime and its ideology the necessity for political elites to demonstrate prominence in various ways is inescapable.

Let us now turn our attention to contemporary democracies, mainly studied by political scientists.

The Question of Symbolic Superiority Within Democratic Systems

Strangely enough, though manifestations of elitist distance within such contexts are frequently underscored by journalistic anecdote and subject to denunciation on normative grounds in numerous essays, the theme of symbolic superiority has been under-investigated within the discipline.[8]

On the Tension Between Eminence and Nearness

To the extent that the relevant literature does take account of this type of symbolic dimension at all, it is generally to point out an inherent contradiction between the need for political elites (in their capacity as representatives) to demonstrate eminence and a certain form of closeness with citizens. There is undeniably some truth in this view—which is readily taken as a structural invariant, valid for any democratic regime. Yet, a much more refined approach is required, if we are to come to terms with the complex realities involved. First of all, it is useful from a heuristic point of view to consider the ambiguities of the notion of eminence.[9] Several types can be distinguished, such as social eminence (related to renown, success, access to other strategic elites, etc.), competence (e.g. oratorical skills), exemplarity (incarnation of various values),

means and substance (which may lead to redistribution), and, for what particularly concerns us here, the display of outward signs of superiority.

Regarding the latter, earning legitimacy sometimes demands that representatives maintain a high and striking profile, which involves the possession and wielding of various symbols of prestige. It is useful to posit these aspects along a continuous spectrum according to the degree of emphasis on personal dimensions. At one extreme, we obviously have physical appearance related to the representative's own physical bearing, followed by manners which are embodied signs. Adornment and dress are also quite personal, although situations may often determine what constitutes proper attire. Vehicles, notably cars, lie somewhere in between personal and collective dimensions, considering the fact that they may be used by several people, driven by a chauffeur, preceded by an escort, and so on. Dwelling and cuisine belong more toward the collective end of the spectrum due to cohabitation or commensality. Finally we have the political elites' entourage, with its vicarious aspects, along with ceremonial pomp which is always collective in nature. It is important to suggest a more complex view by introducing an added dimension concerning private/public image. Admittedly, this dichotomy is far from sufficient for our purpose since the differentiation between the two spheres may prove more or less marked according to the cultural environment, as we have seen. Assuming that such a distinction does make sense, when we consider prestige goods, for instance, research should always take into account both the domestic space of the home and the public space of official residences; personal cars as well as official vehicles which may include limousines but also planes and helicopters. Likewise, if we look at the entourage, it is logical to treat vicarious display through spouses and children separately from the assistants, ushers, bodyguards or chauffeurs that appear as attributes of an official function.

Present-day decorum in Western democracies holds that pomp is legitimate in so far as it remains the preserve of the State and is not appropriated for and by the rulers themselves. Where elites are temporary office holders, the ostentation displayed in, say, the banquets they organize in their capital's palaces is perceived as a reflection of the polity's standing, which is sometimes necessary to project. Viewed from the standpoint of legitimation, a contradiction arises between the requirement to represent a country or a city with dignity and the need for representatives not to appear cut off from those they represent. After all, in a democracy, those acting at the top of the state are supposed to do so in the name of the latter. Seen from a symbolic angle, it is thus important to underline the articulation between an intra-elite level (when political representatives are expected to entertain distinguished guests decently

or to attend meetings and receptions organized elsewhere) and the relation with the bulk of the population.

Yet when political elites for instance indulge in architectural follies (such as Turkish President R.T. Erdogan's recently built 1000-room palace in Ankara) which are supposed to heighten the reputation of their respective country, are they contributing to project a flattering impression of the community they 'represent'? Are they not also trying to enhance their own image? Among genuine democracies, in principle, older remnants of courtly opulence have been converted into official luxury. However, if modern protocol has replaced court etiquette, demonstrating thereby the de-patrimonialization of socio-political systems (i.e. a more clear separation between public and private resources), political authority still rests to a large degree on traditional signs of eminence and attributes of power. There is no doubt that, all over the world, contemporary political elites still enjoy exorbitant privileges and prerogatives. It is often arguable whether the primary aim consists in eliciting respect from a domestic audience or in awing foreign counterparts. When official actors are criticized for excessive expenses and 'showing off', it is easy for them to counter that what they had in mind was the greater glory of their function, and not the fostering of an image of elitist distance for themselves.

Approached without ideological preconception and bearing in mind the tension incurred in remaining close enough to those for whom one speaks while also demonstrating their value, the image of political elites becomes an important object of investigation, considered both from the point of view of self- and cross-perceptions. When observing the phenomenon of representation from a *bottom-up perspective*, we find people aspiring to elevate themselves by identifying with representatives who embody higher ambitions. They appear anxious to gain a greater sense of dignity and a measure of pride through association with someone whose function or image transcends their own. Supporters may certainly trust superior actors for their alleged competence or hope that they will use their socio-political power to their direct benefit. They may also believe that these actors are an incarnation of their ideals. At the opposite end of the spectrum, we find deep-seated suspicion of anyone whose profile is more distinguished than those s/he claims to represent. A borderline case is that of French working-class-based organizations which proposed in the 1860s–70s to send to parliament only the humblest among them, in the belief that they would better resist the temptation to 'betray' fellow workers. Drawbacks related to their origins (particularly an inability to express themselves properly) were deemed to be secondary in light of the fact that these deputies could bear witness to the condition of their peers. In this view—very much opposed to the strong republican and liberal tradition of

merit-based representation—the role of the representative was essentially to appear as a living symbol of his collective identity. Conversely, a great deal of distrust subsisted toward those members of higher classes (lawyers, journalists, medical doctors) who claimed to represent the proletariat. One such deputy created a scandal when he appeared dressed in his working outfit: a gesture intended to remind everyone of his social origins and obligations.[10]

When looking instead *from the top-down*, we have, schematically speaking, at one extreme representatives who seek support by stressing their 'ordinariness' in the hope that it will appeal to voters. For example, if accent and diction play an important part in the way in which politicians are assessed, they may be exploited in different manners. Indeed, some members of the Labor Party in Great Britain became adept at using their working-class accent to differentiate themselves from members of the Conservative Party. Compassionate strategies may also prove effective. At the other end, we find representatives resorting to a wide variety of strategies intended to demonstrate eminence and endeavoring to deploy every conceivable sign of distinction. Most cases fall somewhere between these extremes and contain much more ambiguous logics of identification. This is manifestly the case in, for instance, the United States where, on the one hand, 'money talks' and there is nothing objectionable to boasting about one's personal success while, on the other hand, politicians can be—at least from certain foreign viewpoints—astonishingly casual and familiar as well.

As a matter of fact, nearness and eminence are far from exclusive notions. Indeed, political elites must overcome this tension daily and learn how to play on both registers. Not only are the two imperatives compatible but combining them may prove most effective as a source of legitimation. Festive moments such as sharing a meal or attending a sporting event for example, allow for the affirmation of solidarities *and* the staging of differences (high table, VIP stand). Likewise, using a helicopter to visit a small town but then ostensibly refusing to take to the podium when addressing the audience, may felicitously convey assorted feelings of power, munificence and proximity.

Comparisons

In some contexts, however, there are severe symbolic constraints on representatives who are expected to adhere strictly to the ideals and socio-cultural interests of the community for which they stand. Only at this price are they empowered to act on its behalf. Thick descriptions about the way in which political actors reconcile the opposing imperatives of eminence and nearness

reveal striking cultural disparities. It can thus be shown that in a sub-Saharan country such as Nigeria (whether under democratic or non-democratic circumstances), it is necessary to advertise one's powers of patronage if one is to attract followers. The credibility of political elites relies heavily on the display of external signs of wealth that signal their ability to accrue and dispense resources to potential supporters. The rivalry between patrons exacerbates symbolic competition, which may reach incredible heights of ostentation. Remarkably enough, dependents basking in reflected glory often partake in this process of comparison at their own level and go as far as drawing vainglorious pride from the prestige goods enjoyed by their respective champions.

In an altogether different culture, Scandinavian political representatives come under considerable pressure not to distinguish themselves from the average citizen. Showing even the slightest sign of superiority can trigger virulent media criticism and lead political careers to a rapid ruin. There, it is what can be called 'conspicuous modesty' that is the norm whereas the flaunting of previous success would be senseless and counterproductive.

Besides such extreme cases, we find a whole spectrum of more ambiguous situations where political actors waver between contradictory codes. French political elites, for instance, often find themselves torn between the opposite imperatives of what can be thought of as 'majesty' and 'proximity'. Success is frequently related to the ability to play on both registers.[11]

By way of example, let us refer briefly to two particularly enlightening topics: that of (personal and service) cars and that of receptions. Whereas in sub-Saharan Africa, it is not uncommon for newly elected representatives to unanimously vote for the attribution of a brand new vehicle each, in Nordic countries official cars and drivers remain exceptional. In Norway for instance, only a few ministers enjoy such perks on a permanent basis. Other top officials share a pool of vehicles made available only on booking. What is more, they are under the constant scrutiny of the press, eager to expose any form of abuse even in matters as apparently trivial. In Finland this goes as far as awarding the unenviable title of 'taxi king' and 'taxi queen' to political actors who make a too-frequent use of these means of transportation. In Oslo, whether the prime minister's vehicle should be allowed to use bus lanes or not in order to avoid the early-morning traffic and save time was an object of intense debate. Some commentators thus claimed that he should suffer traffic like any ordinary citizen, but the right was finally granted to him on grounds of security. In France, where there are hundreds of thousands of service cars having one at disposal proves to be quite an important symbol for VIPs in both the private and the public sector. Yet, in this case, attitudes and representations remain

poles apart from those recorded either in Nigeria or in the Nordic countries. In a survey of mayors of the 1000 largest French cities and towns carried out in 2006, they were asked to what extent they considered a service car as indispensable for their activities, and subsidiarily whether it generated increased deference toward them and possibly an impression of distance on their part. As with other themes (dress, etc.), the responses revealed substantial contradictions and tensions. While some respondents presented their car as a useful 'second office', many betrayed a preoccupation with the opinion of others and a strong concern regarding effects on their image. What was commonly expressed was the fear of giving the impression of enjoying an undue privilege. Consequently, many mentioned that their vehicle was either old or small, that it was also used by other members of the local council, or that they would drive it themselves most of the time.

The same type of contrast can be found when looking at receptions. In a complex pluralistic society such as Nigeria, the credibility of leaders is strongly dependent on the display of tokens of prosperity which convey the promise of bounty, notably on the occasion of lavish feasts. Conspicuousness is an imperative and may actually be considered as a valuable socio-political resource in these contexts. From the bottom upward, it is essential to have the backing of a 'Big Man'—his patronage coming at a price of course. Any scholar studying these questions in some depth is bound to be struck by the relative absence of popular resentment, at least within the patron's own community or faction, regarding ostentatious behavior on his part. Indeed, the heart of the matter here is not whether the latter may overindulge himself or not, but rather that the staging of 'communal splendour' also fulfils clear needs on the part of dependents, whose desire for recognition seems to be satisfied through symbolic as well as concrete forms of redistribution. Conversely, in Nordic countries public display often generates a sense of unease. The theatrics of representation are acceptable only in so far as they fit the role which political actors are officially assigned; this amounts to a narrowly defined brief to which they are expected to conform, the adoption of a certain type of demeanor. In other words, men and women charged with representing a polity must humbly serve and stand for the values of their respective repertoire; they are not allowed to stand out as individuals. For this reason, the study of official receptions offers a good indicator of the overall level of tolerance toward extravagant display. One comes across quite a few instances of ministers and mayors of large cities forced into resignation for exceeding their functional spending limit when in office. In countries where transparency is seen as a cardinal value, it is often possible for citizens to access politicians' food bills. Moreover, the media acts as a vigilant watchdog in this domain. What is remarkable here is that such

minor scandals, which would be perceived as mere peccadilloes in many parts of the world, are taken instead as the sign of a more general lack of integrity on the part of prominent actors.

In the above-mentioned survey of French mayors, one inquired whether they consider decorum (e.g. invitation cards, waiters, luxury food) to be an element contributing effectively to the image of their borough and whether it entailed a risk for their own image in terms of suggesting an impression of privilege and distance. This question aroused numerous comments and, here again, one recorded very contrasted responses. A modicum of grandeur is often deemed necessary (in view of a city or town's reputation which needs to be upheld, of that of the local institutions themselves, but also of the mayor's function, of democracy, the population represented, etc.). Some of them attach a high level of importance to entertaining guests decently. In sharp contrast to this type of comment, some mayors vocally advocate austerity. What is important here is that the reference to the Republic may imply 'modesty' for some, as well as a solemn exhibition of pomp for others. More often than not, decorum is considered to be of some significance, with this stance immediately tempered by statements on the importance of simplicity—quite typical of the respondents' ambiguous universe of reference.

What such evidence testifies to are the very contrasted systems of meaning within which the actors operate. Whereas projecting an image of substance is required in many unstable African societies, this constitutes a properly unthinkable notion in Nordic countries. And vice-versa, it would be almost inconceivable for an aspiring politician to play the card of 'conspicuous modesty' in Nigeria; whereas in the French case fulfilling the duties of representation may demand both proof of and transcendence of proximity. Attitudes that are far removed from one's framework of reference are perceived not only to be shocking but also to be largely meaningless.

Of course, casting some light on the real diversity of cultural representations does not dispense with interpretations. For instance, regarding the French case, it can be argued that the socio-historical trajectory of the country led to a tension that was never fully resolved between a public form of unpretentiousness (a legacy of the republican ideals of the French Revolution) and the pursuit of distinction (a lasting influence of the Versailles court tradition). Revisiting French history, it can be shown how this translates into a position of continual flux between majesty and proximity, whatever the level considered—be it that of a mayor or the French president. A society's cultural matrix is not necessarily monolithic, and the specificities of certain cultures may just as well derive from a constant tension between two contradictory imperatives.

It would be wrong to assume that the striking disparities uncovered by empirical research can be easily reduced to structural variables or to interpret them in a purely teleological light (e.g. in terms of democratization). One has in mind, for instance, constructivist approaches which vest the political with a virtually demiurgic power to transform patterns of meaning—which may lead to the conclusion that an invariant relation of structural determination exists between the type of political regime and the nature of symbolic relations. From the Nigerian case, we can see that high levels of ostentation are compatible with close personal and social ties. In this respect, the symbolic logics of political representation cannot be explained on the basis of two general scenarios—a democratic one whereby political elites are close to the people, and another according to which they remain aloof and assert prominence through ostentation—without denying important sources of difference and complexity.

In a structuralist perspective, the goal should be to narrow this complexity down to a number of key variables that can account for observable differences in practice. One of these is socio-economic development. We are of course looking at highly different settings when we compare Nigeria, where millions of poorly educated people barely have enough to subsist on, and Scandinavian countries (also, to a lesser extent, France) where the welfare state provides an extensive safety net. Likewise, many institutional factors need to be taken into account. However, even here, it remains extremely difficult to empirically demonstrate any form of universal causality, and the most rewarding avenue for comparative analysis probably lies in tracing the socio-historical dynamics respectively at work in each case.

The issue of the attitudes deployed by members of the elite when interacting with lower status populations is rich in comparative lessons. In Nigeria, there is definitely hierarchy but not necessarily distance, and one is often struck by the Big Men's remarkable level of accessibility. They seem well aware that their reputation depends on this. In Nordic countries, it seems rather as if representatives do all they can to avoid any form of distinction. In France, what appears to dominate is the need to adapt to the situation. Such variations are particularly interesting to observe during electoral periods. Do candidates want to be seen as affluent members of the elite who can wield and dispense resources; as being on the same level as their voters; or do they try to adjust their image according to the publics met? When considering other cases (such as the Philippines, Bolivia or Ethiopia), we encounter still more alternatives (Daloz 2011).

Compared to the standard questions tackled in the literature on political elites, symbolic superiority has been a rather under-studied topic. It is hoped

that this short contribution will stimulate reflections and encourage future research. What would be particularly needed are comparative investigations about political elites' symbolic prerogatives and logics of self-presentation (as possibly related to culture, social background, personal style, 'focus' of representation, concrete interactions, etc.).

Notes

1. This section is drawn from Daloz (2010, Chapter 7).
2. For a panorama of 'Precious Materials as Expressions of Status' and their meanings, see Clark (1986).
3. For example, monopolizing large shade-yielding parasols. Regarding skepticism vis-à-vis excessive generalizations, one must refer above all here to the magisterial *Negara*, by Clifford Geertz (1980) in which the author demonstrates how in the case of Bali 'power served pomp, not pomp power'. See also Firth (1973) on the issue of the meaningfulness of rituals.
4. On euergetism, see principally Veyne (1976). For comparative reflections on the applicability of the notion to other settings, see Daloz (2013, pp. 42 ff.).
5. One thinks of the criticisms Abbott Suger, the great advocate of the luxurious decoration of liturgical space during the twelfth century, received from St Bernard who instead extoled voluntary poverty and holy simplicity in the name of 'things of greater importance'.
6. See, for example Marin (2002) on the 'representation of power' and the 'power of representation'. Regarding monographs, one could refer to dozens of descriptive works here. The reader may consult edited books such as Cannadine and Price (1987) or Wilentz (1999 [1985]) and their abundant bibliographies. Attempts at comparison are rare. See, however, volumes from the 'Rulers & Elites' series published by Brill such as Duindam et al. (2011), or Mitchell and Melville (2013).
7. It is true of course that symbols may be impressive without being intelligible. See mainly Anglo (1992) for a reflection on the limitations of political symbolism (under the Tudor era).
8. Apart from one-sided views on the symbolic uses of politics (Edelman 1985 [1964]).
9. The same goes for that of 'proximity'. See Daloz (2013, pp. 52–53). Developments in this section are largely drawn from this book (Chapter 3).
10. In 1997, an MP (belonging to the French Communist Party) was to repeat the experience on the opening day of the parliamentary session. The former miner and union leader, Keir Hardie, had similarly created a stir at the British

Parliament when he opted for a cloth cap and refused to wear the black coat and top hat usually donned in Westminster.

11. See Daloz (2002, 2007, 2008) for thick descriptions about the Nigerian, Nordic and French contexts, respectively.

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33

Norms and Orientations of Political Elites

Bernhard Weßels

Citizens' political opinions and beliefs, political behavior and vote intention are a regular topic of the mass media. In contrast, little is reported on the political orientations, beliefs, and behavior of political elites. One reason for the high presence of pollsters' results about mass publics has to do with the interest of the political elites: In democracies, their fate depends to a considerable degree on voters' will, expressed in election results. The people elect parliament and government, thus mass opinions are important. What about elites' orientations and norms? Who are the elites and how do they differ from mass publics? Why may their opinions, orientations, and norms matter as much or even more than those of the ordinary citizens? This is the general question which we deal with in this chapter. Rather concrete answers to such questions can be found by studying political processes and decision-making for which the orientations of elites are of utmost relevance. The relevance of political elites can be understood by looking at the functional definition of elite positions in society. Following Burton, Gunther, and Higley, elites are defined as "persons who are able, by virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations, to affect national political outcomes regularly and substantially. Elites are the principal decision makers in the largest or most resource-rich political, governmental, economic, military, professional,

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communications, and cultural organizations and movements in a society" (1992, p. 8). We limit our investigation, however, to the political sector, that is to persons who hold positions of political authority and therefore are entitled to make binding decisions for the polity.

The Relevance of Elite Orientations

The claim that elite orientations and norms are highly relevant for the well-being of a society is a classic one. Truman argued for example that general elite consensus is needed in order to guarantee the survival of democratic processes in times of crisis and threat (Truman 1959). Dahl (1971) has attributed great importance to the attitudes of political leaders as a precondition for the consolidation and stability of democracy, in particular in developing countries. In their analysis of elite settlements, Burton and Higley came to the conclusion that "the consensually unified elite structure ⋯ constitutes the primary basis for subsequent political stability" (Burton and Higley 1987, p. 304). Referring to Sartori's (1987) notion that elites ought to perceive politics as "bargaining" instead of "war," they concluded that a "key to the stability and survival of democratic regimes is, in our view, the establishment of substantial consensus among elites concerning rules of the democratic political game and the worth of democratic institutions" (Burton et al. 1992, p. 3).

From the perspective of the theory of democratic elitism, the reason for the relevance of political (and other) elites for the transformation, consolidation, and stability of regimes lies in the fact that "a mass of people cannot act except through organization and in response to the initiatives of small numbers of leaders" (Truman 1959, p. 489). As McClosky has put it, in contrast to the mass public the political elite tends to be united on basic values so that they "serve as the major repositories of the public conscience and as the carriers of the Creed. Responsibility for keeping the system going, hence, falls most heavily upon them" (1964, p. 374).

The perspective of democratic elitism has been criticized by a number of scholars, starting with Bachrach. His conclusion after reviewing the positions of three proponents of this perspective (Truman 1959; Berle 1959; Mills 1958) is the following: "To contend, therefore, that elites must become the guardians of the system is either to freeze democracy within narrow bounds—bounds within which established elites are not threatened—or to endanger democracy's existence" (Bachrach 1962, p. 443). In his book on democratic elitism he wrote "If it is time to abandon the myth of the common man's

allegiance to democracy, it is also time that elites in general and political scientists in particular recognize that without the common man's active support, liberty cannot be preserved over the long run. The battle for freedom will be lost by default if elites insulate themselves from the people" (Bachrach 1967, p. 106). Other scholars formulated "a critique of the elitist theory of democracy," too. The adequacy of this theory both in normative and in empirical terms was questioned (Walker 1966).

Sartori took up the debate and criticized the conflict as an artificial juxtaposition of the classic view on democracy with its normative emphasis on the horizontal dimension and the empirical theory of democracy with an emphasis on the vertical dimension of democracy. He regarded it as weird that the conclusion of Bachrach cited above has been presented "as an 'alternative approach', for none of the living authors under attack would ⋯ disagree with it" (Sartori 1978, p. 61).

It is not really known whether consensus among the influentials is either a necessary or sufficient condition for democratic stability (McClosky 1964, p. 377). Likewise, the claim of democratic elitism that political elites generally express more liberal, democratic value orientations may be empirically wrong in some cases. One can turn this into a critique of democratic elitism—or an empirical approach to a theory of democracy—or one can turn it into a functional argument that the absence of elite consensus regarding the rules of the game is not conducive to democratic transformation and democratic stability. Thus, from a functional perspective, an elite consensus on the rules of the game may neither be a necessary nor a sufficient condition for democracy and its stability. Consensus may not be a prerequisite of stability. As McClosky has put it, "the converse may be the more correct formulation, i.e., that so long as conditions remain stable, consensus is not required; it becomes essential only when social conditions are disorganized. Consensus may strengthen democratic viability, but its absence in an otherwise stable society need not be fatal or even particularly damaging" (McClosky 1964 p. 377). Still, consensus among the (political) elites on the rules of the game would be functionally conducive for democracy and democratization. This does not imply that elites' consensus must extend beyond the rules of the game. Just to the opposite. That elites do not share basic attitudes regarding core societal values and policy goals is not a challenge for democracy, but rather its insurance. Without such differences there would not be political competition between elite groups, and, as Sartori has put it, "the result of the competition between them is democracy." It "results from the fact that the power of deciding between the competitors is in the hands of the demos" (Sartori 1978, p. 71).

Applying Sartori's claim as a criterion for evaluating the orientations and norms of political elites in democracies has two implications: Regarding values and policy goals, elites should show heterogeneity (typically along party-lines) in order to make alternative offers to the demos; regarding the democratic rules of the game, there should be consensus among them. Thus, the theory of democratic elitism implies that a functioning democracy requires both consensus on the rules of the game and conflict over policies.

The Character of Elite Orientations and Norms

Data on political orientations and norms of political elites are not as widely available as for mass publics. However, comparative research results still allow some generalizations. Research on the attitudes and beliefs of political elites has shown that there can be significant differences to those of mass publics. One recurring argument about political elites is that their orientations and beliefs are more constrained and stable than those of ordinary citizens. The higher level of constraint in elites' political orientations results from their more ideological conceptualization of politics where ideology is defined as a system of beliefs based upon a small number of core principles (Shils 1968). Numerous studies have shown for diverse countries that the beliefs of political elites are "usually structured by partisan ideological commitments" (Putnam 1976, p. 88). Empirical research indeed shows a high stability of general ideological orientations and attitudinal constraint. Kritzer's analysis went beyond that and showed not only that there is a very clear structure of attitudes among party convention delegates in the United States, but also that ideology strongly influences political behavior (Kritzer 1978). Herrera's study of party delegates' understanding of the terms "liberal" and "conservative" and how they relate these concepts to the terms of the political debate impressively confirms the relevance of ideology for elite attitudes and orientations (Herrera 1992).

Putnam and colleagues found that the political orientations of Italian political elites show a high temporal stability, in particular regarding fundamental features of political ideology (Putnam et al. 1979). The study by Converse and Pierce on political representation in France is probably the first one investigating the temporal stability and constraint in the belief systems of citizens and political elites based on panel data. They found that ideological constraint was about ten times as high for political elites than for the French mass public (1986, p. 238). Temporal stability was more than twice as high for political elites than for citizens (ibid., pp. 249–251). More recent research supports these findings. Murry and Cowden showed with data from the US

Leadership Opinion Project that there is high continuity in elites' beliefs and that ideology plays a significant role in structuring issue attitudes. Dealing with foreign policy beliefs, they could show with panel data that this continuity in beliefs even persisted during the global upheaval at the end of the Cold War (Murray and Cowden 1999). Taken together, these results provide ample evidence that elites' orientations show high stability and constraint, and that their ideological conceptualization quite often is stronger than for mass publics.

Another finding, not uncontested however, is that the orientations of political elites regularly are more liberal and tolerant. In their Four Nation Study, Sullivan and colleagues found that members of parliament in Britain, Israel, New Zealand, and the United States are considerably more tolerant than the mass publics of the respective countries. Both political elites and mass publics were asked to name from a list the one political group they liked the least. Next, they were asked if the members of this group should be granted full citizenship rights: If their members should be allowed to teach at school, to make public speeches and to hold public rallies, or if they should be banned from taking the office of prime minister and should have their phones tapped by the government or even be outlawed. The differences between members of parliament and mass publics were striking in Britain, New Zealand, and the United States: The share of tolerant responses among the political elites was on average almost as twice as high with 91 percent in New Zealand, 78 percent in the United States and 63 percent in Britain. Israel was an outlier in two respects. First, tolerance was very low; and second, differences between members of the Knesset and citizens were negligible (Sullivan et al. 1993, p. 60). The authors suggested that Israel deviates because its political culture "puts less emphasis on minority rights and freedom of speech and more on majority rule, than the Anglo-Saxon democracies" (ibid. 1993, pp. 65–66). In another article dealing only with Britain and the United States, two of the authors of the Four Nation Study, Barnum and Sullivan (1990), using the same data came to the tentative conclusion that two of the key factors protecting political freedom are elite tolerance and constitutional rules including the interplay among judicial institutions and legislative bodies. Members of parliament (MPs) are substantially more tolerant on key issues of political freedom than the mass publics. The differences between political elites and citizenry only partly can be explained by selective recruitment, and neither by demographic characteristics like education, but rather by political socialization in public office.

McAllister's study on mass-elite differences also found that differences in educational levels do not explain the differences in orientations between political elites and mass publics. He found evidence for the socialization

hypothesis instead. Moreover, his study of candidates to the national parliament and voters shows two things: First, differences between candidates of different party camps are more polarized on economic and social issues than between voters of these party camps. Second, candidates show a higher degree of consensus on aspects of the political order. In particular, they favor more permissive penal laws and law enforcement and also show much more liberal orientations than the voters in this respect (McAllister 1991). McAllister thus confirmed for Australia that political elites show characteristics very much in line with the theory of democratic elitism: competition on bread-and-butter issues and consensus on more basic rules.

The conclusion that political elites show more consensus on the rules of the game has been contested by Sniderman and colleagues in their study on commitment to civil liberties in Canada (Sniderman et al. 1991, 1996). In their analysis of a survey of MPs and citizens in Canada as well as in their re-analysis of McClosky's data for the United States, they found that the differences in support of democratic values between the MPs of different parties were sometimes larger than those between MPs and citizens. Therefore, they argued that it is misleading to assume the existence of a broad elite consensus on the democratic rules of the game. Moreover, the degree of elite consensus they found also varied considerably across different democratic principles. On some questions, the MPs of individual parties deviated further from the overall mean (of MPs) than the citizens. The results by Sniderman et al. thus confirm that even a high level of elite agreement on democratic values may conceal the presence of elite subgroups who do not support the rules of the game. Likewise, the degree of elite consensus may differ depending on the question at stake and is especially low when elites are asked to choose between conflicting values such as individual freedom and public order. Finally, democratic value orientations of elites cannot be attributed primarily to a specific elite socialization, because they are at the same time closely related to the basic ideological predilections of the elites.

The claim that political elites always are the "better democrats" than the citizens cannot be justified with respect to attitudes toward corruption either. Studies from a variety of countries show that political elites tend to judge corrupt behaviors by elites somewhat more leniently. Jackson and Smith who probably did the first empirical study on politicians' and voters' perception of corruption in Australia came to exactly that conclusion: "for politicians, some scenarios are grey corruption; for voters, all are black" (Jackson and Smith 1996, p. 33). McAllister's surveys of elected representatives and voters confirmed the results of Jackson and Smith. Voters and MPs were asked to judge the importance of eight ethical principles included in the federal parliament's

guide. On average, voters are about 18 percentage points more supportive of the eight principles than MPs. More than 20 percentage points more voters than MPs emphasize the importance of refusing gifts, not favoring special interests, always telling the truth, using public resources economically, as well as having respect for human dignity and the right to privacy (McAllister 2000). Thus, voters expect the observance of higher standards from legislators than the legislators themselves.

This finding is also supported by studies from Canada and Britain. Examining scenarios of corruption, Atkinson and Bierling found for Canadian voters and political elites that politicians judge less harshly, and—comparable to the difference in the emphasis on ethical principles in Australia—they found that a much higher proportion of voters than politicians support sanctions against corruption (2005, p. 1022). For Britain, a set of corruption scenarios was used in order to investigate orientations of MPs, candidates for parliament and the public. In four of the nine scenarios, differences between political elites and mass publics are minor. However, in five scenarios the judgments of ordinary voters are between 9 and 39 percentage points more exacting than those of MPs, for example regarding the acceptance of gifts, the disclosure of private donations, and hiring relatives from public funds (Allen and Birch 2012, p. 95).

Thus, the empirical evidence on how well the orientations and norms of political elites are in tune with democratic principles is mixed. It seems obvious that an elite consensus on the rules of the game is a functionally relevant contribution to democracy and its survival. However, how to measure "rules of the game" seems not clear at all. The variety of measures suggests that there is no consensus among researchers about what the rules of the game entail. As long as heterogeneity in research prevails, valid general conclusions can hardly be drawn.

Democracy, Representation, and the Role of Institutions

The role of democratic attitudes of political elites in processes of democratization is probably the most significant case demonstrating the relevance of elites' orientations and norms. For the third wave of democratization in Central and Eastern Europe as well as for previous transitions to democracy in Southern Europe and Latin America, a number of publications stress the role political elites have played in these processes. The authors in the volume

edited by Higley and Gunther "Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe" (1992) stress the importance of the normative commitment of political elites to democracy in transition processes in Italy, Portugal, and Spain, as well as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru, Venezuela, and Uruguay. Gunther's conclusion for Spain is that democratic consolidation resulted from a change of disunited to united political elites. In other countries like Italy or Colombia, the linkages between political elites and citizens have been crucial for the democratic transformations.

Another interesting region of democratic transitions is East and Central Europe after the fall of the so-called iron curtain. For the very first study comparing mass and elite attitudes after transformation, surveys have been conducted six months after the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Miller et al. (1995) argue that political representation requires that political elites and citizens share a common understanding of political symbols and values. However, their study shows considerable differences between the two groups. With respect to the ideological consistency of beliefs, the findings even deviate from those of studies in other countries. In Russia and the Ukraine, ideological consistency was surprisingly low among political elites and surprisingly high among mass publics. The authors explain the relatively high ideological conceptualization among mass publics in these two countries by the high degree of politicization during the period of system change. The comparatively low constraint among political elites instead indicates that institutions and arrangements had not been established at the time of the first survey, thus leaving the elites without a common yardstick. This implies that context matters.

In a follow-up study conducted three years later, the authors investigated the conceptions of democracy in order to determine whether leaders and ordinary citizens shared a common political culture. They found that political elites used more characteristics to describe the meaning of democracy than did citizens. Not only the complexity, but also the content of the conception of democracy differed considerably. Political elites put much more emphasis on the rule of law and political responsibility than mass publics, who emphasized freedom instead. The respondents' conception of democracy also had an impact on support for principles of democracy. Interestingly enough, however, the consistency between answers to questions regarding democratic principles is rather low for both political elites and mass publics as compared to the consistency regarding the economic order. Inter-item correlations for five principles of democracy were about 0.30, for five items of support of market economy about 0.40 (Miller et al. 1997, p. 179). The authors concluded that

their results suggest a great weight of the development of democratic institutions for the direction that support for democracy would take in the future.

That context and institutions matter for the political elites' positions regarding democratic orientations and norms has also been shown in the German context. Rohrschneider's analyses demonstrate that conceptions of democracy differ between political elites from East and West Germany at least in the early period after the breakdown of the Berlin wall (Rohrschneider 1994). Furthermore, contrasting a value-diffusion model and an institutional-learning perspective, he found only minor East-West differences regarding basic democratic rights. This finding supports the diffusion argument. However, regarding civil liberties the differences between East and West were larger, with East German MPs being less tolerant. Using their different historical experiences as explanation, he concluded that this reflects a lack of practicing democratic restraint among East German MPs (Rohrschneider 1996).

Thus, one interim conclusion is that the orientations and norms of political elites are strongly shaped by regime context and socialization within this context. Developments at the elite level as experienced in the United States during the McCarthy era or recent autocratic tendencies in Russia, Hungary, and Poland show that political institutions strongly flanking the rules of the democratic game are necessary, namely institutions that provide incentives and norms of political behavior.

Political elites in democracies are involved in policy formation and legislation. Democracy carries the normative notion of popular sovereignty and effective elite control by the citizens. Thus, institutions must exist which organize the linkage between people and decision makers which is a precondition for effective political representation. The basic idea of representative democracy implies a more or less direct chain of delegation, or "authorized representation" as Bingham Powell calls it (Powell 2000, pp. 10ff.). Citizens' preferences translate into voting behavior and election outcomes, which in turn determine policy-making. Thus, liberal democracy as a political order has solved the problem of political control of the rulers by institutions which guarantee the regular choice government by the people.

The representative bond is created by giving a mandate to those political actors who have gained a majority of votes. How do electoral institutions contribute to orientations and norms of the elected representatives, and how? Expressions of the character and quality of political representation can be found in orientations: (1) in the role orientations of political elites, in particular those of directly elected representatives; and (2) in the congruence of orientations between voters and elected holders of political office with respect

to policy issues. There are other ways to assess the quality of representation like roll-call studies, studies of law-making and the like which should be mentioned only in passing because they rely on aggregate data and do not provide direct evidence on the attitudinal links between voters and political elites.

Comparative studies of the effect of institutions on role orientations and issue congruence are rare because they require surveys of both political elites and citizens. A study of political representation in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden revealed striking differences in how MPs define their tasks and in the importance they attribute to party representation. These differences are related to the differences in the electoral and party system. In Sweden and Norway which are highly party-dominated systems, party representation comes first. About 70 percent of the MPs there regarded party representation as very important. On the other side stands Finland with only 9 percent of MPs regarding party representation as important. Esaiasson explains this difference as a consequence of the Finnish electoral system which places more emphasis on personality than party (Esaiasson 2000, p. 61). These differences do not imply that issue agreement among MPs and party voters is lower in Finland, though. Since the role orientations of MPs in Finland are more individualistic, Holmberg (2000) expected that policy congruence would be less party-centered. The empirical results did not support this expectation, however.

The 1996 study "Political Representation in Europe" (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Katz and Weßels 1999), based on MP surveys from 11 West European countries plus a survey of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), confirms that the degree to which electoral systems are personalized matters for the focus of representation the elected representative chose. Whereas individual-level factors (education, church attendance, and political experience, parliamentary and party seniority) do not show any effect on the focus of representation of the MPs, the character of the electoral system does have an effect. The smaller the average district magnitude is, the higher is the proportion of MPs who regard constituency representation as important (Weßels 1999).

Powell showed for a large number of democracies, including parliamentary and presidential systems as well as electoral systems from single-member district to proportional, that institutional structures influence representative performance (Powell 2000). Most relevant, the two different visions of democracy—majority control and proportional representation—work almost equally well with regard to left-right congruence, but produce it in different ways: in majoritarian systems, the control mechanism is accountability toward the constituency, in proportional systems it is accountability toward the party.

The effect of different visions of democracy embedded in the electoral system and their consequences for political representation consists in a trade-off between representing the median voter in the district and representing the party's voters. Whereas the median voter represents the central position of the total electorate of a district (regardless of party), party voters represent the central position of the respective voter group. The trade-off hypothesis challenges the assumption that in majoritarian systems with single-member districts MPs only try to represent the median voter in the district, and MPs in proportional systems only try to represent the party voters. Rather, it is a question of more or less. MPs in majoritarian systems skew representation in favor of the median voter; in proportional systems in favor of the party voters. In the two majoritarian systems, the United States and France, the median voter in the district is better represented than the party voters of the MPs' parties. In the Netherlands and Sweden, almost ideal types of the proportional vision of democracy, the distances of the MPs to the voters of their party are much lower than those to the median voter. Germany as a mixed system ranks in-between (Weßels 1999).

Whether the impact of institutions on policy representation also works in new democracies, is still an open question. On the one hand, one might argue that institutions need time to allow for the accumulation of learning and experience to produce effects. On the other hand, research on role orientations of representatives shows that the incentives set by institutions are well perceived by the elites. Kitschelt et al. (1999) showed that issue congruence between voters and elites in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland is strongly shaped by the character of party competition and issues. The structure of party competition leads to different ways of representation. Polarizing trusteeship occurs when political representatives take more pronounced positions than their voters. Polarizing trusteeship has been a feature regarding economic issues due to the emphasis on party competition in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. Regarding cultural issues and politics of identity, polarizing trusteeship was not a feature in the Czech Republic but in Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria (Kitschelt et al. 1999, Ch. 9). A mandate relationship, in contrast, implies a full match between voters' and MPs' preferences. It is only likely in areas with little party competition or where parties in general do play a lesser role.

Conclusion

The orientations and norms of political elites matter, there is no doubt about this. The relevance of elite consensus to the rules of the game for successful transitions to democracy has been shown for a variety of transformations in Latin America. Furthermore, elite consensus contributed to the consolidation of democracy in the Third Wave of democratization in Europe. The debate among protagonists and opponents of the theory of democratic elitism whether political elites play or have played a pivotal role in these developments seems to be obsolete. Each class of actors plays its role in political processes and research has to find out how and why. The debate is charged with normative connotations and therefore does not contribute much to the theoretical and empirical understanding of the role of political elites in modern democracies. It confirms what Sartori has identified as a fundamental dilemma of democratic theory: While the horizontal dimension of democracy has a clear normative base, equality, the vertical dimension—the principle of political representation on which modern democracies rely—is much more difficult to justify on normative grounds. Sartori concluded that "the plain fact is that the 'ideals' of democracy—popular sovereignty, equality and self-government—have remained very much what they were in the fourth century BC ⋯ Thus the plain, but nevertheless shocking, fact is that we have created a representative democracy ⋯ without 'value support'" (Sartori 1978, pp. 59–60). As Dahl pointed out, modern democracies—or polyarchies—are based on the principle of representation rather than direct democracy. Representation implies the rule by a minority. The power of these elites is limited by regular and free elections, thus by political competition (Dahl 1971). Here, Sartori sees a normative justification. "The distinctiveness of the competitive theory of democracy is that it confronts the vertical dimension" (Sartori 1978, p. 63).

The results of empirical research provide evidence that there is an interplay between political institutions, the incentives they offer as well as the orientations and norms of political elites. Studies on democratic transition and consolidation show that the new institutional context promotes gradual attitudinal adjustments. They show furthermore that the incentives of the electoral system have an impact on how representatives understand the responsibilities of their office and their role as representatives. In addition, the roles political elites take in organizations or political institutions have a socializing effect on their norms and behavior. Beyond that, the competitive pressure within political parties or constituencies prevents political elites from becoming too autonomous and out of touch with their mass publics. At the

same time, these experiences also contribute to the development of more consistent belief systems and a stronger ideological conceptualization of politics. This is an effect of the professionalization of politics. The differences in stability, constraint, and shape of political orientations, values, and norms of political elites and mass publics thus are produced both by (professional) socialization and by institutional structures.

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34

Power Networks

David Knoke

The roots of power network theory and research stretch back more than a century, to the seminal contributions of Pareto, Mosca, and Michels, with subsequent additions by Mills, Keller, Domhoff, Useem, Schwartz, and others (e.g., Higley 2010). Adaptation of formal social network principles and methods to power elite studies appeared only toward the end of the twentieth century. This chapter reviews empirical research using network concepts and methods to analyze power structures in developed and developing nations. It discusses analytic models of power elite social structures and demonstrates methods for investigating power networks. It concludes with suggestions for future power network theory and research.

A *power network* refers to political actors connected by one or more types of decision-making actions, such as communicating, persuading, influencing, or deciding the outcomes of legislative, regulatory, or judicial issues. Power network actors could be individuals, groups, or formal organizations. Levels of analysis may range from local institutions, such as schools and neighborhood associations, to municipal, regional, and national governments, and to international networks linking nations in trade, military, or cultural relations. Power networks are a subset of political networks, which also include nondecision-making relations, for example, people discussing

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political matters with friends and relatives. This chapter concentrates on national power networks.

Power Networks in Developed Nations

I review three exemplary research programs that applied social network ideas to analyze national power structures of developed nations in North America and Western Europe.[1] R.A.W. Rhodes developed a policy network theory, which he and other British political scientists applied to United Kingdom and European Union (EU) policy-making (Rhodes 1981, 1985, 2008; Thatcher 1998; Börzel 1998, 2011.) Their approach synthesized interorganizational, corporatist, and resource-dependence theories about how organizations' external resource needs shape their behaviors, to explicate central-local intergovernmental relations in policy communities. A core proposition was, "Policy is not made in the electoral arena or in the gladiatorial confrontation of Parliament, but in the netherworld of committees, civil servants, professions, and interest groups" (Marsh and Rhodes 1992). The central concept was the *policy network*, consisting of "sets of formal and informal institutional linkages between governmental and other actors structured around shared interests in public policy-making and implementation. These institutions are interdependent. Policies emerge from the bargaining between the networks' members ⋯ The other actors commonly include the professions, trade unions and big business" (Rhodes 2007, p. 1244). Rhodes (1990) classified policy networks along two dimensions: (1) the degree to which its members are integrated; and (2) which groups belong to the network and how resources are distributed among them. The resulting five types ranged from most to least integrative: (1) *Policy communities*, networks with highly restrictive memberships, stable relations, vertical interdependence, and "insulation from other networks and invariably to the general public (including Parliament)" (p. 304); (2) *Professional networks*, dominated by one profession, such as physicians in the National Health service; (3) *Intergovernmental networks*, connecting agencies and bureaus of subnational governments; (4) *Producer networks,* where public and private sector economic interests dominate policy-making; and (4) *Issue networks*, featuring a "large number of participants and their limited degree of interdependence" (p. 305).

A major criticism of the Rhodes model was its metaphorical treatment of networks, leading to largely descriptive, historical, and ethnographic research studies. In contrast, two American sociologists, Edward Laumann and David Knoke, proposed an organizational state model of national policy domains,

integrating theories, concepts, and methodological tools of social network analysis to guide empirical data collection and analysis (Knoke and Laumann 1982; Laumann and Knoke 1987; Knoke 1998). They defined a policy domain as any subsystem "identified by specifying a substantively defined criterion of mutual relevance or common orientation among a set of consequential actors concerned with formulating, advocating, and selecting courses of action (i.e., policy options) that are intended to resolve the delimited substantive problems in question" (Knoke and Laumann 1982, p. 256). The participants in a policy domain compete to influence the outcomes of public policy decisions by the legislature and executive agencies. In national policy domains—such as health, energy, and labor—public and private sector organizations with interests in specific policy issues and events exchange political resources and form coalitions to lobby the decision-making authorities. Laumann and Knoke's investigation of events in the US health and energy policy domains featured multiplex networks of information exchange, resource transactions, and political support, analyzed with a variety of formal social network analysis methods. These techniques were subsequently applied in comparative analyses of the US and West German labor policy domains (Knoke and Pappi 1991), and with Japan as a third nation (Knoke et al. 1996). The organizational state projects demonstrated that central positions in elite networks are occupied by elected and appointed government officials and by peak interest groups. The capacity to participate and influence collective outcomes of these networks requires substantial organizational power resources, such as formal authority, money, political capital, trust, and mass support within the larger society.

German analysts of power networks took an approach similar to the organizational state model. "The *linkages* between the actors serve as channels for communication and for the exchange of information, expertise, trust, and other policy resources. The *boundary* of a given policy network is not in the first place determined by formal institutions but results from a process of mutual recognition dependent on functional relevance and structural embeddedness" (Kenis and Schneider 1991, pp. 41–42). However, they also considered policy networks to be a form of governance (Börzel 1998). Networks enable coordination of organizations' interests, pooling and exchanging of resources, and negotiating decision outcomes with public authorities. Decentralized bargaining networks confer governance advantages over both deregulated markets and centralized hierarchies. Research on dangerous chemicals and telecommunications policy networks in Germany and the EU revealed complex network governance structures—formal advisory boards, working committees, and secretive cabals—that coopted private sector

organizations in policy-making processes (Schneider 1986, 1992; Leifeld and Schneider 2012). After German reunification, policy network governance structures blending public and private sector organizations were crucial for the privatization of former East German shipbuilding and steel enterprises (Raab 2002). Formal institutional constraints on the "Treuhandanstalt" (Trust Agency)[2], namely, the decision competencies awarded by the German constitution and by specific laws in the policy domain, shaped the informal dense horizontal and sparse vertical communication ties generated during negotiations to shut down or privatize inefficient East German enterprises.

The EU likewise increasingly relies on informal network governance processes, in addition to its formal policy institutions, due to the dispersal of policy resources among public authorities and private sector organizations, government dependence on and deference to private organizational interests, and the proliferation of policy domains (Schneider 1992). Raab and Kenis argued that the EU's transnational system of governance is "based on negotiations between national governments, the European Commission, the European parliament, large companies and national or European associations" (2007, p. 187). However, a comprehensive theory explaining policy network dynamics remains to be constructed.

Several political scientists investigated elite power structures in Switzerland, based on interviews with key organizational informants in policy subsystems such as energy, climate adaptation, natural resource management, telecommunications, and pension reform. Sciarini et al. (2004) analyzed ties among organizations involved in policy decisions in telecommunications reform, pension reform, and the free movement of persons. They tested hypotheses about the direct and indirect impacts of the EU on domestic power relations inside Switzerland, a non-EU nation. Both processes led to more informal consultations and reduced conflict among elites, implying that "even in non-EU member states Europeanisation can be used as an external leverage to launch reforms that would be strongly opposed in a purely domestic setting" (p. 22).

A test of meta-hypotheses about decision-making in nine policy networks, from the 1970s to 1990s, found that "both political parties and some specific state bodies could increase their power, whereas most interest groups have lost some. While the internationalization of politics has overall had the expected effects with respect to the power structure and to conflict among political parties, it did not lead to the hypothesized, new conflict among interest groups" (Fischer et al. 2009, p. 55). Instead, "the core of Swiss politics seems to be even more restrained and closed then 30 years ago." Interest groups suffered a net loss of power, but shifts in the power structure between domestic and export-oriented economic sectors did not result in increased elite conflict.

   With other coauthors, Fischer studied the impacts of policy shifts from regulation, to liberalization, to subsequent reregulation on the relations among two dozen organizations in the Swiss telecommunications power network from 1997 to 2010 (Fischer et al. 2012). They applied an actor-oriented model to explain changing collaborative ties among political authorities, the regulators, the regulated, and interest groups. The Swiss telecom power structure changed dramatically: network density decreased, organizations sharing similar policy preferences and performing similar functions had strong propensities to collaborate, and powerful new organizations spawned by the reforms attracted ties that were "governed at least partly by a mechanism of 'preferential attraction' ⋯ where actors seek to create ties to powerful collaboration partners" (p. 451). The authors interpreted these complex, multi-level network changes as confirming a shift from regulatory hierarchy toward task-specific regulation in which elected authorities and the former telecom monopolist were forced to share power with new actors. However, the generality of this structural pattern awaits future research studies of other sectors and nations.

   Applying both social network analysis and advocacy coalition theory, which emphasizes elite actors' values and beliefs, Karin Ingold (2011) blockmodeled 34 elite climate organizations involved in the development and implementation of the Swiss carbon dioxide law between 1995 and 2005. She found a stable cleavage among pro-economy, pro-ecology, and mediating federal agency-scientist coalitions reflecting the organizations' shared and adversarial beliefs about climate change. A subsequent model applied to three waves of the climate change network (in 1995, 2005, and 2012) revealed that common beliefs and formal power structures had greater impact than perceived power structures on collaborative relations among organizations (Ingold and Fischer 2014). The effects were stronger on decision-making about mitigation strategies than on implementation of climate policy measures.[3]

Power Networks in Transitional Economies

Research on power networks in developing nations is sparse and largely descriptive (Martinez-Diaz and Woods 2009). Among the few exemplars are studies of the Mexican national power structure (Gil Mendieta et al. 1997), national development in South Korea and Taiwan (Kondoh 2002), water policy in Egypt and Ethiopia (Luzi et al. 2008), and free trade negotiations in Chile (Bull 2008). However, several recent investigations applied social network methods to investigate changing political elite structures in the transitional economies of Eastern Europe and in China.

In post-communist Hungary, political elites with ties to large corporations generated a political-economic structure polarized between "red" (left-wing) and "orange" (right-wing) partisans (Stark and Vedres 2012). An analysis of senior managers and boards of directors of 1696 firms and elected political office holders from 1987 to 2001 revealed a co-evolution of corporations and competing political parties. Rather than a legacy of failed state socialism, party-firm interdependencies emerged across election cycles:

> In short, to gain resources to compete for votes, parties competed for firms. At the same time, and in parallel, to gain an upper hand in economic competition, firms allied with parties. Although the economic and political fields had been institutionally separated, firms and parties became organizationally entangled. (p. 702)

By appointing politicians to corporate positions, Hungarian firms gained access to information about government contracts, industrial and trade policies, and changes in regulatory policies and practices. Politically tagged firms then influenced alignments with other firms by shared board memberships. Over time, partisanship grew so deeply embedded that red and orange firms avoided making business ties with one another, thereby generating political structural holes in the Hungarian economy.

Ukraine also underwent rapid privatization and democratization following the Soviet empire's collapse. After the 2004 Orange Revolution against election fraud by the Kuchma regime, the national power elite was polarized and fragmented. Analyzing elite reproduction and circulation from 2002 to 2011, Tetiana Kostiuchenko (2012) found that many incumbent parliamentary deputies, cabinet ministers, and high-level functionaries of the Presidential Secretariat "managed to retain their power positions and statuses" (p. 14). She culled information on five types of network relations—political, business, civic, educational, and kinship ties—from biographies of 493 members of the 2007–10 Ukrainian parliament, government, and secretariat. Analysis of ties among these elites revealed a low-density core containing 55% of the members and a weakly connected periphery at much greater social distance (Kostiuchenko 2011). She concluded that "the majority of the actors cannot reach each other directly, and this might be a constraint for establishing a consensus between different fractions and political forces" (p. 203). The network of joint draft law submissions consisted of more than a hundred small cliques of three members but very few subgroups with more than five participants, indicating that "cooperation is rather short-term being caused by the diversity of spheres

in which legislation is developed" (Kostiuchenko 2014, p. 7). However, a comparison of Ukrainian and Georgian power elites concluded that the former was more well-connected and integrated than the latter, both before and after market transitions (Akin 2013). Those structural differences may underlie Ukraine's relatively more peaceful transition to market economy and democracy, in contrast to regional secessionist violence plaguing Georgia.

China's transition to a market economy beginning in 1978 was not accompanied by political democratization. Instead, the Chinese Communist Party continued to control the polity, while factions and coalitions within the elite CCP Central Committee and Politburo contended for leadership (Bo 2010; Fewsmith 2015). Franziska Keller applied network methods to map relations among Chinese political elites across three decades (Keller 2014, 2015). She analyzed patronage ties among 1183 Central Committee members from 1982 to 2012, treating as direct links any joint service in the same bureaucratic unit or a higher-ranking person's promotion of subordinates within the same unit. She found that such ties increased the chances for advancing to the inner circle, "but that having multiple patrons is even better. So is being well-connected among one's peers in general ⋯ as long as they are clients, and not patrons outside the inner circle" (Keller 2014, p. 32). Specifically, elites who were popular as a coalition partner, as measured by closeness centrality (average shortest distances to other elite members), were more likely to be appointed to the Politburo as much as a decade later. In contrast, elites with high betweenness centrality (the extent to which they linked to other elites who were unconnected) identified the network's patrons and stable leaders.

The paucity of research on elite networks in transitional and developing nations underscores our scant knowledge about their distinctive power structures. Theorists and researchers should assume that political relations take on different meanings in diverse cultural contexts. Polities infused with robust patron-client systems, such as Eastern Europe, Mexico, and China, "combine strong emotional, particularistic ties with simultaneous but unequal exchanges of different types of resources" (Knoke 1990, p.142). Clients and patrons exchange, respectively, personal loyalty, deference, and awe for protection, understanding, and material benefits. Incumbency in a central network position is a valuable resource in itself, apart from other goods and services flowing through the power network. By contrast, in developed nations without serious patron-client systems such as the United Kingdom and the United States, power elite relations are more likely to be calculative and transactional. The consequences for ethical action and corruption in both types of power structure remain to be examined.

Transnational Power Networks

In the twenty-first century, several researchers began to investigate global or transnational power networks. These networks consist of nations, organizations, or persons engaging in economic, political, and other types of relations across national boundaries (Robinson and Harris 2000). Examples of transactions between nations include trade flows, cultural exchanges, and military alliances. International organizations and institutions—such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization—typically have limited authority to impose and enforce supranational rules and regulations (Robinson 2004). United Nations agencies constitute a complex transnational network, as do innumerable international organizations (IOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), foundations, and universities (Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006; Ingram and Torfason 2010). Network analysts examined whether connections among persons occupying the top positions of these entities comprised a supranational power elite.

Leslie Sklair (1997, p. 514) argued that a transnational capitalist class "is organized in four overlapping fractions: [transnational corporation] executives, globalizing bureaucrats, politicians and professionals, consumerist elites (merchants and media)." Members of the class belong to multiple fractions, either concurrently or over time by moving across institutions. Marxist theorists argued that the class is restricted to elites who directly engage in international capital accumulation, thereby "unifying the world into a single mode of production and a single global system" (Robinson 2004, p. 15). Globalizing socioeconomic forces creating this transnational capitalist class include "the spread of transnational corporations, the sharp increase in foreign direct investment, the proliferation of mergers and acquisitions across national borders, the rise of a global financial system, and the increased interlocking of positions within the global corporate structure" (Robinson and Harris 2000, p. 11).

A primary method for empirically identifying the transnational capitalist class is to measure the interlocking directorate of persons occupying seats on multiple boards of directors of large global corporations and dominant financial institutions (van Veen and Kratzer 2011; Heemskerk 2011; Heemskerk and Takes 2016). Using public documents on boards, the organization-to-organization links via shared directors are revealed by multiplying a two-mode firm-by-person matrix with its transposed person-by-firm matrix. William Carroll and Meindert Fennema (2002) compared a stratified sample of the 176 leading international industrial corporations and financial companies in 1976 with a matched sample in 1996. In both years, about 75% of the

interlocks involved pairs of directors of firms headquartered in the same country. Most of the transnational interlocks were among European-based firms. By 1996, the 22 most central firms, having three or more transnational directors, were based in Germany, France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and North America; none were from Japan or other Asian nations. These findings gave "some support for the hypothesis that a transnational business community is in the making ⋯ [but] equally striking is the extent to which this community remained in 1996 centered around the North Atlantic area" (p. 415). A subsequent analysis of 22,551 directors of 805 global corporations found that, between 1996 and 2006, transnational directors gained prominence relative to nationalist directors (i.e., persons who never held directorships in firms headquartered outside their home country). However, "national networkers, despite thinning ranks and sparser interlocks, continue to form the backbone of the global corporate elite, and remain on balance nationally cohesive" (Carroll 2009, p. 289). During the global financial crisis from 2006 to 2013, corporate elites did not "retrench into their national business communities: the transnational network increased in relative importance and remained largely intact" and grew "more transnational in character" (Heemskerk et al. 2016, p. 68). But, it also became less hierarchical and depended on a growing number of single-link directors, reflecting the fragmentation of national corporate elites and continuing transnationalization.

Another approach to studying the transnational class investigates elite affiliations with policy-planning organizations (a.k.a. think tanks). These groups assemble leaders from business, government, mass media, academia, and the legal and scientific professions to discuss economic and social problems, propose public policy solutions, and devise action strategies. Some organizations primarily conduct research while others engage in public-opinion influence and lobbying activities. Carroll and Carson (2003a, b) linked five major transnational policy-planning groups in 1996—the World Economic Forum at Davos, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Trilateral Commission, International Chamber of Commerce, and Bilderberg Conferences—to 271 global corporations through a few dozen mostly North Atlantic persons holding multiple positions in both sets of institutions. Although they were reluctant to conclude that this elite constitutes a transnational class, Carroll and Carson asserted that transnational policy-planning organizations offer political and cultural leadership crucial for such a class to emerge. A subsequent analysis of 500 global corporations and 11 policy groups in 2006 indicated that ongoing network integration via policy boards was accompanied by higher European cohesion at both individual and organizational levels (Carroll and Sapinski 2010). In this core-periphery

network structure, the more cohesive European subgroup played a crucial brokerage role between Asia-Pacific and North Atlantic regional business councils. An analysis of the network of corporate-funded climate and environmental policy groups revealed sparse but crucial links between energy and financial firms (Sapinski 2016). A "small number of individual capitalists carry a relatively thin network from the fossil fuel and nuclear sectors" (p. 89), casting doubt on the emergence of a strong coalition of climate capitalists that might thwart an urgent transition of the global energy system toward steep reductions in carbon emissions.

Empirical evidence about the political influence of transnational capitalists came from an analysis of political campaign donations by the US subsidiaries of the world's 500 largest foreign firms to corporate political action committees from 2000 to 2006 (Murray 2013). Controlling for interests of individual firms, corporations that were highly central in the transnational director interlock network, thus having a greater stake in the US economy, contributed vastly more funds to US election campaigns (a mean of $154,628) than did the more peripheral foreign firms ($8866). Murray interpreted the findings to indicate that transnational centrality predicts globally oriented political activity. "In other words, a segment of the transnational business community is indeed a class-for-itself" (p. 247). However, the research leaves unanswered the question of whether and how that class acts in a unified fashion to achieve its political objectives.

Analytic Power Network Models

Power network analysis applies both graphic methods, where political actors are displayed as points and their relations as lines in a two-dimensional diagram, and algebraic methods, where actors comprise the rows and columns of a matrix and cell entries reflect the existence or strength of ties between all pairs. For networks of even modest size—perhaps a few dozen actors—the complexity of relations in a diagram and matrix often requires simplification in order to reveal the underlying power structure. One very useful matrix simplification identifies two social positions, a primary and a secondary subgroup or block, each of which is jointly occupied by subsets of network actors. In general, primary and secondary subgroups are empirically determined by the greater density of ties among members occupying the former position. Then the connections within and between the two positions are represented as binary ties reflecting the densities of intra- and interpositional ties. That is, 0 indicates few or no relations, and 1 indicates higher levels

of connection. Drawing on Peter Rossi's (1960) typology of community elite structures, Ronald Breiger (1979, p. 24) proposed a set of analytic models that may be treated "as hypotheses for relations among community influentials." The following paragraphs summarize and extend Breiger's typology, then discuss some matrix algebraic methods for sorting power network actors into structural positions. I illustrate these methods by applying them to the 1990 Mexican national power network.

The *caucus rule* model "is thought typical of the small town and dormitory suburb. Decision-making tends to be a matter of manufacturing consent among the 'cosy few' who comprise the caucus. Consequently, both the initiation and reception of social ties of the relevant type are confined to a subset of the population" (Breiger 1979, p. 26). The subset of actors who occupy the primary position settle matters to their own satisfaction, without consultation or input from the larger, fragmented secondary position. Such structures may occur empirically only for noncontroversial decision-making.

Caucus rule	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	0
Secondary	0	0

In the *multiple caucus* model, dense ties are internally confined among the actors within each position, with few or no ties bridge between the two. Such structures might reflect isolated and noncompeting clusters that are indifferent to one another, or may indicate two polarized and conflicting positions whose partisans experience "greater difficulty of reaching consensus from such an extended spread of opinion, and the inability of opposing groups to 'understand' each other" (Coleman 1957, p. 22).

Multiple caucus	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	0
Secondary	0	1

In contrast to segregation in the two caucus models are three power structures exhibiting varied interpositional ties, where the primary position represents a superior group relative to an inferior secondary position. In the *hierarchy* model, "all ties from both blocks go to one block. Moreover, the lower echelons not only receive no choices from the 'elect' or 'chosen' block, but do not even form an coherent group internally" (Breiger 1979, p. 28). For example, in a patron-client system, the clients are obliged to defer to their own

patrons, but are forbidden to form coalitions with other clients. In the *deference* model, the secondary position exhibits some internal structure.

Hierarchy	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	0
Secondary	1	0

Deference	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	0
Secondary	1	1

In the *center-periphery* model "a coherent set of active members (or a 'leading crowd') is surrounded by isolated individuals who have interchange both *to* and *from* them" (p. 29). Breiger cited James Coleman's (1957) example of "somewhat amorphous suburban town" whose resident right- and left-wing activists carry out their political activities not inside the suburb but in the metropolis.

Center-periphery	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	1
Secondary	1	0

The *amorphous* model is a "residual category with no discernible enduring pattern of power and no examples in the literature" (Breiger 1979, p. 30). It's a situation in which the actors in both subgroups have connections to everyone, producing no distinct positions.

Amorphous	Primary	Secondary
Primary	1	1
Secondary	1	1

Three power network structures not mentioned by Breiger are: (1) the *out-group* model, an inversion of the multiple caucus model, where neither position is internally connected, but associates with members of the other position; (2) the *celebrity* model, exemplified by entertainment or athletic fans adulating their favorite stars, while the stars neither return their fans' affection nor admire one another; (3) the *anarchic* model, which completely lacks any structural ties within or between positions.

Out-group	Primary	Secondary
Primary	0	1
Secondary	1	0

Celebrity	Primary	Secondary
Primary	0	0
Secondary	1	0

Anarchic	Primary	Secondary
Primary	0	0
Secondary	0	0

Analytic power network models can be readily extended from dichotomous to three or more positions, and from a single type of relation to multiple types of ties. Space limits prevent me from cataloging all possibilities. Instead, I present only the *polylith* model, where relations are confined within discrete subsets of positions, and the "leaders in each domain ⋯ comprise wholly distinct (nonoverlapping) sets of actors" (Breiger 1979, p. 30). A polylith network corresponds to a pluralist elite structure, comprised of multiple, autonomous, and functionally specialized elite subsectors, as described in the classic debates between power elite and pluralist elite theorists (Keller 1963). Each domain is controlled by different sets of top leaders, a "system of independent city-states or petty sovereignties" (Dahl 1961). This example combines two distinct center-periphery structures, with the actors in the first and third positions occupying the superior positions in different issues, respectively, while the secondary position is inferior within both substructures.

Domain #1	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Primary	1	1	0
Secondary	1	0	0
Tertiary	0	0	0

Domain #2	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Primary	0	0	0
Secondary	0	1	1
Tertiary	0	0	1

The following section describes and illustrates some methods for empirically classifying power network models. Analytic network models can both depict power structures at static cross-sectional moments in time, and, through longitudinal analyses of elite networks, can detect changes in power elite structures, whether from abrupt regime replacement or more gradual evolutionary transformations.

Methods for Identifying Power Network Positions

Social network analysts developed a variety of methods for aggregating actors into positions. Following a brief discussion of three methods, I illustrate their application to a small national power network. In *blockmodel* analysis, subsets of actors are aggregated into blocks whose members are *structurally equivalent*, meaning that they have identical or very similar ties to actors outside the block. A *core/periphery* analysis maximizes the density of ties among the actors occupying the primary position and minimizes the density within the secondary position. An *optimal modularity*, or community detection, method maximizes the densities of ties within each position while minimizing the between-group connections. These three methods make different assumptions about the relevant structural features of network positions, and thus produce different results when applied to an empirical power network. A researcher's choice of which method to use should be guided by the particular research question about power network that she seeks to answer.

The 1990 Mexican national political elite was analyzed by Gil Mendieta et al. (1997). From 5400 members of the government between 1920 and 1990, the authors identified "37 core actors, who have played a central role in Mexican politics after the 1910 revolution" (p. 35). A connection between a pair of actors represents any formal, informal, and organizational relation, for example, "common belonging (school, sports, business, political participation), or a common interest (political power)" (p. 37). The article displayed six diagrams showing the ties among core actors active at each decade from 1940 to 1990. Figure 34.1 and Tables 34.1, 34.2, 34.3 use relational data about the 1990 Mexican power elite derived from Fig. 9 in Gil Mendieta et al. (ibid.). Three of the men held the presidency: José López Portillo (1976–82), Miguel de la Madrid (1982–88), and Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988–94), and the latter was the son of a fourth core member, Raúl Salinas Lozano. Of 55 possible ties between pairs of actors, 22 occurred, for a network density of 0.40.

Tables 34.1, 34.2, 34.3 show the pairs of positions identified by each method. The blockmodel produced a large primary and small secondary position, with moderate densities between them and within the primary position. This pattern is consistent with the center-periphery model. In contrast, the core-periphery analysis yielded a smaller core position with very high density, but sparsely connected to the secondary position, which had few ties within itself. This pattern is consistent with the caucus rule model. Finally, the optimal modularity analysis identified two communities with high densities of ties within each subgroup and lower between-position relations, which
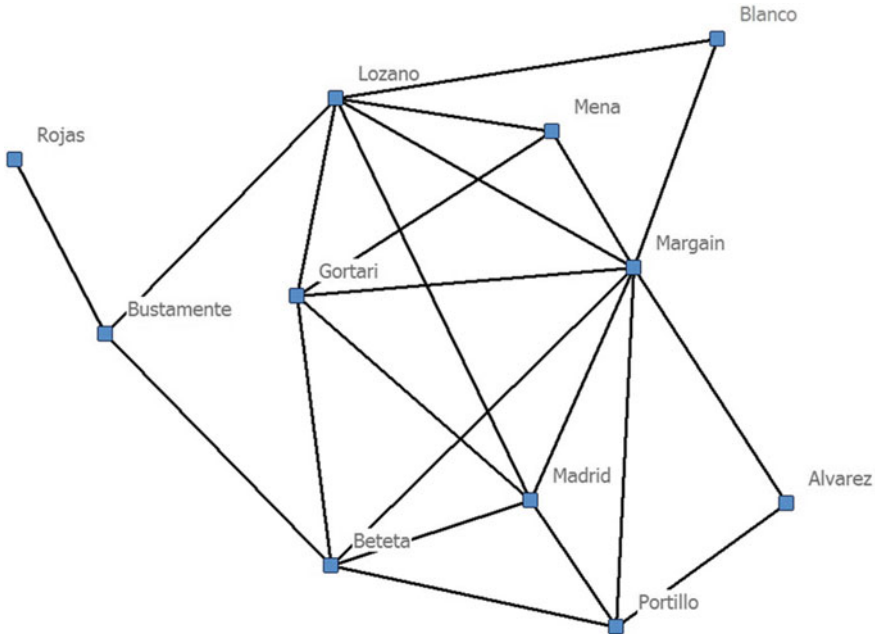
Fig. 34.1   Graph of 1990 Mexican national power elite network

most closely resembles the multiple caucus model. An important implication of these examples is that diverse theoretical and methodological assumptions may influence empirical results (e.g., Pappi 1984). Hence, conclusions drawn from empirical research on elite networks may be ambiguous about which among several competing theoretical models best fits the observations. Analysts would be wise to temper their enthusiasm for a favored power structure model by entertaining the possibility that alternative structures may also have some validity.

Future Power Network Analyses

Power network analysis advanced substantially over the past three decades, but has considerable opportunities for further development. Researchers should strive to refine and extend network theories that explain the formation, evolution, disintegration of elite social, economic, and political structures. We need improved models of coalition dynamics, domination and control mechanisms, conflict and cleavage processes, and collective action outcomes. How does an economic elite's influence over a nation-state's political

Table 34.1 Blockmodel analysis of 1990 Mexican national power network

		1	7	3	4	5	8	9	10	2	6	11
1	Alvarez						1		1			
7	Madrid					1	1		1	1	1	
3	Blanco						1				1	
4	Bustamente									1	1	1
5	Gortari	1					1	1		1	1	
8	Margain	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	
9	Mena						1	1			1	
10	Portillo	1	1				1			1		
2	Beteta		1		1	1	1		1			
6	Lozano			1	1	1	1	1	1			
11	Rojas							1				

(Columns 1 7 3 4 5 8 9 10 form block 1; columns 2 6 11 form block 2.)

Reduced BlockMatrix

	1	2
1	0.357	0.500
2	0.500	0.000

institutions, through electoral campaign donations and lobbying influence, generate legislative and regulatory decisions that further concentrate economic wealth, and hence political power, within the tiny group of elite persons and organizations? What explains social cohesion, conflict, and turnover among elites? What are ruling elites' strategies and practices to resist opposition from nonelites incensed by exploitative power relations? How are power network

Table 34.2 Core/periphery analysis of 1990 Mexican national power network

```
                        1                   1

                  6 2 8 0 5 7    4 1 9 3 1

                  ------------------------

   6      Lozano |    1   1 1 | 1    1 1  |

   2      Beteta |    1 1 1 1 | 1         |

   8     Margain | 1 1   1 1 1 |    1 1 1  |

  10    Portillo |    1 1     1 |    1      |

   5     Gortari | 1 1 1     1 |      1    |

   7      Madrid | 1 1 1 1 1    |          |

                  ------------------------

   4  Bustamente | 1 1         |        1 |

   1      Alvarez |    1 1      |          |

   9        Mena | 1   1   1   |          |

   3      Blanco | 1   1       |          |

  11       Rojas |             | 1        |

                  ------------------------


                       Reduced BlockMatrix

                              1      2

                            ----- -----

                        1   0.800 0.300

                        2   0.300 0.100
```

structures similar and different in developed, transitional, and developing
nations? What accounts for the rise of a transnational class that benefits
from technological innovation and globalization in the world economy?
Answers to these research questions, and many others, will necessitate more
creative empirical data collection and innovative network methods. For exam-
ple, network researchers could reexamine classic theoretical hypotheses about
the circulation of elites by mining data from electronic news archives about

Table 34.3 Optimal modularity analysis of 1990 Mexican national power network

```
                               1                   1
                       1 2 8 0 7   4 6 3 9 5 1

                       A B M P M   B L B M G R

                       -------------------------
      1      Alvarez |     1 1   |               |
      2       Beteta |     1 1 1 | 1         1   |
      8      Margain | 1 1   1 1 |   1 1 1 1     |
     10     Portillo | 1 1 1   1 |               |
      7       Madrid |     1 1 1 |   1       1   |

                     ---------------------------
      4   Bustamente |   1       |   1         1 |
      6       Lozano |     1   1 | 1   1 1 1     |
      3       Blanco |     1     |   1           |
      9         Mena |     1     |   1       1   |
      5      Gortari | 1 1   1   |   1   1       |
     11        Rojas |           | 1             |

                     ---------------------------


                        Reduced BlockMatrix

                             1      2

                           ----- -----

                       1   0.800 0.267

                       2   0.267 0.400
```

relations among political and economic elites spanning several generations for a diverse set of nations. Then, applying longitudinal network analysis methods, they could assess the dynamics of continuity, change, and disruption in national elite composition and configurations under major macro-societal episodes of war, depression, and technological transformation.

Much elite network research relies on public documents for biographical data on persons and director interlock data on corporations. Researchers should follow the lead of policy network analysts in conducting interviews with contemporary elites and organizational informants. Such an approach would create more detailed and nuanced information about personal and business relations and would enable analyses of multiplex networks. Power network analysts should examine longitudinal changes in elite connections, taking advantage of powerful exponential random graph methods (ERGMs). ERGMs allow researchers to go beyond describing network relations to conduct statistical tests of hypotheses about processes affecting changes in network structure over time. In addition to well-known affiliation networks, such as director-firm interlocks, researchers should collect and analyze tripartite networks. For example, do donors' financial contributions to electoral campaigns influence elected officials' subsequent legislative, executive, and regulatory decisions that benefit the donors' interests? The Web is a cyber trove of information on relations among states and parties, institutions and organizations, persons and events, stories and ideologies, cultural artifacts and symbols, documents and videos, and other combinations of entities awaiting collection and analysis. Through resourcefulness and hard work, power network researchers will enjoy many years of fruitful investigation.

Notes

1. For extensive overviews, see Knoke (2011) and Knoke and Kostiuchenko (2016).
2. The "Treuhandanstalt" was set up in 1990 and entrusted with the privatization of all state-owned enterprises ("Volkseigene Betriebe") of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR).
3. See related articles by Ingold and Varone (2011), and Ingold and Christopoulos (2015).

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Section VI

Elite Dynamics and Dilemmas

Maurizio Cotta

35

Elite Dynamics and Dilemmas

Maurizio Cotta

A political elite is, according to accepted definitions, a restricted and sufficiently cohesive group of people that exert a disproportionate influence in political life, as other elites would do in areas such as society, the economy, and culture. (Mosca 1923; Pareto 1916; Higley 2010). It is also widely recognized that the existence of elites is a ubiquitous, albeit somewhat variable, phenomenon in politics. From the most totalitarian system to the most democratic, the presence of elites is to be reckoned with. However important or even decisive their role in politics, political elites have to face crucial dilemmas and challenges. Three dilemmas—time, space and institutional environment—are, so to say, systemic, that is, they have to do with some basic dimensions of the organization of political life itself. A fourth dilemma, concerning the relationship between collective elites and individual leaders, should also be considered.

Time

Time is the first and possibly the most basic dilemma to be taken into account: politics is not a one-off activity or a short-term happening but a complex set of interconnected events and phenomena stretching over time. The passing of

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time operates like a powerful filter on political events separating what is destroyed by its impact and what manages to survive and consolidate itself over the years, and sometimes centuries. The question which then arises is how elites face this hurdle and to what extent they are able to overcome it. The problems of duration, renewal, adaptation, discontinuity are thus critical for elites as for other political actors. It should not be forgotten, however, that, to some extent at least, a temporal connotation is in itself a defining feature of a political elite: without the relative stability of its composition over time, we would not be able to talk of a cohesive group and even less of one able to exert a significant influence in politics. There are of course other actors who may have a momentary influence in politics, but because they are not part of a stable group, they typically disappear quite quickly without affecting the course of political action in any significant way. In this way, they can be seen as a political random event that may be interesting to study but not in the same way as elites.

From these considerations, we can derive a series of problems that elites typically face. Foremost is that of combining the preservation of internal coherence and continuity at a given moment with some degree of renewal over time. As a result, elite theory has given a special attention to the time-linked themes of recruitment, circulation, and the careers of elites. It has also highlighted the delicate balance between continuity and renewal; without the former, an elite would dissolve, and without the latter, an elite would become sclerotic and eventually die (Mosca 1923). Successful elites are, therefore, characterized by relatively high levels of continuity in their (formally or informally defined) membership, but also by efficient mechanisms of renewal.

The advantages and resources connected with being a member of such a selective group obviously encourage participants to defend their position and lead to the establishment of rules and mechanisms to prevent outsiders from joining. At the same time, every select group who wants to last needs some mechanism or procedure that supports internal renewal. An intake of new members is needed to replace exits due to natural causes—death or disabling infirmities—but also to voluntary retirements, which can happen for a variety of reasons. There are, however, other reasons that reflect more functional needs. For example, incorporating new members may be dictated by the need to acquire new competences required by a particular situation, by the necessity to coopt external elements that threaten the hegemony of an existing elite, and by the need to defend its legitimacy by demonstrating its openness to new experiences. The last is obviously pertinent in the case of democratic regimes, which tolerate the existence of elites but on the premise that access to them is assured by relatively open procedures of recruitment.

The importance of renewal raises some crucial questions for elite groups: How is renewal assured? Through which channels are new members admitted? What is the extent of renewal? What are its consequences? These crucial questions also reflect the nature of an elite and its position in the broader political system, as well as helping to define its qualities and performance. With regard to the defining features of an elite and its position in the political system, the problem of continuity and renewal will be significantly different for traditional, contemporary authoritarian and ideocratic, and democratic elites.

Concerning traditional elites, historically aristocracy, with its procedures of hereditary succession and of acquisition of noble titles (typically administered by a monarchical authority), and clergy, with its mechanisms of training and of maintenance of the orthodoxy, have displayed some rather well-patterned models of regulated renewal and continuation over time, which were primarily geared to the preservation of strong group identities and well-defined borders. We know, however, that even these highly conservative models could face in some instances deeper processes of renewal. In aristocratic elites, the creation of "new nobles" (typically by monarchical initiative, but encouraged also by changing distributions of social and economic resources) were not unusual, in spite of resistance from the "old" nobility. And in clerical elites, the birth of "new orders" (such as the Franciscans and Dominicans, or the Jesuits in the Catholic church) or sects and schools (such as in the Islamic world) producing a differently qualified personnel more in tune with the changing times led to significant innovations in recruitment.

Authoritarian and totalitarian elites are in general less easily amenable to a common model. The variable degree of predominance of an individual leader, the different institutional configurations of the regime and their greater or lesser institutionalization significantly affect the process of elite renewal. Extreme and opposite cases are, for instance, the family clan model, such as that of the Assads in Syria or of the Aliyevs in Azerbaijan, and the strictly and highly institutionalized party-centered elite system in post-Maoist China. The last example shows an apparently well-oiled mechanism of succession at the top within a stable elite structure anchored to the party (and the military establishment).

In democratic regimes, where political elites tend to be strongly anchored to institutions, it is the combined effects of electoral procedures, party organizations and their influence in the selection of candidates, plus obviously the changing orientation of voters, that preside over the rate and quality of renewal. With a strongly entrenched party system and structured mechanisms of recruitment, renewal rates will normally be limited, resulting in a relatively

stable inner circle of representative elites. A limited change in elite composition will ensure the predominance of continuity and gradual adaptation, whereas things may change more substantially when the established mechanisms of recruitment decay and when, from the outside, new movements and parties emerge to produce different recruitment mechanisms and different elite types. The pluralistic and polycentric structure of democratic regimes will generally ensure that newly successful elites will not completely dispossess the old elites but rather join them to produce a new equilibrium between old and new.

Besides cases of prevailing continuity and gradual adaptation of an incumbent elite (or elite system), we also have to reckon with instances of more profound transformation. Here, we refer to cases where one elite type is substituted by another through a relatively rapid process. The new elite group or elite system is, in such cases, based on significantly different legitimating principles, power resources, and mechanisms of renewal. Although peaceful transformations can occur, such phenomena are often accompanied by highly conflictual and sometimes bloody processes. Why and how such deep changes take place and to what extent components of the old elites survive in the new setting are recurrent and challenging questions for scientific research.

Space

The second crucial dilemma relevant for political elites is space. With very few exceptions, politics is defined by variable forms of spatial organization: city states, regional states, loose confederations of local entities, large territorial states, and gigantic empires have in turn provided the confines of political life. Political elites, much more than other types of elites, such as economic or religious, are typically anchored to a territorial environment. This has obviously very much to do with the nature of political life itself, which is primarily about the "authoritative allocation of values" (Easton 1953) within a "bordered" community. When a polity is well established and uncontested, the connection between the elite and that political space will also be obvious. The sphere of influence of a political elite will be defined by the borders of the polity within which it operates. Outside of these borders, members of the elite may be respected, but they will not have a special influence, except in the case of internationally hegemonic countries. In the real world, however, this neat model—to every polity its own political elite(s)—does not apply everywhere to the same degree. For example, the presence of a hegemonic power may substantially limit the sovereignty of a country (Krasner 1999) and

subsequently impinges upon its political elite, which may need some important connection with the elite of the hegemonic country in order to achieve legitimacy and access resources and thus to be able to fully exert its domestic role. This was, for instance, the case for most European elites during the period of the two-block system.

Other challenges may originate within the boundaries of a defined political space. Here, the relationship between elites placed at the center (national elites) and those at the periphery (local or regional elites) is of crucial importance, particularly for the elites at the center. A successful central elite must reckon with the fact that elite formations also exist at the periphery and that a positive relationship with them is generally fundamental for a consolidation of its position. Such a relationship implies cooperation and political exchange, clientelism, as well as some degree of cooption of peripheral elite members to the center. Variable degrees of centralization or decentralization of a political system will obviously affect this relationship and thereby the power balance between central and peripheral elites. A cooperative relationship may not always work because a "regional" elite may not accept a subordinate role and may even attempt to redraw the borders of the polity to the advantage of its internal sub-units. If successful, a local or regional elite may eventually dispossess a national elite of its position or reduce its significance. An extreme case of such dynamics was the breakdown of Yugoslavia where the success of regional elites progressively disempowered the national elite. Similar, albeit milder, phenomena can be seen in many countries. A contrary case is where a supranational elite is formed side by side with the national elites of the integrated units of a confederal polity. Over time, a supranational elite may progressively erode the maneuverability of the latter and eventually succeed in downgrading or supplanting their legitimacy. The US, Swiss and EU cases provide significant examples of different histories and stages of such a process.

Institutional Environment

The third dilemma concerns the relationship between elites, resources, and institutional environment. Elites enjoy disproportionate influence in political life, but this does not mean that they are necessarily completely free from constraints and accountability. Constraints may be external, that is, stemming from the balance between an elite's accessible and non-accessible resources. The state of the economy or of the international arena in a given moment may significantly enhance or depress the ability of a political elite to pursue its agenda. Internally, the efficacy of the bureaucracy on which an elite depends

for the translation of its decisions into practice can either strengthen or significantly weaken an elite's effectiveness.

The institutional architecture of a political system is a crucial variable for elites in that institutions provide resources and constraints for political elites. Institutional frameworks contribute to the legitimacy of an elite, which, as we have seen, can be linked to an elite's durability over time, to the instruments for action placed at its disposal and to the maintenance of its internal cohesion. On the other hand, institutions may also operate as constraints by making elites responsive and accountable. Liberal-democratic regimes, in particular, have developed a whole gamut of tools to reach this goal. Elites are reinterpreted in the conceptual frame of representative democracy as "delegates" or "trustees" of the populace (Burke 1774) with all the problems involved in implementing these interpretations (Manin 1997). Problems of agency loss obviously apply to this situation when seen from the point of view of the demos. From the point of view of the elites, the opposite problem applies: they have to find a way to combine their duty to respond to voters' needs with the requirement to preserve their own freedom of action, which seems to be a frequent prerequisite for effectively conducting the business of governing and deciding in complex environments. A special kind of situation typically arises with the international involvement of a country's political elite: on the one hand, the elite must respond to domestic demands, but on the other hand, it must play its part in the international game. This double-level game (Putnam 1988) situation offers significant opportunities for elites to gain autonomy.

Authoritarian regimes typically provide much greater leeway for political elites and constrain them to a much lesser extent via institutional means than democratic regimes. However, the more limited development of their institutional architecture may also prove a negative factor for an elite as it does not provide the support needed in certain crucial situations (such as ensuring peaceful power transfers among elite members or in providing for a sufficient degree of renewal). They are also weaker instruments of durable legitimation of elites.

The relationship between political elites and institutional environments can acquire a very special relevance when "normal times" give way to more exceptional transformations. Regime crises, transitions, and instaurations of new regimes are crucial moments when the constructive or destructive role of elites can gain a decisive role (Higley and Gunther 1992; O'Donnell et al. 1986). Internal elite conflicts and the inability to control them have been seen by "transitologists" as an important factor leading to the dissolution of a regime, while new alliances between components of the established elites and new challengers may pave the way for the transition to a new regime. A

stable consensus among elites is also a prerequisite for the consolidation of the new regime resulting from a transition.

We may thus see elites as crucial actors in the shaping and reshaping of regimes, but must also remember that with regime change, elites may lose their hold on power and be consigned to the graveyard of history. Reductionist approaches, which would focus exclusively either on institutions or on elites to explain political phenomena, would not provide an adequate reading of reality.

Elites and Leadership

A final dilemma stems from the relationship between elites and leadership. The first concept highlights the importance of the collective dimension of political action, the fact that politics continuously requires the cohesive action of relatively small groups of actors. The second concept highlights the relevance and innovative role that individual actors can achieve when reaching a position of preeminence. These two concepts raise several questions: What is the relationship between the two phenomena? Are leaders emerging internally from an elite or are they challenging an existing and established elite? Is a link between a leader and an elite group a precondition for their leadership, or can such a link be an impediment to becoming a leader? A careful study of political phenomena suggests that also here a reductionist approach, which would see elite and leadership as two completely alternative analytical lenses, would not help the understanding of political life. Political elites rarely develop without the contribution of particularly eminent figures who contribute disproportionately to the construction and shaping of the collective identity and cohesion, which are the crucial hallmarks of this phenomenon. However, individual leaders will also not last long unless they are sustained by a group of actors who are willing to act with them and to support their ideas over time and space. Nevertheless, this relationship may not be as easy as could be desired: collective and individual modes of action have each their peculiar features, and reconciling them effectively may not be easy. Conflicts between visionary leaders and more conservative elites are thus a frequent event in political life.

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Elite Circulation and Stability

Luca Verzichelli

Circulation is a crucial concept in the study of elite dynamics. It was established within the scientific analysis of politics by Vilfredo Pareto, whose *Trattato di Sociologia Generale* (1916) offered a first systematic assessment of the transformations of political elites (which he called the *classi elette di governo*) through an accurate historical analysis.

Pareto's theory is influenced by the work of several previous authors. These include Gaetano Mosca, who had written a number of important essays on the renewal of the "ruling class" at least two decades before publication of the *Trattato* and who in turn would be influenced by Pareto's writings when drafting the second volume of the *Elementi di Scienza Politica* (1923). The enormous influence of Pareto's reflections on elite circulation is due to his systematic exploration of the broad meaning of the phenomenon, which he conceived as an intrinsic element of political change (Femia 2006), including both the processes involving the circulation of individuals between the elite and the "non-elite," and those marking the replacement of one entire elite by another. No other classical theorist placed a similar emphasis on the inescapable fate of elites as a cyclical phenomenon underlying all fundamental changes in human history. Taking this belief as his starting point, Pareto provided a methodical diachronic comparison that not only

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explained, in terms of "circulation," the inflow and outflow of rulers within a given political system but also accounted for all possible degrees of political change witnessed over the course of history in terms of the dramatic processes of elite transformation. The famous image of the endless alternation of powerful lion-like and intelligent fox-like elites captures the most important moment of a broader dynamic, described by Pareto's metaphor of the river. The transformation of the ruling class, according to Pareto, can in fact be described as the alternation of sudden "floods," when a new elite replaces the old one, and phases of the placid flow of the river's waters, when said transformation occurs within the same ruling class (Pareto 1916, § 2056).

Since then, the notion of circulation has become a key concept for most elite scholars, beginning, of course, with Robert Michels and Max Weber who may be considered the last "precursors" of elite theory. Although adapted to very different contexts and reformulated in a variety of different forms, such a notion was utilized throughout the twentieth century to describe the replacement of those individuals who are able to compete for power and influence in the political processes. Harold Lasswell, in particular, was a key figure in the re-evaluation of the Paretian theory. In his *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (1936), Lasswell focuses on the competitiveness of elites, whose effective influence, rather than their capabilities, has to be at the center of any comprehensive empirical analysis. More in general, all the most influential theorists of political science of the first half of the twentieth century—starting with Joseph Schumpeter and James Burnham to name but two (political scientists from very different backgrounds but with a similarly strong impact on elite studies)—paid tribute to Pareto's intuition.

It is more difficult to say what the overall impact of direct application of this classical theory has been, particularly given the fluctuating nature of Pareto's reputation, due to many scholars' concern over the problem of his pre- (if not anti-) democratic ideas. In particular, the allegations of his sympathy for the Fascist regime have been shared by many commentators, who concentrated on his celebration of "revolutionary elites" vis-à-vis the inertia of "plutocratic elites." However, a historical assessment of his contribution to political science should go beyond these normative evaluations. On a more objective level, it has been argued that while a straightforward attempt to project Pareto's general ideas of elite circulation, in order to account for the sequences of political change in recent history, entails the risk of an overstretched application of such ideas, his theory remains a unique and extremely valuable theoretical construct (Higley and Pakulski 2012).

Many events would confirm this. For example, after the Second World War the dispute between partisans of the *elitist school* and supporters of the *pluralist school* had much in common with the notion of elite circulation. The work, *The Power Elite* by C. Wright Mills probably most clearly resumes the core argument of classical elitists. Mills argues that power is a question of the interchange among different elite groups, and in particular among the three most important ones, that is, the economic, political, and military elites (1956). On the other hand, the pluralist critique of neo-elitism, usually associated with the classical work by Robert Dahl, *Who Governs* (1961), assumes a somewhat irregular mode of elite circulation, whereby confrontation is not necessarily the standard pattern and changes in the composition of the ruling classes tend to be determined by compromises.

Elite Circulation and Mass Democracy

As previously mentioned, theoretical speculation over the concept of elite circulation was extremely influential in the development of comparative politics and more generally in the diffusion of the empirical study of politics. The age of *behavioralism* saw a blossoming of analyses of elite structures and elite changes, with a multitude of empirical researches analyzing the longitudinal transformations of the elites' composition, especially, but not exclusively, in North American democracy.

Many scholars focused on analyzing different modes of elite replacement during phases of revolutionary change—transitions to democracy, crises during the process of democratization, and so on. One of the founders of empirical political science, Harold Lasswell, returned to the study of "revolutionary elites" in his later works (Lasswell and Lerner 1965). During the same intense period, authors from both sides of the Atlantic—Aron, Lipset, Coleman, Barrington Moore, Rokkan, and Linz, just to name those who were most influential—were intrigued by the question of elite (dis)continuity during such dramatic phases of political change. Their seminal contributions have marked the evolution of different aspects of the subject—for instance, the relations between elites and regime continuity or the link between elites and leadership.

In this chapter, I basically focus on comparative analyses of elite transformations within the democratic context in order to limit the scope of said analyses to an area covered by a more homogeneous body of literature. The bulk of existing studies, which I will briefly illustrate in the next section, runs parallel to the continuous theoretical assessment of the crucial concepts of

classical elite theory. In fact, the period following the affirmation of behavioralism—between the mid-fifties and the early seventies—is often recalled as that of the decline of elite theory. This decline was due to a number of reasons, some of them connected to the emergence of different domains within the political science agenda (in particular, the development of international relations and public policy analysis), others connected to the waning appeal of the idea of elites' centrality in a democratic age. However, although molded into very different forms, the idea of elite circulation continued to be divulged and analyzed throughout the world: the influence of this classical (and neo-classical) notion can in fact be traced to a significant number of scientific works. Three elements seem to be particularly relevant. First, there is the development of a significant vein of "sociology of elites" more markedly normative and critical of Western societies. Such a framework has been embraced by many writings concerned with the notion of elite transformation as a lever to preserve a high-quality governing class within a democratic political community. Several neo-Marxist critics of classical elitism fall into this category, starting with Nicos Poulantzas whose fundamental work on the relationship between social structure and power (1968), stressed the relevance of an accurate analysis of similarities and differences in the dynamics of elite transformation. However, the most relevant work bridging the idea of elite circulation and the critique of capitalism-based democracy is perhaps the book, *The Class Structure of the Advanced Society* by Andrew Giddens (1973). According to Giddens, homogeneity, as a product of elite change, becomes a crucial variable which helps to explain the different origins and behavior of the rulers of one type of regime or another. He believes that elite circulation in Western democracies tends to result in certain consequences—such as a relatively low degree of elite cohesiveness and an increasingly open process of elite recruitment—whose strengths and weaknesses are fully discussed in the aforesaid work.

Roughly in the same period, a second current of thought revitalized the idea of elite circulation. A group of political scientists and political sociologists started demanding a re-focalization on the centrality of elites. An important milestone in this "new elite paradigm" was *Elitism* by Higley and Field (1980), which has provided a fertile framework and stimulated a broad agenda of comparative research. The core argument underlying this new current of elite studies is the existence of specific dynamic capabilities of elites that enable them to survive through different historical phases—and to cope with new challenges imposed by changing socio-economic conditions—through a process of unification. Unified elites from the contemporary post-industrialized democracies are, therefore, less exposed to dramatic fatalities and more able to

modernize in keeping with ductile processes of social transformation. It should be pointed out that this discussion, although strictly related to the theoretical speculations of the "sociology of elites," is very much connected to the findings of other scholars operating within the sphere of comparative politics. At the time of the "rediscovery" of elite theory, Arend Lijphart had in fact already formulated his first typology of democracies, built upon a previous theory developed by Gabriel Almond, whereby different types of democracy are shaped by the two basic dimensions of social structure (homogeneous or plural) and elite behavior (coalescent or adversarial) (Lijphart 1968). This typology marked the start of fifty years of work by Lijphart (and a large group of supporters/critics) analyzing the issue of democratic variance. Indeed, his idea of consensual democracy, a prototype that Lijphart presents as an alternative to Westminster-type democracy, is based on the fundamental pre-condition that political elites are capable of making continuous, but slight, adaptive changes without inhibiting the tendency of a multitude of political actors to produce compromises, large coalitions and strong support for the basic principles of the political system.

A third aspect of the question in hand concerns the role of party ideologies and party organizations in favoring a "correct" process of elite circulation. After the Second World War, this question became more relevant in the European debate, where strong "catch-all parties" were emerging as fundamental pillars of the model of parliamentary democracy. However, the role of partisan cultures and the diverse impact of party organizations are also important in North America, as the seminal and oft-quoted pioneering study of individual ambitions in politics conducted by Joseph Schlesinger (1966) has shown. In Europe, political parties have made extensive use of the functions of political selection and recruitment theorized by Michels and Weber and then studied empirically by Duverger. Those who have studied the concrete dynamics of the relationships between political parties and democratic institutions, proposing and criticizing notions like *Parteienstaat* in Germany, or *partitocrazia* in Italy, have pointed to the impact of different party models on the diverse patterns of elite formation and circulation.

In this context, one eminent author who has renewed the analysis of elite circulation by bridging previous theories through a new research agenda is the German political scientist Klaus von Beyme (1993). Von Beyme's work is strongly related to the traditional *fil rouge* linking the reflections of Mosca, Pareto, and Weber. Von Beyme believes it imperative to clarify the language of analysis, and in doing so, he makes a clear distinction between the neutral concept of *elite* (the collective group of individuals influencing political decisions) and the value-oriented concept of *political class* (a given power-group

strictly connected to the highest political responsibilities and deeply unified by a common *class consciousness*). This operation, in reassessing Mosca's terminology in the context of a dynamic analysis of elite transformations very close to Pareto's scheme, enables von Beyme to incorporate the role of parties within the elitist theoretical framework. Party penetration of modern societies is indeed the crucial factor explaining the different modes of persistence and transformation of a political class.

Elite Circulation Within Advanced Democracies: Questions and Dimensions of Analysis

We can now turn to those empirical studies inspired by the notion of elite circulation developed by contemporary comparative studies. As of the late 1960s, two specific puzzles have been particularly important here: (1) the puzzle of change within a political elite, which has led to attempts to identify the underlying factors that determine significant transformations within a group of rulers, or even the less radical, somewhat more predictable "normal" changes characterizing the evolution of any democratic experience; (2) the puzzle of non-change, or not-clear-enough change, where attempts have been made to identify the recurrent factors underlying elite continuity. I shall focus in the main on the first puzzle for the moment, before looking at the second one in the next section.

Some of the writers mentioned in the previous section can also be considered the forerunners of a new wave of studies that specifically focus on the empirical testing of (old and new) theories of elites. Thanks to these studies, the notion of elite circulation has been repeatedly perfected and operationalized in order to offer systematic observations from a longitudinal perspective. Not surprisingly, the first influential empirical studies were produced by American, or American-based, scholars: one should mention, among others, the works of Rustow (1966), Quandt (1969), and Edinger (1967), which revitalize the findings in the field, as well as a wide range of comparative analyses. However, notwithstanding its simplified form as an introductory handbook mainly based on the findings of earlier studies, it was the work by Robert Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (1976), that proved the most successful in its field, and subsequently influenced a number of empirical studies conducted since. In the seventh chapter of this oft-quoted volume, dealing with the problems of "elite transformation," Putnam offers a concise review of classical theories, moving from some specific criticisms of

Pareto. In addition to his discussion of the methodological deficiencies of the classical elite theorists, Putnam introduces two substantial new elements into the discourse. The first consists of the need to distinguish between the effects of "individual turnover," that is, the amount of rejuvenation of a given elite group, which does not necessarily correspond to any significant change in elite structure or elite behavior, and the effects of a substantial change in the collective profile of the elite. The second element highlights the limit of a theory that focuses exclusively on the cyclical nature of elite changes: "Pareto's theory cannot account for historical changes in the sociological complexion of elites, particularly when these changes are acyclic" (ibid., p. 168). To overcome these limits, Putnam refers to other classical theorists when playing with the elitist critique of the Marxist thesis of historical materialism to postulate a number of new hypotheses regarding the cultural and social factors of convergence/divergence among contemporary political elites.

The late 1960s marked a time of renewal for elite studies in Europe as well: the theoretical framework had been reformulated in a successful work by Geraint Parry (1969), while a number of well-documented national studies were emerging in several European countries at that time. The international reputation of some of the scholars involved in these studies allowed for an intensive program of cross-national comparison, developed through the International Sociology Association and the International Political Science Association, and which has also been promoted since 1970 by the European Consortium for Political Research[1].

For the sake of brevity, I do not bother mentioning the empirical studies conducted in regard to individual nations, although most of them have been very helpful in the development of a comparative perspective. Excerpts from these important works can be found in a number of collections covering elective and ministerial elites in several Western countries (Suleiman 1986; Verba 1987; Dogan 1989; Blondel 1985; Blondel and Thiébault 1991). Most of their findings reflect the concern expressed by Putnam about the extent and meaning of the "collective circulation" of elites. Similarities between the long-term effects of epochal turning points (industrial revolutions, birth of mass parties, electoral realignments, etc.) have been analyzed by examining the overall profile of the rulers in question.

These waves of empirical research into elite change have repeatedly been connected to an important normative element: the quest for a "healthy standard" of elite turnover. The measurement of parliamentary renewal has often been associated with this problem, but so far, no precise definition has been provided of what is the "natural rate of turnover." The different dimensions of the unique, multifunctional role of MPs, and a number of country-specific

variables affecting the pace of renewal in each case, have made it difficult to achieve this aim.

Likewise, the broad debate about how to improve the quality of democratic representation by limiting the number of times representatives may be re-elected has not offered any clear solution. A book edited by Albert Somit et al. (1994) touched upon this aspect of the question and raised concerns about the possible threat to democratic governance posed by an excessively persistent class of elective representatives. This work also extended the analysis of a question, which until then had been discussed mainly within the context of the United States, to a broader number of contemporary democracies.

No particularly strong evidence has been found supporting the hypothesis of a possible deterioration of democracy due to an excess of parliamentary seniority, and this confirms the lack of success of a "radical thesis" like the mandatory term limit, which has been discussed at length and adopted, to a certain extent, at the level of State legislatures in the United State.

However, the question of the "optimal" rate of turnover remains an important one. In order to understand the pros and cons of strongly persistent political elites, scholars have to disentangle the complicated causal mechanisms underlying the phenomenon. A number of important steps in this direction have recently been taken, thanks to various works that have deepened and widened our comprehension of parliamentary turnover. For instance, the detailed study of turnover in Congress by Swain et al. (2000) has offered a new perspective by mapping the different components of the phenomenon. This approach allows the authors to offer an overall explanation of the generally low turnover of members of the US Congress, taking into account the impact of strategic retirement and of partisan realignments.

The ambitious objective of a truly comparative analysis of parliamentary turnover has been pursued by an extensive study (covering twenty-five countries) made by Richard E. Matland and Donald T. Studlar (2004). This study starts with the distinction between voluntary and involuntary exits (from Congress) and matches a number of complementary hypotheses based on structural and institutional determinants. Many of the hypotheses are in some way confirmed by the analysis, although a number of them (in particular, the hypothesis based on the party ideology variable) look less relevant than others. The study concludes that electoral volatility and party system changes remain the most relevant factors of legislative turnover, although it argues that the dependent variable is also affected by a set of institutional factors, including the design of electoral institutions.

The main merit of this study is that it emphasizes the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon, which stimulates a new wave of investigations into

elite circulation within democratic legislatures. Moreover, the reflection on the diminishing role of party ideology can be interpreted as a sign of the declining impact of party organizations on the destiny of individual representatives. This aspect in some way challenges an old argument from the sociology of elites: the *iron law of (partisan) oligarchies* would seem to be in decline, but this does not necessarily mean the end of oligarchic control over the patterns of elite circulation. This question is approached by Heinrich Best (2007), who connects increasing rates of turnover to the emergence of a "legitimacy challenge." After decades of closure in the political markets, due to the dominance of mass party organizations, the capacity of democratic regimes to maintain trustable elites is being increasingly challenged, and new types of competitors (bearing new patterns of political professionalism) emerge as the result of different factors. Party cartelization, the mistrust of democratic institutions and politicians, the decreasing relevance of national parliaments as arenas where a pool of aspirants to the leadership can be identified, together with the emergence of the strong personalization of party leadership are the most important aspects to be investigated in the search for the intervening factors affecting the rate of legislative turnover.

As a matter of fact, notwithstanding the quality of existing findings—at least in North America and Europe—the questions about this specific aspect of elite circulation continue to be difficult to answer. In particular, in order to better specify the indicators we are using—such as the rate of incumbents' exits versus that of "fresher politicians"—and articulate adequate new research questions about the different aspects of parliamentary turnover (for instance "electoral turnover" versus "non-regular turnover" resulting from the mid-term retirement of members and other forms of mandate discontinuity), it is essential that we consider the findings from the detailed analyses already produced within a broader, more comprehensive comparative framework. To this end, a comprehensive review and a new original comparative framework has been offered by Gouglas et al. (2016).

When Circulation Is Slow: Elite Persistence and Careerism in Modern Democracies

We have already mentioned some of the studies that have tried to answer the second type of questions mentioned above, concerning the determinants of "elite stability" in contemporary democracies. After all, elite circulation and elite continuity are inextricably interwoven: if the idea of a necessary

alternation among elite groups is at the core of the dominant theories of representative democracy, it is also true that an orderly, smooth degree of elite circulation is also to be considered a fundamental pre-condition for democratic stability. In other words, studying the longitudinal patterns of elite transformation means keeping an eye on the "normality" of non-turbulent times, marking the differences and accounting for them using a number of political, institutional and cultural variables.

However, with the development of quantitative methods and extensive comparative studies, the opportunities to analyze different measures of elite circulation/continuity have grown exponentially, allowing several new interpretative questions to be answered. These questions include one that complements the classical issue of the optimal standard of elite turnover: how can we explain the effective ability of stable democratic regimes to guarantee the continuity of their elites?

Assuming that the national representative assemblies have always represented the arenas for the "pool of aspirants" competing for the leadership, the focus has often been placed on the collective degree of parliamentary renewal. The oft-quoted study by Nelson Polsby on the long-term patterns of "seniority" in the US congress (1968) remains an important reference point for the exploration of structural and historical reasons for elite stability. According to Polsby, and the scholars who have followed him in the study of parliamentary institutionalization, the increased overall responsibility of a given body, and the increasing complexity of its representative roles, pave the way for a more selective access to membership of a truly professionalized elite.

Other projects have shifted the focus toward the qualitative significance of elite continuity (or circulation). For instance, Heinrich Best's and Maurizio Cotta's analysis of a wide cross-national data set concerning the socio-political characteristics of European parliamentarians from a long-term perspective (Best and Cotta 2000) led them to reformulate certain questions regarding the explanation for the main socio-political profiles of representatives in Europe. These questions were explicitly reformulated and tested in a later, more systematic work (Cotta and Best 2007). Their work resulted in a multifold research design: a precise assessment of the long-term effects of political professionalization (the decline of the nobility and other traditionally "notable" characteristics, the stabilization of turnover, an increase in partisan and elective backgrounds, etc.), an explanation of the variance in the emergence of specific phenomena (gender representation, the increase in technical backgrounds at the expense of traditional "humanities/social science backgrounds"), and finally an explanation for the re-emergence of certain pre-modern features of the political class. The most evident "u-curve"

presented in the volume is probably the resurgence of university education, no longer as a result of the presence of town notables but now simply due to the increasing numbers of people with access to higher education in contemporary societies.

The evolution of patterns of party professionalism is also connected to past and present analyses of changes within the *inner circle* of ministerial elites. In the 1980s, the comparative analyses of ministerial elites (Dogan 1989; Blondel and Thiebault 1991) had already revealed the stabilization of a significant percentage of *outsiders*: ministers belonging to the political elite at large, but with different characteristics from the *ministerial aspirants* who have gained most of their political experience within the national institutional context (generally in the parliamentary assembly).

Recent studies, such as the comparative works by Dowding and Dumont (2009, 2015), confirm that there is a great deal of variation across countries: the different degrees of party control over the selection process, and to some extent the different national institutional devices, determine remarkably different opportunities for ministerial selection and de-selection. This makes the connection between top-political career trajectories and the elites' range of opportunities even more intricate. In fact, the many factors affecting this link include rather novel phenomena such as an increase in the "personal powers" of the chief executives vis-à-vis the party's apparatuses, the increasingly complex policy expertise required to cover most of the positions especially at the core-executive level and, last but not least, the waning attractiveness of political office compared to other types of elite positions.

One consequence of this increasingly complex system of elite circulation is the appearance of some totally non-partisan (technocratic) figures at senior executive level. Once again, this is not a completely new phenomenon: the use of technocracy had been noticed in the past and explained as a consequence of the non-ideological agenda, oriented toward problem-solving, of post-industrial democracies. However, the use of technocracy seems to have intensified in recent decades and a tendency to avoid the appointment of party-political figures for specific institutional roles, such as finance or welfare minister, or for other related policy-making offices such as the ministries of labour, Infrastructures or Education, has emerged in several countries. Moreover, in some cases the recent economic crisis has determined the conditions for a total "party abdication," albeit only of a temporary nature: democracies with serious problems of party-government responsiveness have indeed experienced "fully technocratic governments" where the whole team of ministerial personnel comes from different backgrounds and is not part of the political class (McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014).

Once again, the general trends seen in regard to qualitative elite transformations have produced some interesting results that show that the classical question of the cyclical circulation of different elite groups is still a valid key to research. However, variations in the magnitude of the phenomenon, and even in the types of outcome—the characteristics of non-partisan ministers, the duration of their political-institutional commitment, the type of exit from their political appointment, and so on—are plain to see across countries, as shown by the first systematic comparisons made (Costa Pinto et al. 2017).

By introducing the analysis of persistence among parliamentarians and within the inner circle of top-executive leaders, we have touched on a concept—that of *political careers*—which is strictly associated (and somehow confused) with the notion of elite circulation. Obviously, the very notion of political career requires some degree of elite continuity; however, unlike the observed general patterns of circulation, the patterns of *political careers* look rather different from one another since the number of variables defining the "structure of opportunities," on the one hand, and the willingness of elite members to remain on the political ladder, on the other, can easily change.

Once again, the most evident distinction can be found in the patterns of political careers in both Europe and North America. The first broad model is concerned, of course, with the historical impact of political parties, while in the latter case individual resources, personal consensus and links to a plurality of interests play the decisive role in determining a long and prestigious career. According to the father of "ambition theory" (Schlesinger 1966), political careers in the United States are related to a combination of individual motivation and political opportunities. They may range from minimal expectations, when "discrete career ambitions" lead a politician to leave politics rather soon, to a "static ambition," when a politician tries to remain in the same position for a considerable time, or to the unrelenting motivations of a politician willing to climb the ladder of power. In this case, "progressive ambition" pervades that person's career trajectory.

This framework has inspired several studies of legislative careers in the United States (Black 1972; Herrick and Moore 1993), whose findings have confirmed the importance of individual ambitions and resources, like trust-funds and support from local and functional constituencies. However, longitudinal analyses of congressional careers have also demonstrated the importance of resources acquired "once in Washington" (Hibbing 1991), where the links to the party caucuses and the national party establishment matter. A mix of factors—both personal linkages and partisan or institutional ones—can therefore explain the different degrees of success of contemporary American political careers. This phenomenon seems in any case to be strictly connected

to the centripetal dimension of career structures, from local elections to state district election, and up the political ladder to the National Congress or to the National Executive (Francis and Kenny 1999).

In Europe, the original model looks completely different, with national political careers strictly connected to the growth of party professionalism and submitted to the *iron law of oligarchy.* However, in many European democracies, the interaction between party professionalization and other sorts of variables has gradually resulted in a more composite landscape. In the UK, the emergence of a cohort of *career politicians* who try to live off politics (and would love to keep living off politics), but who are not committed exclusively to politics (and who probably would not continue working for their own parties in the event of electoral defeat or ministerial downgrading) was described by a prescient article written by Antony King (1981). More in general, comparative surveys produced in different democratic countries show that the diachronic variations in the development of contemporary *professional politicians* are evident everywhere, and this should lead us to reformulate the notion of "structure of political opportunity" (Norris 1997; Borchert and Zeiss 2003). Career patterns and career paths within this framework look rather variable, but also much more comparable from one country to another, given the widespread effects of certain explanatory variables such as sources of income, regulatory and institutional reforms, and changes in the attractiveness of the traditional top-leadership positions (Borchert 2003).

The concept of political career is therefore a fundamental pillar of the contemporary literature on elite transformations. However, in certain recent studies this notion has taken on a derogatory meaning. According to the aforementioned definition by King, a careerist is a non-committed politician who wants to keep "surfing" within the institutional context to reach the highest positions of power and to use his personal consensus for opportunistic, if not exclusively egoistic, purposes (Riddell 1993). Longitudinal analyses do not provide a clear picture of the stabilization of new political or social features linked to the opportunistic nature of many politicians, but several signs of this transformation are manifest, as is shown by phenomena indirectly connected to careerism, like party switching, legislative disloyalty, personalized electoral campaigns, and even political scandals resulting from the personal attitudes of MPs and ministers.

It seems, therefore, that a lengthy phase of elite stability—regardless of whether such feature more closely fits the European party-government model or the US pattern of individual ambition—is now over and that many factors capable of accelerating the pace of elite circulation are emerging in traditional

Western democracies, as well as in other and newer democratic contexts around the world.

Another Century of Circulation? The Crisis of Democracy and the New Challenges Faced by Political Elites

This is not the place to review the increasingly large number of studies on the crisis of representative democracy. However, there is a clear relationship between changes in democratic governance and changes in the elite structure. Many of the distinguished scholars involved in the theoretical debate about the future of democracy suggest that the understanding of a new surge in elite circulation is now becoming a crucial issue for the destiny of democracy. An example is offered by the implications discussed in one of the most influential works published in recent years: *The Principles of Representative Democracy* by Bernard Manin (1997). Describing the main differences between the types of modern democracy in his threefold historical classification, Manin observes that in our current "audience democracies," *personal vote* relationships tend to substitute "party loyalty" relationships as the basis for the selection process. However, unlike the typical local linkages which denoted the personal voting relationships and political notables of the old "parliamentary democracy," the influence of individual preferences is now connected to different factors such as candidates' responsiveness and media performance.

The predominance of responsiveness is a core argument in the reflections of another influential observer of the European democracy, Peter Mair (2013), while the penetrative power of "money elites" and "media moguls" is widely described in the latest editions of a classical analysis of US democracy (Dye 2014).

Does this mean that we have to get used to growing, irregular patterns of circulation due to sudden changes within the structures of opportunity and to the decline of the traditional political *milieu*? There are several question marks over such a revolutionary scenario: path dependencies and traditional explanatory variables are still at work, combined with new specific determinants of elite stability, to counter the random effect of the aforementioned complexity. A satisfactory classification of all these determinants is difficult to construct at this stage due to the role of country-specific variables and, to some extent, of the persistence of traditional modes of elite circulation in some parties. However, we can simplify the future research agenda by listing those analytic

dimensions which should be the main concern of future studies of elite circulation and stability.

1. The changing nature of *elite selectorates*. This term used to be synonymous with *political parties*, particularly in Europe. We know that personal linkages, linkages to local and global interests, and linkages to civic society's movements and to media opinion makers are all becoming increasingly important. But we also know that many parties have radically changed their approach to political selection, responding to the challenges of anti-politics with more transparent, open processes of internal selection, not only for the allocation of senior party positions but also for the selection of their candidates for public representative institutions (Hazan and Rahat 2010). The explosion (outside of the United States) of party primaries over the last twenty years is the most noticeable phenomenon connected to this necessity. Mention should also be made of the renewed debate over the "rotation" of public offices among party representatives (already promoted by green and new left parties in the past) and the appearance of open on-line processes of selection of local and national representatives as those proposed by Italy's *Movimento Cinque Stelle* and by protest parties in other countries. Understanding the effects of these new processes of elite selection should therefore tell us to what extent the patterns of elite circulation will be re-shaped in the near future.

2. The changing nature of *democratic governance*. Of course, the nature of opportunities and political ambitions has been deeply affected by the evolution of democratic governance. This has obviously to do with the process of the hollowing out of the State, which has undermined the centrality of traditional domestic legislative and executive institutions (Rhodes 1994). However, account should also be taken of the effects of *horizontal shifts* in governance: the emergence of parallel elites from semi-public authorities and NGOs or the appeal of private arenas of power, like multi-national conglomerates and think tanks, constitute important aspects of the transformation of elite trajectories. For these reasons, new frontiers of research, such as the study of the roles of former political leaders, have been explored in an attempt to understand the variety of ways and of arenas in which they can continue exercising significant power (Theakston and de Vries 2012).

3. The changing nature *of elite-mass relationships*. This is the most critical issue to be addressed in a manifesto for future research on elite circulation since the scope of the comparative analysis of the mutual influence of political elites and public is rather limited and unsystematic. A more robust

monitoring of this relationship, of the findings of studies of populist and anti-political discourse, and of studies of political communication and new leadership styles should lead us to reconsider the diachronic approach in order to understand the similarity between the current practices of elite circulation and certain past examples of elite discontinuity from the twentieth century. Past studies have in fact shown that in times of crisis in particular, the elites' decisions are of crucial importance to the consolidation of stable relations with the public and to shaping the basic principles of new political regimes (Dogan and Higley 1998). The hollowing out of European parliamentary democracy (Mair 2013) and the emergence of new "anti-elite elites" from the populist movements of our times undoubtedly represent a further element of uncertainty with regard to the future modes of formation and transformation of the ruling classes.

It can thus be seen that there is much to be learnt from focusing on the challenges posed to political elites in times of democratic crisis and public mistrust. The way elites are changing today is perhaps different from the way they used to change in the past. Nevertheless, elites are clearly not a thing of the past, and this means that elite circulation, which remains an intrinsic element of the elite dynamics, is certainly not over either. Disentangling the causal links is probably more difficult within such a complex situation, and discovering the common denominator at the core of elite transformations in many democratic realities will be even more difficult in the near future. However, this is a sound reason to recall the valuable theoretical constructs proposed by classical analysis, and all the robust findings produced by empirical political science to date.

Note

1. One should not forget the influence of those European scholars participating in this comparative endeavor, flanking an already well-established American community of scholars. As far back as 1959, at the ISA's IV World Congress in Stresa, the Political Sociology working group included, among others, Juan Linz, Richard Rose, Giovanni Sartori, Stein Rokkan, and Mattei Dogan. And Dogan was soon to be appointed the first Chair of the IPSA's Research Committee on Elites (1972).

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Democratization: The Role of Elites

Philippe C. Schmitter

This chapter could be brief. From a strictly etymological perspective, the transition from autocracy to democracy should involve moving from "the rule of one person (or small group of persons)" to "the rule of the people (or to that segment of the people possessing equal political rights as citizens)." In the former, the government consists of a political elite clearly demarcated from and not accountable to the population; in the latter, either there is no elite and citizens govern directly or they govern indirectly through agents chosen by them, but who only rule *pro tempore* and depend periodically on their explicit consent. As the result of such a change in regime, there should be a complete change of elite personnel and structure. Moreover, the ensuing governing elite (or non-elite) is expected to pursue different policies benefitting different segments of the population.

From a realistic perspective, the role of elites and their policies in the process of regime transformation are not so simple. Once it is recognized that all "real-existing democracies" (REDs) (Schmitter 1994; Schmitter and Karl 1991a) depend crucially on the role of representatives who act as intermediaries between the citizens and their rulers—some of whom, either directly in presidential regimes or indirectly in parliamentary ones, become the rulers—then, the difference between autocracy and democracy is bound to be less dramatic. Instead of rule by a few versus rule by all, we have "rule by some

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politicians" or "polito-cracy" as the outcome. These newly empowered repre-sentatives inevitably form an elite institutionally separate from the electorate that has chosen them competitively or the selectorate that has chosen them for their reputation (Mosca 1896; Michels 1962). For, in REDs, not all represen-tatives are elected and act in the name of political parties. Many, probably most of them, are selected by various publics and act through civil society, that is, a myriad of interest associations, social movements and advocacy groups—which only very rarely hold competitive elections to choose their leaders.

Moreover, not uncommonly and especially through the latter channels of interest and ideational representation, many actors in the "new" democratic elite will be inherited from the *ancien régime.* If this were not enough, as we have been reminded by numerous theorists and empirical researchers, these elected or selected politicians may form a *class* to which there are formidable barriers to entry by competition or a *caste* whose members collude to avoid competition from outsiders and/or succeed in invoking conformity by con-vincing the people of their unique and hegemonic "right to rule."

More recently, another factor has intervened to complicate this mediated relation between citizens and rulers, namely the trend toward the profession-alization of the nature of representation and, hence, the status of politicians—in both political parties and civil society (Borchert and Zeiss 2003; Cotta and Best 2000). Initially in liberal democratic theory, it was presumed that the tenure of politicians was limited in time and commitment, either by the outcome of competition between political parties or by personal choice when the winners (elected or non-elected) decided to return to their original life situations. In short, politicians were presumed to live "for politics," not "from politics." In well-established democracies, this trend toward the latter has already been extensively documented; in newly created democracies, it seems to set in very quickly as the amateurs at the beginning of regime transformation become professionals by its end.

If this were not enough, all REDs depend on non-democratic elites that are embedded in the so-called guardian institutions of the state—agencies, com-missions, directorates, boards, central banks, courts, administrative staffs and so forth—that may be delegated certain powers by democratic elites but are expected to take their binding decisions based on their expertise—civilian or military—and, therefore, deliberately protected from the vicissitudes of polit-ical competition (Dahl 1971). Needless to say, the continuity of these elites is likely to be even greater during and after the transition from autocracy to democracy than that of elected or selected political representatives.

The Mode of Transition

What is crucial to explaining the outcome in this ambiguous process of elite transformation is the mode of transition—how a given polity changes from autocracy to democracy. Ever since Machiavelli, students of politics have known that this interim between regime types constitutes a very distinctive moment—one that he argued even required a distinctive science of politics (Machiavelli 1532). Its most salient characteristic was the much greater degree of uncertainty (he called it *fortuna*) during which not only the actions of actors were much more difficult to predict but also the rules of the game were unknown. Although in his case, the transition went in the opposite direction—from republican to princely government—the generic situation is similar when moving from autocracy to democracy. And the implication is identical. During the period when one regime is in demise or transforming itself, what becomes much more important than during "normal times"— when *necessità* was embedded predictably in a pre-established and hegemonic set of rules—are the autonomous choices of actors (he called it *virtù*) in choosing and institutionalizing a new set of rules. *Ergo,* not only may the period of transition result in a change of the ruling elite (or for Machiavelli, the single ruler), it also provides the agents involved with an unusual degree of discretion in making these choices.

   The literature on regime transition prior to the recent wave of democratizations that began in the mid-1970s was scarce, but it conveyed a simple message. There were two possible modes of transition, conveniently exemplified by Great Britain and France respectively. In the former, RED came about over a long period of time through a series of reforms as the result of which the previous monarchic autocracy gradually and incrementally changed its rules to incorporate successive groups of the population that had been denied the full rights of citizenship. This involved a dual process of relatively peaceful mobilizations by those excluded and relatively flexible responses from those already included in the political process. In the latter, RED only came about—again over a lengthy and tumultuous period—as the result of successive revolutions when the previous autocratic regimes refused to respond to or even to recognize the demands for inclusion coming from below, and as a result of the accumulated frustration of these demands, the excluded groups resorted to collective violence, which periodically was successful in deposing the ruling autocracy. The implication of this ambidextrous literature for elites was clear. In reformed transitions, there would be a considerable continuity in their composition; in revolutionary ones, the previous elites would be

deposed—killed, imprisoned, or driven into exile—and a new elite would emerge from the struggle itself. Needless to say, in practice, the contrast between the two was not so dramatic—but still significant. In the former, elites circulated; in the latter, they jumped.

Since the mid-1970s (at least until the "Arab Spring" of 2008), most of the attempted transitions did not conform to either of the two historical alternatives (O'Donnell et al. 1986; Huntington 1991, pp. 85–108; Linz and Stepan 1996). Revolutions became rarer (and did not result in a regime resembling a RED such as Iran) or illusory (when the accompanying violence was confined and did not produce an irreversible change in the entire composition of elites such as Romania). Reformist transitions faded in significance due either to the effective resistance of entrenched elites or their improved capacity for co-opting the forces of opposition. What emerged were two other types: the *pacted transition* and the *imposed transition* (Schmitter and Karl 1991b). Neither was completely novel. The former had characterized the transition to democracy in Venezuela after 1958; the latter could be said to have been the case in West Germany and Japan even if the imposing power was exogenous and took the form of military occupation by a victorious democracy.

The Change in Modes

The common distinguishing feature of these more recent transitions is that they come from above—in contrast to the two "classic" modes which were driven from below by excluded, non-elite actors. Both imposed and pacted cases are initiated, monitored, and controlled (to differing degrees) by pre-existing elites—either in the government or jointly with the opposition.

In the case of imposed transitions, the process usually starts from an internal division within the ruling class or caste in which the "soft-line" faction becomes dominant and chooses to initiate changes in the rules by liberalizing public policies—for example, by tolerating greater press freedom or diminishing arbitrary imprisonment—and by introducing some democratic procedures—for example, by convoking elections with limited participation and candidates or allowing the formation of civil society organizations (Schneider and Schmitter 2004). The objective is usually some sort of hybrid regime that has many of the surface manifestations of an RED but not the accountability to citizens that lies at its core (Schedler 1998). Its minimal version has been baptized a *dictablanda;* its more extensive one, a *democradura.* Such a limited change in regime will be successful under two conditions: (1) the soft-liners remain capable of containing or marginalizing their hard-line

opponents and (2) the opponents to the regime are unsuccessful either in mobilizing their own supporters or outsiders in civil society.

Many of the post-1974 transitions fall into this category. In Latin America, Brazil was the most notable example. The military dictatorships of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru shared many of its characteristics, although all experienced much more significant mobilization and violence from below making them decidedly mixed cases. In Asia, Taiwan and later Indonesia had predominantly top-down transitions. But it was the post-1989 cases of transition from Soviet-style autocracies, for example Albania, Belorussia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine, and the Baltic republics, where this mode was most prevalent. The leading actors initiating and attempting to control the change in regime came from within the previous regime, that is, from a fraction within its ruling party or its security apparatus. Some of these post-communist transitions were quickly aborted when the new rulers simply changed their rhetoric to one of nationalism and democracy while perpetuating autocracy, for example, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

In the case of pacted transitions, the process again is contingent upon internal elite divisions—this time not only among rulers, but also among their opponents. Whatever the reason (and they are not uniform), the softliners within the government and the moderates in the opposition form an alliance by agreeing upon a common set of rules designed to reduce the intrinsic uncertainty of the transition in regime—and to prevent its being captured by either of their more extreme factions. The content of this foundational pact varies according to the specifics of each case—for example, whether the autocracy is military or not—but usually includes at least the following items: a mutual commitment not to resort to violence or to encourage intervention by outsiders, an agreement to share offices and to make (or not make) policies according to some pre-established and usually proportional arrangement, and an amnesty with regard to crimes committed under the previous autocracy (O'Donnell et al. 1986; Higley and Gunther 1992). For this to happen, it is essential that the elites involved—inside and outside the previous autocracy—are successful in delivering the continued compliance of their members/followers to the restrictions agreed upon.

Both of these elite-dominated modes of transition have their potential perverse effects and critical moments. The *imposition of democracy* depends ultimately on the perception of legitimacy of the ensuing regime by its citizens. The fact that it is intended to protect the status and power of specified components of the *ancien régime* by selectively inserting non-democratic rules and reservoirs of power renders it vulnerable once the uncertainty of

the transition itself has been overcome and actors have settled into the trenches of normal political behavior. Moreover, with the increasingly globalized nature of political discourse, the diffusion of universalistic norms regarding human and civil rights will undermine national-level arguments of political exception or cultural difference. At some point in time, imposed democracies will have to reform themselves to conform to more general expectations concerning democracy—and this may prove difficult depending on ensuing changes in the power of those elites protected by such enclaves of autocracy. The *negotiation of democracy* by pacts is less likely to be challenged eventually on grounds of legitimacy since compromise among elites is almost as legitimate as majority rule in many conceptions of democratic practice. These cases—usually the most successful in institutionalizing rules for political competition and accountability—risk the opposite. The politicians who draft these rules and consent to them during the transition will soon discover that they are congenial to protecting their tenure in power by discouraging challenges from those outside the initial deal and by encouraging collusion among insiders. They will therefore be tempted to prolong the pact beyond its immediate utility during the transition and convert it into an enduring feature of the ensuing regime. Such an institutionalized oligarchy not only runs the greater risk of corruption and mismanagement due to the absence of "free and fair" competition and reliable mechanisms of accountability, but it should also be less capable of responding to internal transformations and/or to external shocks.

Some Empirical Observations

As a purely empirical matter, it should be noted that most historical attempts at democratization—regardless of the mode of transition—have been unsuccessful and resulted in a return to some form of autocracy (BTI Report 2003; Freedom House 2003). Very few polities have made it to democracy the first time they tried. Since 1974, however, when over 70 countries have made such an attempt beginning in Southern Europe and Latin America and extending to Eastern Europe, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, very few have reverted overtly to autocracy. And several of those that did (usually by military coup) subsequently returned to some form of democracy—however imperfect. Guinea-Bissau, Nepal, Bangladesh, Georgia, Philippines, Honduras, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, and Ukraine would seem to be cases-in-point. Many more have made it to some form of RED. This has especially been the case in Latin America where from being virtually completely autocratic at the end of the 1960s (with the lonely exceptions of Costa Rica and Colombia),

the entire continent (except for Cuba) now relies on political elites chosen by reasonably honest, competitive elections for their top executives. Asia has experienced several successful regime transitions with significant (and peaceful) changes in ruling elites since the 1970s: South Korea, Taiwan, and, so far, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Malaysia and Singapore have yet to cross this critical threshold. Elsewhere, the outcome remains uncertain— presumably, because entrenched oligarchies have been reluctant to give up or even to share power: for example, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar and Cambodia. And, of course, the region has some of the most obvious out-right autocracies in North Korea, China, Laos, and Vietnam. The African picture is one of proportionately fewer attempts at democratization and less success and hence of greater elite continuity. But even there some transitions have produced consensual turnovers in ruling elites: for example, Senegal, Ghana, Kenya and, most recently, Nigeria. Many of the others have managed to create some kind of hybrid regime, for example, Angola, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Togo, Ruanda, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Sudan, with frequent elections, predictable results and entrenched ruling elites. Two (South Sudan and Somalia) simply remain "unconsolidated" without having produced any predictable set of rules, rulers or even state structures. The recent experiences in the region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) where the modes of transition were more violent and mass-driven seem to have inverted this generally favorable trend. Either these attempts reverted to autocracy very soon, *vide* Egypt, or they degenerated into protracted civil war and unconsolidated autocracy, *vide* Syria and Yemen. Only in Tunisia, which followed the reform path more than the revolutionary one (and which was later supplemented by some pacting) has the outcome been a fledgling RED.

Some Speculative Hypotheses

One intriguing hypothesis is that this change in the odds of success trends is due to ensuing changes in the identity and composition of political elites. First and foremost, this may reflect developments in their respective military elites since their response is almost always crucial to the outcome of whatever strategy is adopted (Schmitter 1985; Goodman et al. 1990; Peceny 1999). Not only have the military become more professionalized, but more importantly, they can no longer be assured of external support for their intervention, especially since the end of Cold War rivalry between the two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, made their international allegiance much less significant (Bruneau and Matei 2008). In several cases in both Southern

and Eastern Europe, membership in NATO and participation in UN and EU peace-keeping missions seem to have played a significant role in discouraging their intervention in domestic politics (Pridham 1991). The military as individuals or as institution are no longer as likely to intervene or even to threaten the advent of RED as it was only a few decades ago.

But even more significant may be the changing role of economic elites (Etzioni-Halvey 1997). In the early transitional modes of reform and revolution, the bourgeoisie played a crucial role by preferring the former to the latter and, therefore, by promoting democracy. Subsequently, however, when reform meant the redistribution of their income and wealth and revolution meant their elimination as a class, they more frequently intervened in favor of autocratic rule, sometimes even in collaboration with military or civilian elites in other countries. This was particularly the case in peripheral settings such as Latin America where capitalism was delayed and dependent in its emergence and, hence, more vulnerable to internal disruption and external threat. As capitalism became increasingly globalized and embedded in international and regional organizations, business elites—even in the periphery—became less and less national in calculating their interests and exercising their power and influence. The nature of domestic regimes became less a source of physical threat and more a resource for profitable return. In this context, liberal, constitutional, representative democracies, for example, REDs, that guaranteed the protection of property rights and ensured that political conflicts would be channeled through predicable channels of resolution were clearly preferable to autocratic ones—no matter how momentarily advantageous the repressive actions of the latter might be (Rueschemeyer et al. 1993).

The most serious elite challenges to contemporary democratization may come not from military or economic elites. They may come from elites representing religious or ethno-linguistic minorities—often concentrated in sub-national political units dominated by majorities ruling at the national level (Wimmer et al. 2004; Mansfield and Snyder 2007). One of the most notorious weaknesses of democratic theory has always been that it has no explanation for the existence of the unit within which it is practiced: the (allegedly) sovereign and (allegedly) national state (Rustow 1970). And, even worse, there are no legitimate mechanisms for filling this lacuna. Plebiscites are irrelevant since the pre-established conditions of eligibility to participate in them almost invariably determine their outcome. When there exists no consensus among elites representing the interests and passions of groups located within a given territory concerning its boundaries and identity *prior* to the attempt at democratization, then the only solutions to the choice of unit are conquest or compromise—and the former is rarely compatible with eventual

democracy (Linz and Stepan 1996). Reaching a compromise during this period is, however, difficult since, suddenly, numbers count much more than under autocracy and so does location since an embryonic democracy must not only decide on voter eligibility (presumably without restrictions based on class, gender, religion, ethnicity, or wealth), but also decide on the constituencies within which these votes are tabulated. Elites representing numerical minorities may have reason to feel threatened, especially if the decision rules are strictly majoritarian, but even more so if they are concentrated territorially in sub-units that are under-represented or dispersed across several sub-units where they are permanently minoritarian. At the extreme, elections become "ethnic, linguistic or religious censuses" that are destined to produce contested results, not infrequently, accompanied by violence.

Rotation in Power

The recent attempts at transition to democracy have not only been more successful, they have also been more eventful for the elites that participated in them. The previously successful cases of regime transformation in the twentieth century—most of them after or around World War I and World War II—resulted in a winning party or coalition that remained consistently in power for 8 to 12 years, for example, Norway, Finland, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Jamaica, India, as well as the Western and Southern European countries liberated from Nazi occupation. The hegemony of these founding elites was even longer in the cases of the defeated countries: West Germany, Japan, and Italy. In the post-1974 transitions, the pattern has been dramatically different. Instead of having a protracted electoral advantage rooted in their image as the founders of democracy (or, in some cases, of the nation-state itself), the opposite has become the norm. The party winning the founding election is most often defeated in the subsequent one (Schmitter 2001; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007). Spain became the paradigm case when the initial winner, Adolfo Suarez, and his UDC party, lost by a large margin in the second election and never recuperated. The only two cases that come to mind when there was continuity in the initial ruling party were the Czech Republic and Chile. The most astonishing cases occurred in Eastern Europe when the former ruling Communist Party elite re-named and reformed itself and succeeded in winning several of the subsequent elections—despite what seemed to be the thorough public discredit of their previous performance.

The reasons for this reversal in the fortune of founding elites are obscure. At the top of the list, one should probably put the intervening increase in citizen

information and expectations. Not only are today's newly empowered citizens better informed about the performance of their own institutions and those of other comparable countries, but they also expect more from their newly founded institutions and the elites that run them. When it quickly becomes apparent that democratization as such does not lead to a greater volume or better distribution of benefits, and even that it comes with considerable "start-up costs" and "initial disruption," they shift their attention (and vote) to some alternative elite—that also turns out to be disappointing. The Spaniards, as forerunners in this process, have coined a term for it: *desencanto.* What is important to retain, however, is that contrary to past experiences, this disenchantment with what the transformation to democracy has produced does not translate into support for some autocratic replacement for it. Something called "democracy" remains the preferred regime for almost all citizens—"the only game in town"—but its pursuit results in a much accelerated circulation in the elites running it. Revolutions are said "to eat their children"; transitions seem "to wear out their elites."

Some Tentative Conclusions

(1) During the transition from some form of autocracy to some form of "real-existing democracy," the nature of politics and, therefore, the role of political elites is "abnormal," that is, intrinsically uncertain and not just risky as in normal times. Given the absence of accepted rules and predictable behaviors during such an interval, actors have unusually greater autonomy in making their decisions, especially with regard to choosing the rules of the game that will determine the nature of the emerging, but not yet established, regime.

(2) Therefore, political elites have even greater importance than during the usual lengthy periods of "normal" politics within established regimes, whether autocratic or democratic. However, these transitional elites are also more likely to be internally divided in their preference for the emerging rules and, hence, which elite or coalition of elites will eventually dominate and impose its rules is itself uncertain.

(3) The mode of transition, how the regime transformation is made, has a distinct impact on political elites. The two "classical" modes: peaceful reform and violent revolution come from below and involve a substantial change in the composition of subsequent ruling elites, even a complete substitution in the latter case. The 70 or more attempted transitions since the mid-1970s have more often come from above, either by *pacts* between

factions within the previous autocracy and its opposition or by *imposition* from a victorious faction within that *ancien régime.* Under these conditions, there is likely to be a much greater continuity in the composition of political elites.

(4) The uncertain dynamics of transition mean that the power resources that determine elite status are also likely to change. In particular, once founding elections are held and freedom of association secured, the sheer numbers and identities of citizens and their location in specific constituencies becomes more significant, not only in determining the outcome of elections or of competition for influence, but even more in influencing the nature and configuration of the very unit within which politics is conducted, that is, the national state and its sub-units.

(5) For there is no democratic way in which the borders and identity of this unit can be determined. At best, these elements of stateness will have been established prior to the transition, virtually always by non-democratic and controversial means, and elites in and out of power will have adjusted to its existence. However, once the attempt at democratization is initiated, it may become apparent that there is not just one, more or less coherent, political elite emerging from within the previous national unit, but several distinctive elites laying claim to different territories or identities along lines of cleavage relating to ethnicity, language, religion, or previous patterns of discrimination. Needless to say, if and when this occurs, the eventual formation of a political class willing to play according to rules of democratic competition becomes much more difficult. Compromise and power-sharing between elites (and them and their followers) is one solution, as is the rarer one of peaceful secession into separate national units. Unfortunately, the more frequent outcome is an effort at conquest by one elite and violent resistance by another—which makes democratization impossible until the armed conflict is resolved.

(6) The transition is over when political elites have reached a mutual agreement on the rules concerning their competition for office and influence and managed to convince their followers or the citizenry as a whole that these rules embody a form of democracy that is appropriate for their society and legitimate for their polity. Needless to say, these rules vary considerably (and serve to create different types of democracy), but they are all rooted in what have become fairly common rules of citizenship without discrimination by gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language or wealth. Age discrimination has persisted, although it has tended to decline from 18 to 16. The most serious unresolved problem concerns

the status of legally resident or "un-documented" foreigners, who have reached a considerable proportion of the resident population in many national societies. Most of the transitional democracies after the mid-1970s have tended to be net exporters rather than importers of these "denizens"; hence, they have ignored the issue—except for extending citizenship rights to their own nationals living abroad— which creates a new dimension to their elite structure since many of its members may no longer be subject to national obligations.

(7) As we have argued, democratization is a dynamic process that can (and usually does) alter the resources available to actors in their competition for elite position and status. In the case of "top-down" transitions, the key initial resource is usually the capacity to deliver the compliance of members and followers during an otherwise highly uncertain period. Once the elementary freedoms intrinsic to the practice of RED—even in the *dictablandas* imposed by a faction of the previous autocracy or the *democraduras* negotiated by the regime and part of its opposition— become tolerated practice, the newly empowered citizenry will inevitably test their limits and seek to extend them. The result is often a loss of control from above by founding elites and a mobilization of civil society from below that introduces new elites into the political process. This, combined with the increase in expectations triggered by even the most limited type of transition, may help to explain a "peculiar" feature of recent democratizations, namely, the rapidity and frequency with which turnover in power via elections takes place.

(8) On a purely probabilistic and historical basis, most attempted transitions to democracy have failed—usually due to the intervention of military elites (admittedly, often with civilian allies). This has become a much less likely occurrence since the mid-1970s. The reluctance or unwillingness of the military elite to intervene goes a long way in explaining why so few overt reversions to autocracy have occurred. This cannot be attributed simply to a decline in their capacity to displace civilian elites. On the contrary, with the greater professionalization of armed forces and the continuous introduction of new and more efficacious weapons almost everywhere, the objective disparity between military and civilian elites to wield violence has increased. Nor does it seem attributable to increased divisions between branches of the armed forces. One factor of substantial importance would seem to be a shift in the international context since the end of the Cold War, whereby *golpistas* know that they not only cannot rely on the same explicit or implicit support of outside powers, but that various international, especially regional, organizations are capable of

mobilizing sanctions against such actions (Whitehead 1996). This does not mean that the specter of armed intervention has disappeared, *vide* Thailand, Honduras, Egypt and several African polities, but it no longer haunts the process as much as in the past.

(9) The role of economic elites has also shifted. Now that they can no longer rely on the military to "liberate" them from threats generated by democratic competition and now they have lost their strategic significance for outsiders due to the collapse of the (real or imagined) threat of communism, capitalists seem to have discovered that they can live with and even compete effectively within democracy, as long as it remains liberal in its restriction of the role of the state and constitutional in its protection of property rights. Given the imposed or pacted nature of most recent transitions, these conditions seem to be assured from the beginning. Moreover, very few bourgeoisies are any longer strictly national, depending only upon the labor and purchasing power of their fellow citizens. For reasons that seem more fortuitous than causal, the wave of democratizations that began in the 1970s coincided with the raising hegemony of neo-liberal economic ideology and the emergence of a globalized system of market exchanges, especially financial ones. This provided capitalists with additional degrees of freedom, both economic and political. They can secure their capital in a variety of sites outside their own democracy; they can use the threat of out-sourcing abroad to weaken the demands of labor; they can ally themselves with powerful multi-national firms which have direct access to their own and other polities; they can rely on appeals for support from regional and global inter-governmental organizations and arbitration systems. Even when Left-oriented parties come to power, they have proven cautious in wielding their powers of expropriation, redistribution, and promotion of the rights of workers and labor unions—in the interest of reducing the risk of capital flight or decline in foreign investment. The "dirty secret" of most neo-democracies is that their economic and social policies have been much less consequential than in the past and expected in the present. In short, liberal or "real-existing" democracy has once again become "the best cover for the bourgeoisie."

(10) Another challenge to democracy has come from oligarchy, the tendency for ruling elites to perpetuate themselves in power. The classic scenario is for them to use the resources of incumbency to skew the results of competition in their favor—all the more so, if those resources come from within the state and not just private parties, associations, movements, or firms. However, as we have noted above, it has become more

and more rare that the party or coalition winning the initial election is capable of winning the second or third one. It would seem either that incumbency resources are scarce in such neo-democracies or that the relevant publics have become less trusting or more demanding or both. The proliferation of constitutionally embedded term limits—usually two consecutive ones—has also contributed to the more frequent rate of turnovers in power. Efforts by incumbents in neo-democracies to falsify voter registration and electoral results have frequently been tried but have often been frustrated by citizen rebellions, sometimes aided by the growing role of international observers. The second scenario is for those entrenched in office to simply call off elections, dismiss parliaments and unilaterally augment their executive powers, sometimes by declaring a state of national emergency. These so-called *auto-golpes* by elected civilian rulers have been tried repeatedly, especially in Latin America and Africa, but many of them failed due to mass public reaction at the national level and pressures from international or regional organizations.

(11) In all regimes, political elites interact with and become dependent upon each other and upon other elites. In Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America, the extension and consolidation of democracy was rooted to a considerable extent in the interpenetration of political parties and interest associations. Left-wing parties had their "sister" labor unions and cooperatives; right-wing parties had a somewhat looser relation with business and professional associations, as well as private firms. Thanks to this cooperation between political and civil society, these polities developed a particularly strong infrastructure of organized intermediaries—which proved subsequently resilient in most of them to the challenges of economic depression and international war. Contemporary neo-democracies are characterized by a much deeper separation of these two generic forms of representation and, hence, a weaker role for both of them. Their parties not only have much fewer members or even loyal followers than in the past, but the same is true for most associations representing class, sectoral, or professional interests (if membership in them is not obligatory). So-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on the advocacy of various causes: gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights, child welfare and so forth self-consciously describe themselves as not affiliated to any political party, and their donors (often foreigners) insist that this divide be respected. The result is a structural weakness within the emerging political elite in what used to be one of the major elements of its strength and resilience.

(12) But the greatest difference in elite identity and structure between past and present democracies lies in the emergence and spread of "selectorates" that have far outstripped in number and often in influence the "electorates" that have long presumed to exclusively recruit, certify and control the members of the political elite. These "selected leaders" come from a multitude of sources, but they all have in common that they were not elected to fill their positions and are not subjected to being "un-elected" as a constraint on their behavior. By far the most powerful of them inhabit and govern so-called guardian institutions—institutions that have been delegated to perform important governing tasks and deliberately designed to be protected from the vagaries of democratic political competition (Dahl 1971). Historically, the earliest and most significant of these were the armed forces and, especially, their general staffs. Elected elites might set the general "strategic" guidelines and periodically review their budgets, but for most purposes, military elites were expected to select their personnel and make operational decisions "without political interference." Supreme or constitutional courts are another form of guardianship that has spread rapidly through old and new liberal democracies. But the most rapidly expanding component of guardianship in contemporary democracies has been the proliferation of "independent central banks" and "independent regulatory agencies." Presumed to be staffed by technocratic experts in their respective fields, they have usurped a wide range of policy areas that were previously within the domain of elected officials, or not politically regulated at all. And they are virtually unremovable—regardless of changes in government or regime. If that were not enough, many of these agencies are closely affiliated with and supported by international and regional organizations that establish many of the rules that they are subsequently charged with enforcing at the national or sub-national level. A second source of "selectorate elites" comes from within civil society. Virtually none of the leaders of its myriad associations, movements, and foundations have been elected competitively. Most have selected themselves and, by personal reputation or organizational performance, gained the support of consenting members or financial contributors. Needless to say, this is an elite that is much more likely to be affected by regime transformation; indeed, it is its mobilization that frequently drives the transition process further than originally intended. In other words, their external impact upon the political process may be democratic, but their internal status is not.

(13) Notwithstanding the previous discussion, democratization is not just a product of political elites. Their initiatives, interventions, defections,

compromises, reassurances, agreements, and disagreements may be less predictable and more consequential than in times of "normal" politics, but they are all ultimately connected to the actions and reactions of ordinary citizens who are rapidly learning to exploit their greater access to diverse sources of information and to wield their newly acquired civic rights (Gill 2000). During the transition, there may emerge some elites driven by purely idealistic or altruistic motives, but most of them tend to respond only when promised some benefit or threatened with some cost—and it is the mobilization of previously sub-ordinate masses that tends to change their respective incentive structures and action repertoires. *Virtù* in the Machiavellian sense involves precisely being able to understand this uncertain and rapidly changing set of rewards and threats and to act accordingly in order to achieve the desired goal of political order. In his day, this meant a stable "princely" autocracy; today, in more than 70 locations since 1974, this has meant an institutionalized democracy. Not all aspiring democratic leaders are capable of capturing and interpreting the signals sent from below, and needless to say, those who can do not always make "virtuous" decisions. On the front end of the process of democratization, success depends on converting this complex and fleeting set of rewards and threats into rules that political and other elites are willing to respect; on the back end, however, the viability of these compromises among elites will depend on whether citizens regard these institutions as legitimate, that is, are willing to comply voluntarily with the constraints they place on their political behavior because they regard them as appropriate—materially and normatively.

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Sub-national Political Elites

Filippo Tronconi

The devolution of formal authority from central states to sub-national entities is a well-documented trend both in advanced and in emerging democracies (Keating 1988; Sharpe 1993; Hooghe et al. 2010). The new model of multi-level governance (Hooghe and Marks 2002) has been studied from the point of view of constitutional transformations, policy outcomes, and the building of new identities. While the focus has been on the territorial restructuring of the state for at least three decades now (Keating 2008), it is only recently that political scientists have begun to turn their attention to the implications of this evolution for political elites and political careers. The opening of new political arenas, together with the creation and consolidation of new representative bodies, means firstly that more positions are available for would-be politicians. Secondly, it implies that under certain conditions, unidirectional career paths from the local to the national arena are no longer the only option available to politicians. Indeed, where a regional level of government has been created, other patterns have sometimes emerged whereby the regional level is no longer seen as a mere stepping stone toward a political career at the national level.

Obviously, a meso-level of government is not a complete novelty intro-duced by recent devolutionary processes. The federal model, which has been transferred from the American experience to the rest of the world, is based on the idea of a shared sovereignty between the federation and the federated

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territorial units. In parallel, there has been a long tradition of studies focusing on the questions of political elites and political careers at different territorial levels in the United States (Schlesinger 1966; Hibbing 1991; Francis and Kenny 2000) and Canada (Moncrief 1994; Docherty 1997). In fact, as we shall see, these two countries continue to be cited as a point of reference in many studies of the career paths of politicians in regionalized countries, if only to highlight the differences between "original" federal states and unitary states shifting toward decentralized arrangements.

The relationship between decentralization and political elites has triggered two different sets of questions. First, sub-national political elites can be seen, as it were, as the dependent variable. Thus, we observe the influence that the existence of a regional political arena has on elite selection and circulation. In this sense, the main issues political scientists have tried to address are as follows: Who are the members of sub-national elites? Are they amateurs or professionals? Are they different from national politicians? Does the existence of a sub-national level of government significantly change traditional political career patterns? And if so, in what way? From the opposite perspective, one can speculate on the ways regional political elites may influence the process of institutionalization of the sub-national level of government and the further devolution of power. In this case, the most important research questions concern politicians' personal attributes and the consequences of such: do political elites whose members possess certain backgrounds, values, attitudes, ambitions, affect the relations between the center and the periphery of the state? Are different career paths able to condition the development of territorial reforms? The remaining part of this chapter examines the main findings of political science literature from this dual perspective. However, the first set of questions has received much wider attention, while the second set has only emerged recently. Thus, the different space devoted to each set of questions in this essay reflects the dissimilar state of the literature.

The Making of a Regional Political Class

The emergence of a regional political class, distinct from the national one, is the result of two analytically diverse processes of social and territorial differentiation (Stolz 2001: 84). The first process basically refers to the creation of a professional political class at regional level. Professionalization, in the classical Weberian meaning, implies that political positions are filled by people for whom politics represents their permanent, generally exclusive, source of

income. At the individual level, a professional politician is someone devoting most or all of his/her working time to political activity. At institutional level, professionalization implies a permanent service, considerable staff resources, and sufficient remuneration to allow members to dissociate themselves from their previous jobs (Squire 1992, 2007; Stolz 2009: 5). For example, most national parliaments in modern states are highly professionalized institutions of a permanent nature, endowed with the necessary staff and financial resources to conduct their activities, and whose members are professional politicians.

When politics becomes the sole (or principal) professional activity and source of income for a considerable number of people, then this group of people starts to share common interests and display a considerable degree of cohesiveness in their behavior, at least when it comes to protecting the privileges deriving from their professional status. In modern states, we are accustomed to thinking of the professionalization of politics as a consolidated (and perhaps inevitable) fact at national level. From our perspective, however, the question is whether this happens at regional level as well. Do regional politicians enjoy a distinct professional status within their respective societies? How widespread, and how stable, is that position? If sub-national institutions have a high number of paid, long-term political positions, and if the turnover in those positions is relatively low (i.e. the probability of incumbents being re-elected is predictable and relatively high), then we can speak of a professional political class at regional level. On the contrary, a limited number of paid positions, the existence of formal or informal limits to long political careers, and frequent lateral accesses to the most relevant offices, are all signs of a non-professional political environment.

The second element, that of territorial differentiation, refers to the existence of a regional political class that is distinct from the national one. Here the basic question is about the attractiveness of a regional political position vis-à-vis a national one. Is a regional office always perceived as a mere stepping stone toward a national position? If this is the case, then we cannot identify a *regional* political class as such. In this case, regional politicians, regardless of their level of professionalization, would simply be aspiring national politicians, that is to say, part of the national political class. On the contrary, if a considerable number of politicians consider regional office to be valuable in itself, then a distinct regional political arena may be observed. By intersecting these two dimensions, Stolz (2001: 86) depicts a typology of regional politicians with four possible categories. A *regional political class* as such is only present in the situation when political offices are mainly held by professional politicians, *and* regional institutions can represent the focal point of a political career.

Alternatively, we can have *regional citizen politicians*, in case of "amateurs" with a territorial focus at sub-national level, *nationally oriented citizen politicians* in case of non-professional politicians with an ambition to climb up at national level, or the *regional part of a national political class* in case of professional politicians aiming to continue their careers at national level.

So far, we have presented a static picture, based on the different characteristics of several ideal types of politician at the regional level. In order to get a better understanding of the multi-level structure of political careers, we have to broaden our perspective and take into account the national arena, and the links between the two arenas, as well. Is there any movement between the two? How frequent is such movement? What direction do such movements take? We examine these questions in the next section.

Varieties of Multi-level Career Paths

Three ideal patterns of political careers can be identified (Borchert 2011: 131–133), based on the degree of movement, and on the extent to which a hierarchy of offices is perceived to exist. A *unidirectional* career path is characterized by the possibility of moving between levels, and by a clear hierarchy of offices. If political positions at the national level are unanimously considered to be the most attractive, then the vast majority of movement between levels will be from the bottom-up, that is, from local to regional to national arenas. Of course, not all politicians are actually able to move from one arena to the other, as this is something that depends on the availability of offices at the most sought-after level. What is important here is that (1) the vast majority of politicians aspire to reach the national level, and perceive the regional level as a springboard in that direction; (2) those who are able to further their careers, are likely to do so in an upward direction. A unidirectional career pattern is also possible, at least in theory, in the reverse direction, with the sub-national level generally perceived to be the most attractive position, even though there is no empirical evidence of such career patterns. The bottom-up unidirectional pattern is often considered to be the most common one in the United States; indeed, in this country "it seems self-evident that as the territorial jurisdiction of the officeholder increases, the sphere of influence increases also. (⋯) *Political activists seek to increase their territorial jurisdiction*. That is, they typically seek to rise from local government to state government and ultimately to national government" (Francis and Kenny 2000: 2–3, emphasis in the original).

A second ideal type of career pattern is the *alternative* one. Here there is no clear hierarchy of sub-national and national arenas, and the amount of movement between the two levels is low. Different types of politician are involved in each arena, with distinct backgrounds and aspirations: some of them invest in a regional-level career, others in a national-level career, with limited connections between the two groups. Canada has been frequently indicated as the most typical example of the alternative career pattern, although recent evidence has shown increased movement between the two levels (Moncrief 1994; Docherty 2011).

Finally, in an *integrated* career pattern, there is still no clear hierarchy of levels, although movement from one level to the other is frequent. Political actors can, and do, decide to run for office at one level or the other depending on the contingent situation, whereby the costs and benefits associated with each level are duly calculated. From the politician's point of view, integrated patterns provide the most complex environment: an open competition at multiple levels means that many different opportunities exist, but also many risks, as entry barriers are relatively low at each level, turnover is high, and there is no one single, consolidated path to follow. An example of the integrated career pattern can be found in Brazil (Samuels 2000; Santos and Pegurier 2011), where the combined effect of a volatile multiparty system and open-list proportional representation contributes toward creating a system where "there is a great number of available professional positions in the political system; an established career pattern and multi-level hierarchies of attractiveness; a high volatility with a high risk of involuntary turnover" (ibid.: 165). At the same time, the State's federal arrangements provide various arenas in which politicians can operate, even simultaneously, in order to reduce the risk of being left out of the game altogether. In this kind of setting, a position at regional level can (and indeed does) serve either as a springboard for a national career or as a home base after an unsuccessful attempt to break into the upper arena.

Until now we have focused on different levels of government and the movement (or lack thereof) between them. However, political careers and career paths also develop through different types of position: by means of legislative and executive offices, first and foremost, but also through political parties, the bureaucracy, and interest groups. Although most studies of sub-national elites and multi-level career paths tend to focus exclusively on legislative assemblies (with a few recent exceptions: see Botella et al. 2010; Rodríguez Teruel 2011), the degree and direction of movement between levels of government depend to some extent also on the availability, accessibility, and appeal (Borchert 2011) of the different offices. Limiting our focus to the

sphere of political institutions *stricto sensu*, that is, cabinets and parliaments, we discover a first important difference between parliamentary and presidential political systems. While in parliamentary systems it is normal to assume that executive positions are more attractive than legislative positions (the combination of both being even more appealing), in presidential systems one has to make a distinction between the presidency and other executive offices. The presidency is regarded as *the* big prize, although being a monocratic office its availability is by definition very narrow. Ministerial positions, on the contrary, are often considered less stable, less decisive, and thus less attractive than legislative offices. Other institutional characteristics, such as the existence of term limits for legislative mandates, can substantially impact the balance of relative accessibility and attractiveness between offices in cabinets and those in parliaments/congresses. Thus, important variations can also be identified among countries with similar institutional formats. German Länder have been found to offer more interesting legislative careers than most Canadian provinces or Spanish autonomous communities (Borchert and Stolz 2011: 275). Similarly, political careers in Brazil are more executive-oriented than in the United States, where a ministerial position is normally valued less than a legislative seat, both at federal and at state levels.

From Theoretical Models to Empirical Research

Moving now from the theoretical level to the empirical one, different approaches to the study of sub-national political elites can be identified, depending on the main purpose of the research which in turn determines the most appropriate unit of analysis (Hibbing 1999). One research question concerns individual ambitions and opportunities, and that is: what leads certain people to undertake a political career? What are the typical backgrounds of politicians? And so, what is it that determines the "survival" of politicians within the political system, and their ability to attain the highest offices? These are relevant questions regardless of the level of government, and have frequently been addressed with reference to the national arena (e.g. Schlesinger 1966; Hibbing 1991; Norris 1997). With a specific reference to regional politics and to the political careers of multi-level polities, the main research focus here is on the vertical transitions between different levels of government (Fiers 2001; Dodeigne 2014). This kind of research question involves the longitudinal observation of individual career paths.

A second stream of empirical research has looked at legislative assemblies. Here, the usual question has been about the degree of institutionalization of

these bodies (Polsby 1968), thus referring to the boundedness (in the most institutionalized organizations it is relatively difficult to become a member of the institution; leaders are selected from the more experienced members of the institution), the internal complexity (internal roles and functions are separated and attributed on the basis of certain explicit rules), and the stability of formal and informal rules governing the behavior of members (impersonal codes of behavior are more frequent than personal and arbitrary rules). In this sense, the study of legislative careers becomes crucial. For instance, the social background of members, members' turnover, and the length of service within the assembly before assuming a leading role, can all be used as indicators of institutionalization. While these kinds of question can be (and have been) addressed also with regard to state legislative assemblies, they seem to be particularly important at regional level where the degree of institutionalization is generally lower, and where variations, even among regions within the same country, can be considerable.

Thirdly, empirical research may focus on the systemic relations between institutions located at different levels of government. As one can easily understand, this perspective is particularly important when addressing questions regarding the prevalent patterns of careers, as discussed above. Stolz (2003) has proposed two complementary measures of the "multilevelness" of careers. The *centripetal ratio* expresses the degree to which the national legislative assembly appeals to regional members of parliament (MPs). Operationally, this is given by the percentage of national MPs with previous experience as regional representatives. On the contrary, the *centrifugal ratio* expresses the attractiveness of sub-national institutions to national MPs, that is, the percentage of regional MPs who previously held a position in the national assembly. The combination of these two measures provides a useful operationalization of the above-mentioned patterns of multi-level career. The unidirectional model is one where the centripetal ratio is high and the centrifugal ratio is low (or, at least in theory, where the centripetal ratio is low and the centrifugal ratio is high, if the main direction of career paths is from the top-down). The alternative model presents low centrifugal and centripetal ratios, that is, rare movements from one level to the other. Finally, the integrated model of careers is characterized by high ratios in both directions.

Searching for Explanations

The existence of different patterns of multi-level careers opens the way for a further research question dealing with the explanations of such diversity. Several independent variables have been indicated as plausible incentives to pursue one type of career or the other, as they supposedly make one level of government more attractive than the other, or make movements between the two more or less risky, from the politicians' point of view. In the first place, it has been hypothesized that the form of government plays an important role in shaping political careers. As previously mentioned, parliamentary systems are thought to be a favorable environment for integrated careers, whereas presidential systems tend to favor upwards, unidirectional careers. As a consequence, in a parliamentary system a national MP may see a regional executive position as promotion, something that is less likely to happen in a presidential system; on the other hand, a legislator at sub-national level in a presidential system normally aims to advance to the national legislative assembly, as the regional executive position is either unattractive (the ordinary ministerial position) or not easily accessible (the monocratic gubernatorial office). Such clear-cut expectations have not been confirmed in the few comparative empirical analyses available (Borchert and Stolz 2011). For instance, there seem to be more differences than similarities between two presidential systems such as the US (the ideal-typical case of unidirectional careers) and Brazil (where integrated careers prevail). Similarly, several differences have been discovered when comparing the trajectories of regional presidents in parliamentary systems (Botella et al. 2010).

The organizational structure of parties, together with the territorial format of party systems, appear to be further major factors shaping political careers, as a core function of parties is precisely that of recruiting candidates for representative, and possibly governmental, offices (Detterbeck 2011). In multi-level political systems, parties are supposed to play a decisive role in linking regional and federal institutions, and in coordinating their policy-making processes (Deschouwer 2006; Thorlakson 2013). Parties with strong territorial roots and a vertically integrated organization should facilitate the movement of political personnel between regional and national levels of government (unidirectional and integrated careers). On the contrary, stratarchical parties (that is, organizations where the sub-national levels enjoy a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the center), or parties without a permanent territorial organization, should foster alternative careers. However, a quick look at a number of crucial cases reveals a less clear picture. The stratarchical organization of Canadian parties

(Carty 2004) is associated with a traditionally clear separation of careers at provincial and federal levels. The strong vertical integration of German parties, together with the peculiarities of the "cooperative" model of federalism, is sometimes mentioned as a factor accounting for the predominantly unidirectional nature of political careers in that country. However, the US case clearly goes against such theoretical expectations: parties with weak and unstable vertical links have not undermined the unidirectional careers characterizing that particular political system.

The presence of deep-rooted regional identities, as a result of an incomplete nation building, could be another factor affecting political careers within a state. Where the center-periphery cleavage is exploited by strong regionalist parties, a special focus on regional level politics should be expected, whereas uniform party systems should increase the importance of national positions. In the former case, centripetal ratios ought to be low, and thus alternative, or even unidirectional top-down, careers should be frequent. Yet, once again, this expectation is met in some cases, but not in others. In Quebec, for instance, the presence of a strong separatist movement is not reflected in a high centrifugal ratio (i.e. national MPs choosing to pursue a regional career), and the same can be seen in Bavaria (Stolz 2003: 233). On the contrary, Catalan regionalist parties, and particularly *Convergència i Unió*, display an unusual degree of career integration, while the first ten years of the autonomous Scottish Parliament have witnessed a tendency toward an alternative career pattern (Stolz 2009: 131).

Finally, the degree of professionalization of legislative institutions at regional level should substantially encourage strong centrifugal movements and/or low centripetal movements, for the obvious reason that an ambitious politician would prefer to be part of a professional institution than of a non-professional one. In this case expectations seem to be confirmed (Stolz 2003: 244), at least when comparing a country with highly professional regional institutions (Germany, with low centripetal ratios) with a country with less professional sub-state institutions (Switzerland, with high centripetal ratios). Yet, even with regard to the most obvious hypothesis, we need to be cautious given the lack of systematic data on the degree of professionalization of legislative assemblies, and the lack of large-scale cross-country comparative studies.

Reversing the Causal Link: Do Career Trajectories Affect Legislative Attitudes and Behavior?

The territorial organization of power within a state, as we have seen, can be an important factor in shaping the nature of the opportunities available to ambitious politicians. The opposite relationship can be, and in fact has been, hypothesized as well. Political careers have also been seen as an independent variable, influencing the attitudes and behavior of political representatives. In particular, the redefinition of power relations between the center and the periphery of the state (e.g. the devolution of power to certain regions, the allocation of resources to specific areas or to a sub-national territorial unit, constitutional reforms in a federal direction) is thought to be potentially affected also by the previous experience of legislators. A political background including moves from one territorial level to another, the argument goes, could determine a different relationship between the individual representative and his/her multiple principals (the electoral constituency or the party; and within the party, the national or local leadership, the party in public office or the party in central office). It could also determine a different focus of representation, oriented toward the nation at large, specific functional constituencies, or the geographical electoral constituency.

The first research question, regarding legislators' principals, has been tackled recently with specific reference to national MPs with a background as local representatives. The main idea is that having served as a representative at local level (in municipal councils, or as mayor, or as provincial representative, depending on the political system) helps establish strong ties with the local community. These ties can be later utilized as a political resource, both to access national political positions and, as a national politician, to reduce dependence on one's party. Thus, strong local ties have been shown to raise the probability of a national MP voting against his/her own party, and to lower the probability of party leadership to sanction deviant behaviors, even in contexts where party discipline is normally high, such as parliamentary democracies (Tavits 2009).

As far as the focus of representation is concerned, the classical analytical distinction is between a national and a local style of representation (Pitkin 1967). The "dilemma" lies in the fact that a legislative body is normally intended to represent the national interest as a whole, but is made up of individuals elected from specific geographical areas and tied to their original constituencies. To what extent is it legitimate for MPs to prioritize local interests? Are national and local interests to be thought of as necessarily

opposed? Or can we perceive the national interest to be a sum of local ones, thus resolving the dilemma by claiming that each locality holds an equal "share" of national interests? This debate has been mainly developed, in empirical terms, in connection with the concept of constituency service,[1] with a focus on the US Congress (Fenno 1978) or in comparative perspective (Cain et al. 1987; André et al. 2014). More crucially for the topic covered here, also career trajectories can be thought as determinants of different attitudes toward representation. The idea is that a representative brings his/her previous experience into the institution he or she is sitting in, and this contributes to shape his/her views, preferences, and behaviors. These expectations, as reasonable as they might appear, have not yet found an empirical confirmation. In an extensive comparison of seven multi-level European states, Pilet et al. (2014) have analysed national and regional MPs' views on the extent of decentralization and their perception of the importance of the region as a focus of representation. Their findings unequivocally show that the type of career (whether single- or multi-level) does not affect representatives' attitudes. The level of government where an MP is currently sitting is a much more relevant explanation of his/her views on these issues.

Conclusion

While the specificities of political elites and political careers in federal states have been the subject of analysis for decades, a new wave of studies has recently focused on the question of sub-national elites and multi-level careers. The processes of devolution of powers to regions taking place in many unitary states, have in fact contributed to the establishment and development of new arenas for professional politics, and new opportunities for ambitious politicians.

In the present study, I have explored the formation of sub-national political elites and alternative patterns of political careers in multi-level institutional settings. Political science studies of these subjects have adopted two opposite perspectives: the shape of territorial institutions can be thought of as an independent variable affecting the features of the sub-national political elite, and the main direction taken by political careers, between national and regional levels of government (and within those levels). In this sense, some authors have looked at the characteristics of diverse regionalization processes in order to explain variations in career patterns. However, a number of recent studies have argued that the causal arrow might point also in the opposite direction: career paths and/or background experiences contribute toward

shaping the way politicians think of their own representative roles and the way they act when in office. Thus, more specifically, the success of territorial reforms of the state (also) depends on the type of representatives sitting in the corresponding national and regional governmental assemblies. The empirical testing of these propositions has generally been limited to single-country studies. Comparative studies, from which we could gain a much solider understanding of the causal links between careers patterns and institutional change, are still few and far between. Such studies are obviously more difficult and expansive, and even more so when it comes to observing representatives' attitudes, as these can only be investigated by means of personal interviews. Furthermore, the few available comparative works (Borchert and Stolz 2011; Pilet et al. 2014) aiming to test causal connections between regional institutions and sub-national elites, have *questioned* the existence of such links rather than confirming them. At this stage, political science has provided a reasonably clear description of multi-level careers. However, satisfactory explanations of different career patterns, and an understanding of the consequences they may have on political systems, still appear to be some way off.

Note

1. By constituency service, we mean the commitment of MPs toward promoting and defending the interests of their geographical constituency or of individual constituents (André et al. 2014: 166). Constituency-oriented actions include, for instance, meeting with constituents on private or public occasions, holding surgeries, publicizing the MP's success in attracting business to, and obtaining government grants for, the local area (ibid.: 174).

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39

Elites or Leadership? Opposite or Complementary Paradigms?

Jean Blondel

Since, in the previous entries of this volume, political life has been characterized in terms of elite theory, it seems only natural to examine, at the end of the study, how another important concept, "political leadership," relates to elite theory. As is well known, much of the literature on politics in many parts of the world views political leadership as being, at least currently, a key explanatory variable (McGregor Burns 1978; Blondel 1987; Daloz 2003; Goethals and Sorenson 2006; Helms 2012; Hart and Rhodes 2012; Foley 2013; Femia et al. 2015). There are good reasons therefore why in a handbook in which elite theory is the dominant interpretative perspective, political leadership cannot go unaccounted for.

The fact that the title given to the present chapter ends with a question mark suggests that the two approaches may differ markedly; they may even differ so much that the answer to the question of their link could be that there is no link between an approach based on elites and an approach based on political leadership: what is being examined under the rubric of "elite analysis" would then be on a wholly different plane from what is being considered and consequently analyzed under the rubric of "political leadership." If so, there may be no hope of coming to a "joint conclusion" of the problem let alone to discover a framework able to bring both approaches together.

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Two Different Meanings of the Possible Relationship Between Elite and Leadership

Before beginning to elucidate the nature of the general problem posed by the relationship between the theory of political elites and the theory of political leadership, we have to note that the move from a "political elite analysis" approach to a "political leadership analysis" approach can have two distinct meanings, one being much stronger than the other. On the one hand, the weaker meaning amounts to determining merely whether, as a matter of fact, what leaders come to say and perhaps even to do coincides, at least in broad terms, with what had been pronounced by the elite or in the name of the elite: no inference is drawn as to whether what happens at the leadership level can be viewed as resulting from what has been decided at the elite level. The second and stronger meaning, on the other hand, suggests that there is indeed a link between the two developments: in this second meaning, the elite would be the determining factor; then, not just subsequently but as a result, leaders would come to act according to what the elite had pronounced. The first type of meaning identifies merely a potential coincidence; the second type of meaning suggests that the standpoints of the elite are in some general fashion the "*cause*" of what the leadership subsequently does.

Admittedly, in practice, the situation is likely to be appreciably more complex or fuzzy as the concrete situation will tend to be, in a very large number of cases, intermediate. It will often be very difficult to determine the precise point in time at which particular standpoints have emerged and subsequently come to resemble each other: there may have been, for instance, complex series of moves by the political elite and/or by the political leadership. It is therefore unrealistic to hope to provide, at any rate in the context of a contribution such as this, empirical findings based on particular observations and then to try and show as a result whether the "stronger" of the two meanings, namely the one which links directly the subsequent standpoints of the leadership to preceding standpoints within the elite, is or is not really valid.

It is nonetheless worth noting the implications of both the "stronger" and the "weaker" of the two types of relationships between elite pronouncements and leaders' actions. The "stronger" meaning unquestionably implies that there is a kind of "parliamentary government" relationship between elite and leadership: it may well be that such a relationship is in the minds of the more committed members of the elite, at any rate, with respect to those matters in which members of the elite are in unanimous or near-unanimous agreement.

On the other hand, leaders may be unlikely to adopt such a standpoint, except with respect to particular types of elites and in particular institutional contexts: the relationship between (parliamentary) elites and leadership might thus happen to be close in those countries in which the parliamentary system of government is in force, not just in theory but in practice. In any case, such a situation has to be viewed as special. We shall indeed have to return to the question whether the "parliamentary" or "other" character of the political system, especially presidential, may have an impact on the nature of the relationship between the notion of "elites" and the notion of "leadership."

What needs to be examined, on the other hand, is what the more "normal" type of relationship between elites and political leadership is likely to be. To do so, three successive steps must be taken. We have first to remind ourselves of the ideological framework within which the notion of an elite emerged in the nineteenth century and subsequently gained ground. We need then, second, to consider the way in which the concept of "political leadership" came to acquire a rather special character in the twentieth century, largely on the basis of Max Weber's writings (Weber 1922), to an extent in distinction to or at least alongside the notion of elite. As a result, we will have to examine, third, how it occurred that modern political leadership acquired a degree of independence as a result of the peculiar and often forceful character which political leadership came to display. These matters will be the object of the first three sections of this contribution. Finally, the fourth section will draw what seem to be practical consequences for what the best relationship should be between an elite approach and a political leadership approach in order to account for what does actually take place in political life.

The Elitist Perspective and Its "Pessimistic" Approach to the Structure of Society

The views put forward by those who elaborated the notion of elitism from the middle of the nineteenth century appear to have been fundamentally pessimistic about the character of the society under which they lived. There seems to be an underlying suggestion that what was found to occur was not just different from but less satisfactory than what had been expected to take place. There were indeed obvious reasons to support pessimistic views, given the characteristics displayed by the European world from the late eighteenth century onward. It is surely no exaggeration to state that the real European world of the late eighteenth and of much of the nineteenth century did not

resemble at all the one which Locke, Montesquieu, or Rousseau would have looked forward to see emerging.

To begin with, the French Revolution resulted in a series of disasters, only to be followed by the domination of Napoleon for a decade and a half and a consequential military devastation of the European continent. Things may have come to be a little better afterward, but in the middle of the century, France was again dominated for almost two decades by the nephew of the early Napoleon. Britain did succeed in avoiding a direct impact of these developments and was able to display substantial progress in the direction of legally allowing a greater proportion of the population to participate at elections; by then, however, the events which had taken place in France both in the early part and in the middle of the century showed that the universal suffrage formula could be manipulated to such an extent that it would result in support being given to a dictatorial regime. This outcome was indeed a kind of preamble to what was to take place on a much larger and more hypocritical scale in the communist states which flourished throughout most of the twentieth century and in particular in most of the second half of that century.

Thus, not only did many developments which occurred throughout the nineteenth century seem amply to account for and to justify the pessimistic approach of those who believed that societies (and, in particular, at least at first, European societies) should move toward an honest extension of popular participation: what seemed to reinforce this pessimistic line was that there was little evidence, to say the least, in favor of arguing that the "people" would "naturally" and automatically sustain the kind of political arrangements which had been put forward by liberal theorists in the eighteenth century. There might indeed be a case for coming to the contrary conclusion: as the people could be said to be easily at least "taken in" by dictators, there was perhaps more of a chance to achieve truly positive results if the aim was not "democratization" in the strict sense of the word; on the contrary, more freedom and generally a better kind of society would be likely to be obtained if political participation and therefore political power were restricted to those who had benefitted enough from their education to press for a society which would be more liberal, more just and more humane.

Indeed and moreover, the economic changes which were taking place as a result of the "industrial revolution" were not providing much hope for political progress: not only were the conditions of workers far from displaying traces of improvement in the factories in which these workers were employed in greater and greater numbers in Western Europe under the aegis of capitalism, but the ones who benefitted financially from that capitalism, and they were a

substantial number, were in the process of forming a new "bourgeois class" which was even less disposed to be sympathetic to the plight of those whom they employed than the old aristocracy had been to their social subordinates before industrialization became the order of the day.

It was necessary to recall these characteristics of "modern" capitalism in the early and middle nineteenth century in substantial parts of Western Europe to account for the fact that the prevailing feelings among at least some, and probably many, of those who were to support and develop the idea of an "elite" analysis were far from being optimistic about the present or hopeful about a genuine "democratic" future. There was little to be said for imagining that there would come to be changes which might eventually result in different and more satisfactory subsequent practices.

Thus, the fact that Gaetano Mosca published his first book on the *classe politica* (Mosca 1883) is surely not accidental: the thesis on which such a work was based could seem to be markedly more realistic than had been Karl Marx's attempt in 1848 to bring about the Communist Revolution. The whole of the standpoint of the latter author (Marx and Engels 1848) had been undermined by the way in which the supporters of such a revolution were dealt with by the conservatively inclined government of the Second French Republic, a result soon to be made even worse by the Second Napoleonic dictatorship which followed in 1851.

Thus, a "realistic" approach to what was taking place in the middle of the nineteenth century in parts of Western Europe seemed naturally leading to an elitist political analysis. Admittedly, the end of the nineteenth century coincided with a morally more acceptable opening up of Western European societies as well as with greater respect being shown for legal forms and procedures of what gradually came to be referred to as those of liberal democracies. Yet the impact of Mosca's work as well as of some of the studies of Vilfredo Pareto (Pareto 1916) and of the analysis of parties provided by Roberto Michels (1911) seemed at least amply to justify the maintenance of the basic standpoint according to which only a relatively small elite could truly be trusted to bring about genuine political and social progress. One could not rely on the "masses," not just in the middle of the nineteenth century but later on and into the twentieth century: what was then to occur, to begin with in very backward Russia but a little later in Italy, Germany, and other Central European countries as well, justified the same and perhaps an even worse pessimistic approach about what could be expected to happen if "the people ruled."

This type of standpoint became gradually more difficult to sustain in the course of the twentieth century, however. The success of "liberal democratic regimes" not only in the few countries that had escaped totalitarian experiences but also where non-democratic regimes had collapsed stimulated an encounter between elitism and democratic theory. Authors such as Schumpeter and Sartori developed an interpretation of this regime which recognized both the crucial role of elites and that of the populace (Schumpeter 1942; Sartori 1987)

But the question of the relationship between elites and democracy was not closed, and important figures of the elitist school have continued to debate on the line which was to be taken, so to speak, about democracy. It is perfectly reasonable to point out that there is, in the literature but also in ordinary political exchanges, a tendency to describe too easily as democratic those countries and those practices within countries which are perhaps at best liberal or at most partly moving "in the direction of democracy." That matter markedly affected the writings of one scholar who has been central to the strength of the whole elitist movement in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, John Higley (Field and Higley 1980; Higley and Burton 2006). The standpoints held by that scholar did in reality vary appreciably on the issue of democracy from one volume to another in the many contributions he wrote on the character and nature of elitism. The most extreme position he adopted in this respect was to put forward the view, which will be referred to again later, that there were "elite illusions about democracy": this was to be the title he gave to the chapter he wrote in the volume he edited with Heinrich Best (Higley 2010).

The series of problems which elite theory experienced in relation to political life in the early part of the twentieth century and later does plainly seem to show that at the root of the basic difficulty lies the fact that despite decisions made occasionally to refer to leaders, elite theory has clearly been unable to come seriously to grips with a key point, namely the part played by political leadership. This characteristic was indeed to be the one feature which was to transform, for good or for ill, much of what political life was to be from the late twentieth century, not just in Europe, which had been hitherto the center of the discourse on "modern" politics together with North America but across the whole world.

Optimism, and Not Pessimism, as the Basic Feature of Political Life: Max Weber and the Discovery of "Charismatic" Political Leadership

Classical elite theorists had been wrong to assume (for want of any obvious evidence that the contrary was a realistic alternative, admittedly) that "pessimism" about what politics had become at the beginning of the nineteenth century was in the nature of the subject of politics or at least about what that subject had become. Given the manner in which life came to take shape after the end of "traditional rule," it was surely sensible to assume that pessimism about politics was to be expected and in a sense was the only realistic reaction to what political life was becoming and was even likely to be in the foreseeable future.

The mistake of the elitist approach in this respect was thus not to have realized that the characteristics of politics in Western Europe from the end of the eighteenth century and through a large part of the nineteenth century were essentially a specific response to the upheavals which Western European societies were experiencing at the time. These did turn out to be peculiar to the period: as a matter of fact, the extent of the upheavals may have had something to do with the abruptness with which change was occurring in societies which had previously operated for too long on the basis of a traditional socio-political framework. Indeed, on the contrary, although Britain and Sweden were experiencing some difficulties as a result of more modest amounts of change which were taking place in these countries, these changes were almost minuscule by comparison to those which France and a number of other countries of the West of the continent were experiencing, in fact partly as a result of the exaggerated ambitions of French rulers. If the founders of elite theory had paid more attention to what was occurring in Britain and Sweden, their pessimism might have been moderated.

In any case, for whatever reason, supporters of the elite theory by the middle of the nineteenth century were clearly unwilling or unable to anticipate that there might be some kind of "rebound" in political life, that a kind of limited optimism had begun to prevail in some countries and that the way in which politics might be conducted could therefore generally be interpreted more optimistically. This is why, indeed understandably, given the way politics had come to be exercised in many countries across the European continent, supporters of elite theory did not realize that one of the key thinkers about the nature of society, Max Weber, was to write, approximately thirty years after Mosca published *his first book*, a major work in which the emphasis was placed

on a new direction toward which political life was moving (Weber 1922). That new direction was that of political leadership, an approach which had not been considered at all until that time.

Max Weber's approach was different from that of elitism as that author was concerned, not with the structural arrangements which emerged in a society as a result of the way various elements of that society were found to relate to each other but with the broad way in which decisions, the very large decisions and therefore the key *political* decisions, tended to be taken: according to Weber, these decisions were taken by those who were entitled to exercise the "right" to take them. This is why, instead of focusing on what was wrong with the new states which emerged from the many political revolutions which took place on the continent and from the industrial revolution which was gradually extending to much of Western Europe, Weber focused on the overall socio-political characteristics enabling political decision-makers to take their decisions in the context of three types of political arrangements which he saw as following each other.

First, in traditional societies, decisions were taken by those who could be regarded as having by tradition the legitimate right to rule these societies: monarchs (and their advisers) were those who embodied that right. Second, in societies in which the "rule of law" prevailed, those who had the right to take decisions were those who had the "competence" to take decisions on the basis of that rule of law. The third type of society, the one under which societies were beginning to live in the twentieth century, as Weber was seeing it, was characterized by the fact that some politicians, those who can be referred to as "leaders," enjoyed a "charismatic" form of power on the basis of which they had the right to rule. Thus, decision-making processes and the sources of legitimate authority were the manner in which Max Weber categorized the three types of polities which he previously identified. Leaders were drawn from socially traditional groups in the first type of societies; they were drawn from among those who had the legal right and the capacity to decide, in the second type of societies; they acted on the basis of the "charisma" which leaders came to possess in the third type of societies (Bendix 1960).

The approach which Max Weber adopted amounted to a profound transformation (the word is not too strong) in the way of understanding the basis on which successful politicians were to relate to citizens. As is well known, charismatic leadership has a fundamentally religious connotation: Weber was thus attributing leaders a position and consequently a strength, which these had not had in the other types of societies. This was because, in his view, leaders were then fully embodying the key characteristic on which the political system was based in these societies, although Weber himself was somewhat

ambiguous as to whether he was entitled to use charisma to refer to a mode of decision-making which was not linked to a religious activity.

There was a key difference between leaders endowed with charismatic authority and both traditional rulers and those who ruled under legal-rational authority: leaders who ruled on the basis of their charismatic authority did so by virtue of the very characteristics of these leaders: the whole process was taking place entirely at the level of the personality of the leader. It therefore followed that charismatic rule was a fundamentally optimistic model about the effect which that charismatic rule would have on the way the society was to be run. Specifically, the question whether leaders did or did not apply the rules became meaningless since the leaders were the ones who had the "authority" to define the rules. Indeed, it also followed that the people knew that this was the case.

Such was the position which Weber put forward about the societies in which rulers were endowed with charismatic authority. That authority of leaders was said by Weber to be based on "devotion to the specific sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him" (Weber 1968, pp. 1, 213, as quoted by Wilner 1984, p. 4). Such a view manifestly constitutes a radically different approach and provides a radically different basis to the problem of "political rule." The plane of the discussion is so different from the one on which elite theory did operate and continued to operate that it is also impossible not to view that approach as being fundamentally diverse from the one on which elite theory had been based from the start.

The idea of charismatic leadership was not only optimistic because of the entirely different nature of the source from the one on which leadership had been put forward so far, but it was also entirely "optimistic" about the outcome which was to follow. There was no restriction to the validity of the decisions to be taken by the leader, indeed quite the contrary. It could be claimed that such a theory was likely to lead not just to authoritarian but to totalitarian rule, admittedly; but in view of the "religious" origin of the concept, it could be also claimed (perhaps to an extent disingenuously) that leaders holding their power in this way were endowed with a religious-based form of support which would have been provided to them by the people (since the people did fully believe in them). Leaders simply could not be guilty of undertaking the kind of actions and even more be based on the kind of motivations which characterized authoritarian, let alone totalitarian, rulers.

Admittedly, supporters of elite theory may have found it rather naïve to suggest that leaders could be endowed of immense, perhaps total, power without needing to be controlled or at least being supervised by anyone. Yet,

although charismatic leaders were indeed benefitting, so to speak, from such an immense authority, moves have nonetheless taken place in the direction of a more prominent role of leadership in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: the expression "presidentialization of politics" (Poguntke and Webb 2005) at least partly suggests such a line, although that expression had not been coined when Max Weber wrote on the subject of charismatic leadership. Moreover, if this analogy appears to be somewhat exaggerated, it is surely remarkable to note that Weber seemed almost to have anticipated some of the developments related to "presidentialization" from the second half of the twentieth century in particular. It is interesting to highlight the extent to which the presidential system, in its various forms, became prevalent at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Blondel 2015).

Yet, as far as Max Weber was concerned, the evidence for this authority of charismatic leaders was not based on what was occurring under some presidents. As a matter of fact, the evidence which accounts more realistically for what was the author's approach at the time has to do with psychological characteristics attached to the holders of charismatic leadership. One should not forget, however, that there had already been also a partial institutional move toward a form of less-controlled chief executive, for the American constitution of 1789 had invented what could be regarded as being a form of institutionalized charismatic authority with respect to the position of the chief executive. Moreover, while it might be pointed out that many American presidents were far from being charismatic rulers, the characteristics of Latin American presidents were much less clear; in general, things did begin to change after World War II in the context of other presidencies. In this respect, it is therefore as if Weber had anticipated what was going to take place as a result of the decolonization process in many parts of the world.

It is indeed questionable as to whether there would be so much positive interest in charismatic authority, had it not been for the fact that long after Weber defined it and indeed also long after the dictators who had ruled European countries died and/or had had to leave power, the "presidentialization of politics" had not gradually come to be recognized as a major development. This development had occurred, not so much in the context of European parliamentary systems, although it has become fashionable to make such a suggestion in the context of these systems (Poguntke and Webb 2005), indeed not even in the French case after De Gaulle left the presidential position which he had successfully introduced. Where the tendency toward what might be described as assumed rather than proved charismatic authority was to spread widely was in parts of the Third World and in particular in new

countries in which there was typically a lack of legitimacy of the nation on which the authority of leaders could be based.

That state of affairs led to or at least resulted in the presidents of the countries concerned, typically ex-colonial countries, being able to act on the basis of a supposed or real charismatic rule. Such a development almost certainly could not have been anticipated by Max Weber in the early 1920s, yet it has in practice had a marked effect as it has suggested that the German sociologist had indeed displayed a wholly unexpected anticipation of how much of the world would be ruled half a century after his death; this naturally had the effect of rendering many aspects of the approach of elite theorists open to serious questioning, as has indeed been the case from the late twentieth century.

The Emergence of a Difficult Relationship Between Elite Theory and Political Leadership Theory, Charismatic Political Leadership in Particular

Charismatic political theory, as elaborated by Max Weber, came indeed to be regarded as being widely applicable among many of the numerous "new" countries which became independent in the twentieth century, especially in Africa (Jackson and Rosberg 1982): it was often assumed, at any rate in the early years after independence, that the charismatic leaders and the people whom they ruled were in agreement about the direction of the actions which these leaders were following; as a matter of fact, if such a view was not upheld, the leaders would have ceased by definition to be regarded as being charismatic. Yet it could be argued, and it came indeed increasingly to be argued, that charismatic political leadership was occurring so widely that empirical tests would be needed to assess whether the claims which were made were realistic. Indeed, if such claims were not held to be warranted in specific situations, the nature of the political leadership which was being observed would cease to be regarded as charismatic and a different form of political leadership would then be found to prevail.

As a matter of fact, supporters of elite theory did not examine and systematically assess the part which elites did play in the context of those "new countries" in which charismatic political leadership had come to be regarded as widespread, in particular in Africa, especially south of the Sahara, where, indeed, charismatic political leadership was even regarded as being the norm. Such a form of leadership was indeed seemingly closely connected with the

presence of presidential government of these countries, admittedly on the basis of a form typically more skewed in favor of the chief executive than it had been in the United States context, especially with respect to the more limited part played by the legislature in these new countries (Jackson and Rosberg 1982; Hyden 2006).

However, although elite theorists did not examine systematically the part which elites were playing in new countries, one close empirical inquiry was undertaken with respect to a number of Latin American countries, where the presidential system had been adopted early in the nineteenth century, admittedly with repeated major difficulties (Lynch 1992): this was one part of the scope of a volume by Higley and Gunther (1992). That inquiry did indeed find that the developments which had occurred in the states from the two areas which had been covered were generally favorable to the democratic process. Since a key issue seems to be whether it was possible, within a context of elite theory, to adopt an optimistic position in terms of the possible extension of democratization beyond the West, it was concluded in the volume that the general answer could be positive, both for southern Europe and/or for Latin America.

To assess the extent to which democratization was held to take place, two empirical concepts were used, referred to respectively as "elite settlement" and "elite convergence," the former being more stringent than the latter in terms of the extent to which a "unity" of the elite was rapidly achieved in the country concerned: lack of unity within the elite was regarded by specialists of elite theory as one of the key problems which societies needed to overcome in the road to democratization. Short of such arrangements being reached, and in particular short of "elite settlements" being adopted, the probability was very high that there would therefore not be what was described in the 1992 book as "consolidated democracy."

The distinction between "consolidated" and "unconsolidated" democracy was viewed in the 1992 volume as crucial, a point which meant not only that such a distinction existed in the context of these countries but also that there was indeed a case for describing some of these countries as democracies. Thus, among the thirteen countries from the south of Europe and of Latin America investigated in this volume, three Latin American ones, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela, were described as having "experienced clear-cut settlements" (Higley and Gunther 1992, p. 325).

Meanwhile, in the introduction to the 1992 volume, a reference was even made to leaders in a number of occasions. There was indeed more: in the context of a description of what can occur in order to bring about "elite convergence," where elites had previously been disunited, the example of

France under De Gaulle is given as a specific case in which the disunion which had existed for so long among the elites of that country was stopped in large part as a result of an intervention by De Gaulle which led to "elite convergence" in 1962 (Higley and Gunther 1992, pp. 25–29). This is perhaps the first time that leadership is referred to, not just as a phenomenon characterizing a leader on his own but as a form of political behavior affecting the political process in general.

There seems therefore to have been, in the early 1990s, a tendency among elite theorists to consider positively the notion of "political leadership" and to entertain even the possibility of establishing a close relationship between the two approaches. The question which then arises is why, some years later, there was what can only be regarded as a reversal of this positive conclusion and even an apparent refusal to discuss the part which political leadership might play in the political process. The answer seems to be at the level of democratization, as at least some of the leading supporters of elite theory came then to question the validity of the claims widely made, among political scientists, that there was a marked increase in the number of democracies in the contemporary world.

These markedly more restrictive viewpoints were expressed in the volume entitled *Democratic Elitism: New Theoretical and Comparative Prospects* (Best and Higley 2010). If one judges by the reflections of Higley in this volume (Higley 2010, pp. 79–94), it seemed that some of the events which occurred between the two volumes may have had a significant part to play in the more restrictive position which was taken in the later volume. It may also be that the greater pessimism, to say the least, characterizing the 2010 volume was in part due to the fact that of the three Latin American countries which had been regarded in 1992 as having become "consolidated," the developments which occurred in at least one of them, Venezuela, were not what could have been expected to have been the result of a genuine "settlement." Meanwhile, the reactions made at the time to what was to occur in Argentina, Brazil and Chile manifestly turned out to be over pessimistic since the first two were referred to as "unconsolidated democracies" and since Chile was only regarded (admittedly by 1992) as "possibly consolidating."

Yet the fact that such conclusions were reached indicates both that supporters of elite theory were willing to examine closely in 1992 what occurred in the countries concerned and, on such an empirical basis, to conclude that if well-defined characteristics did obtain, a move toward "consolidated democracy" could take place; such a view did not seem to be shared any longer twenty years later by at least some of the elite theorists. The policies followed by the US President George W. Bush in Iraq may have been an important element in the change of attitude about the opportunity for democracy to become

consolidated. Higley states, "Like earlier ideologies, democracy is a device used by elites to justify and mobilize support for their rule or aspirations to rule; it is at base a political formula, as Mosca and Pareto recognized" (Higley 2010, p. 89) and the same author notes in the following page (p. 90), "Democracy has a tenacious hold on the thinking of Western political elites."

Such a standpoint clearly constitutes a more pessimistic standpoint which contrasts with what was suggested in the 1992 volume and which also suggests a marked difference between elite theory analysis and political leadership analysis: is such a "divorce" truly justifiable or should one attempt to bring the two approaches more closely together (again)?

Is the Idea of Building a Bridge Between Elite Theory and Support for Political Leadership Wholly Unrealistic?

It is at this point that the question arises as to whether one should attempt to link the conclusions drawn from elite theory analysis to those which can be drawn from political leadership analysis. There is unquestionably little attempt by the supporters of each of these two "camps" to mention the views of the supporters of the other "camp." The literature on political elites does not appear to have had any greater desire, after the 1992 volume at any rate, to examine what is being said about political leadership than the literature on political leadership appears to want to know what the other side tends to propose.

Yet, to begin with, the basic point which was made by each of the two approaches appears "objectively" incontrovertible and, at least currently, not to be the subject to a fundamental rebuttal. At the root of elite analysis, the basic point is that not all the members of a polity can be expected to have the resources or a genuine interest and, probably consequently, a reasonable influence on what goes on in political life; thus, it is recognized that a fundamental distinction has to be drawn between the mass of the population and that part of the population which elite theorists call "the elite group," namely those knowing more and being more involved in the political process of their country. Conversely, albeit perhaps not quite so outspokenly, everyone agrees, at any rate at least from the late twentieth century, that there is a phenomenon to be referred to as "political leadership"; indeed, this phenomenon includes cases of a very deeply felt character, so much so that they have come to be referred to as cases of charismatic political leadership. To this

extent at least, there is agreement on both sides about the relevance of the two concepts which have been the subject of this entry.

Where the disagreement occurs is on the value, positive or negative, as well as on the importance, large or small, to be attributed to the concepts in question by those who are interested, indeed who are in most cases highly committed to one or the other of the two approaches. It is difficult to avoid the impression, when one examines the literature relating to each of the two concepts, that there is perhaps an underlying tendency on the part of those who fully support one or the other of the two "approaches" not to consider at all the validity of the other approach.

It is not that those who believe in political leadership analysis do not accept that there are persons who are more involved and powerful in political life than others, but if one believes in political leadership, one is concerned primarily with the way in which political leadership expresses itself and in particular in the charismatic forms of that leadership: those who belong to that group thus tend not to pay much attention to the question as to whether there is an elite within the population. Conversely, and in the same manner, it is not that those who are more prone to determine who belongs and who does not belong to the elite do not easily recognize that there is a phenomenon called political leadership and indeed that a part of that phenomenon, charismatic political leadership, deserves careful examination. The active members of that group simply ignore the standpoints which are characteristic among those who are members of the other group.

Why this is so must be due, to a substantial extent at least, to the fact that in each "camp," so to speak, there is a marked emotional commitment to the viewpoint which is being held and that such a commitment appears to be strengthened by the characteristics of political systems. Why there should be such an emotional commitment is not immediately clear, given that, as was alluded to earlier, it is just commonplace to recognize that the interest and influence in political life are distributed unevenly and therefore that there will be a group of highly committed people to what goes on in the field and a much larger group of people who are not committed or at least are not committed to the same extent. The same type of remark, *mutatis mutandis*, can be made in relation to the notion of political leadership and in particular to "charismatic political leadership." Only because the commitment to the idea is emotional as well as corresponding to a genuinely objective characteristic of the subject can one understand that the nature of the opposition between the two approaches should be so strong.

Yet there is also little doubt that some institutional arrangements play at least some part in providing more scope for political leadership than others.

The dominant position of the chief executive in the American constitution led to an emphasis on the role of individual leaders (Barber 1972) which does not formally exist in parliamentary systems, even if the prime minister's leadership has in some cases also emerged, but provided other conditions also obtain, in particular among political parties. It is therefore not surprising if, by and large, there is more stress on political leadership in presidential systems than there is in parliamentary systems.

In the end, one must recognize that rather than adopting a rigidly strong view about elites or about political leadership, the more realistic solution must be to accept that both leadership theory and elite theory correspond to different aspects of the societies and of the political processes, leadership theory being more closely connected to the characteristics of those who are at the very top of the political process, while elite theory is more concerned with the nature of the groups which are involved in political life at a high but somewhat lower level: both elements have to exist, though in a different manner and to a different extent. What needs to be done is to examine their role, their strength, and the extent to which they relate to each other. This is surely the way to ensure that the work undertaken by both sides is best understood and, where necessary, best reformed. Supporters of elite theory would surely gain by incorporating notions of political leadership in a routine manner in their analyses: what seems to be basic political experience is that there are holders of top positions among elite groups which result in the holders of these positions being, so to speak, members of a "super-elite"; these might even be sometimes "charismatic." Conversely, it might be worth for supporters of leadership theory to reflect upon the extent to which some members of the "top political groups" exercise their influence upon leaders. It must be also considered that leaders however powerful cannot exercise effectively their authority without the support of a larger entourage. Not much is gained, from the point of view of scholarship, by stressing the existence of what might be regarded as "polar differences," while, on the other hand, much is likely to be gained from the fact that one type of approach may help to render more sophisticated the developments which are characteristic of the other approach.

The points which have just been expressed may well be criticized on the grounds that a systematic analysis requires also a systematic examination of the implications of a particular concept and not an "amalgam" of concepts belonging to different intellectual domains. It does indeed seem that we may be confronted with different intellectual domains when we reflect successively on the role of political elites and on the role of political leadership in the context of political processes. A reflection on the role of elites suggests that a part of the society, better endowed than the rest of that society in terms of its

political sophistication and power resources and, possibly as a result, of its ability to have an adequate vision of the future, is in the position to determine the direction in which the whole of that society should be going. A reflection on the nature of political leadership, in particular, but not exclusively, of "charismatic" political leadership is expected to assess the way in which leaders will have a lasting impact on that population and thus discover the manner in which the bulk of the populace can be brought, even if in a somewhat dependent manner, within the life of the whole of political system. Elite theory separates a segment of the society on the grounds, presumably, that this is inevitable and possibly even beneficial for the society as a whole; the theory of political leadership, and especially charismatic political leadership, suggests the possibility of powerful linkages bringing together the whole of the political system, albeit on the basis of the dependence of much of the system from the leaders.

The aim is not to end on a pessimistic note, this time not because only a part of the society is able to grasp the whole problem but because the way the society will be moving will depend on the bulk of the society agreeing to depend on the strength and vision of political leaders; this is, admittedly, on the assumption that political leaders do sense what the whole of the population actually "wants." Yet it is to an extent a pessimistic note from the standpoint of the role of the people: the elitists thus seem indirectly to be more than justified in stating, as was stated in the volume of 2010, that democracy is a "political formula," rather than a "reality," whatever "reality" might mean in that context.

This conclusion may not, on reflection, be as pessimistic as it seems: the fact that two concepts, and not only one, are involved in an intellectual contest for the determination of what political action consists of means that there is indeed a serious search for what political life is fundamentally about.

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Political Elites Beyond the Nation State

Maurizio Cotta

The configuration of political elites reflects, fundamentally, the basic configuration of political order. This basic assumption and its main consequences are, more or less implicitly, accepted in most studies of elites. This view appears eminently plausible. Political elites emerge and establish their leading role within the confines of the prevailing form of political system, as their legitimacy and power resources are produced in and anchored to the specific polity within which they operate. With the rise of the nation state as the "model polity"— in Europe and the Americas since the end of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century and in other parts of the world, especially after the Second World War—political elites have also acquired a typically national character. This has meant that their origin, careers, and rise to the top usually take place within the borders of a nation state.

The processes that bring them down are also mainly domestic. That this is not the only possible arrangement is shown by many previous instances of members of the political and military elites crossing the borders of pre-modern states. Cardinal Mazzarino and Prince Eugene of Savoy, two Italians in top political positions between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries in France and in the Habsburg Empire, are just two outstanding examples of transnational elite members in pre-revolutionary Europe. The fact is that the true top level of political elites, royal families and their aristocratic

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entourages, were in that period still far from being nationalized and were open to important trans-border connections. In some way, a rather peculiar residuum of this pre-national reality was that royal dynasties, well into the nineteenth century when they were still politically relevant, could be "imported" from outside (usually, but not always, from Germany) without great problems (as in the cases of Belgium, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Spain with Amadeus of Savoy, and lastly Norway).

The modern state, with its pretense to full sovereignty and independence, and with its clearly defined borders and citizenship rules, has drastically reduced the possibility of external intakes of political elites. This does not mean, however, that national politics and national political elites are totally closed to external influences and that international/transnational networks do not play a role. If sovereignty is to some extent a myth or even an "organized hypocrisy" (Krasner 1999), we must reckon with "gaps" in the national walls. Barriers between nation states are far from watertight, and external influences have often played an important role. We may thus ask if this has also been the case at elite level, and the question of course becomes even more relevant with the appearance of new forms of political organization that go beyond the nation state.

Firstly, we should mention the international contagions and imitations at play in the field of ideologies and political platforms, which produce convergence and cooperation between national party elites. Secondly, the developments in significant international regimes/organizations, particularly after the Second World War, have presumably, by reducing the separateness of national states, opened the way to parallel developments with regard to political elites. Finally, in the old continent, the peculiar phenomenon of European integration has created a special new environment for political elites.

National Elites and International Networks

A more careful look at events in Europe during the nineteenth century and later indicates that the closing of borders along national lines was not a completely dominant feature of political life. While the dismantling of supranational empires and the consolidation of national states created strong incentives for the nationalization of political life and at the same time of political elites, other contradictory drives were nonetheless present. The fight against the (perceived) imperialistic oppression of nationalities fueled revolutionary independence movements which also acquired, to some extent, an

international dimension to better pursue their struggle. Mazzini and his international action in the nineteenth century is a good example (Bayly and Biagini 2008). Similarly, the international dimension of economic transformations triggered the birth of international parties for the defense of the suffering classes. Socialist and Marxist parties were the most important examples of such developments. These phenomena also produced some degree of internationalization of national elites. It was, first of all, nationally marginalized political elites who acquired an international dimension. This choice, however, was not without problems, and they had to face a tough dilemma between active integration in domestic (democratic) politics and maintaining their international commitments. The leadership of socialist parties became progressively "national." The First World War was the litmus test of internationalism: the leaders of European socialist parties decided in most countries to support their motherland at the expense of their international commitments.

It was after the First World War and with the soviet revolution in Russia that one of the strongest and most peculiar cases of internationalization, first of opposition party elites and later of governing elites, arose (Foster 1968). Between 1919 and 1943, when it was dissolved, the so-called Third International or *Comintern* brought together the top leaders of the Communist parties of the world, producing an internationally tightly connected political elite devoted to the goal of world revolution (Mc Dermott and Agnew 1996). In principle, at least, it was organized along egalitarian lines; in practice, it fell under the dominance of Moscow and Stalin. The disproportion in resources between the Communist party of the Soviet Union, fully in power in a major state, and the other parties, which in most cases had a more difficult existence in opposition in their own countries, determined the dependent role of the latter. One of the consequences of this development was that the leaderships of national parties, along with their national careers and strategies, would be significantly influenced by the power center of Moscow.

An even stricter process of international control took place after the Second World War for the governing elites of the countries brought under the Soviet Union sphere of influence in central and eastern Europe. In this region, a process of sovietization of the governing elites of the satellite countries was clearly evident. Selection, careers, and termination of national elites in these countries were strictly controlled by the Russian "elder brother." As we know, this control was not always fully successful, and "nationalistic" tendencies recurrently emerged within an apparently fully internationalized elite. A series of national communist leaders tried, successfully in Yugoslavia but unsuccessfully in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, to assert a "national way" to communism without the consent of Moscow (Grilli 1989).

If in the Soviet bloc the control of national elites by the leading power was extremely tight, in the North Atlantic bloc, the freedom enjoyed by national elites was much greater. Yet even in this case, the visit to Washington of a new elected European leader was often seen as an instrument for strengthening his political legitimacy.

Socialist and Christian Democratic Parties also developed forms of international coordination, which in many cases involved government leaders of democratic countries. While occasionally producing concerted efforts on some international matters, these international party organizations never significantly altered the national character of the party elites involved. Somewhat more relevant was the "brotherly help" given by the larger and more established parties of older democracies to the parties in formation in the new European democracies of the 1970s and of the 1990s and in Latin America. Often cited (Grabendorff 1996; Whitehead 1996; Scott 1999) is the support of German, French, Italian Socialist, and Christian Democratic Parties to the new parties of Greece, Spain, and Portugal and of Latin America after the fall of the dictatorships or, in Central European countries after the fall of Communism. As to the extent to which such international help and elite connections have been really effective, some doubts have been raised (Phillips 1999). A very special case is that of German reunification after the fall of the Berlin wall where the emerging political elites of East Germany became rapidly co-opted and incorporated into the much more strongly established party elites of West Germany (Niedermayer 1995).

International Governance Bodies

After the Second World War, the political landscape witnessed the important phenomena of internationalization. The United Nations and other international bodies of a more specialized nature, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Health Organization, were created with the purpose of bridling and coordinating nation states. The question arises as to what extent such developments have also affected the shape of political elites and more specifically whether they have led to the rise of international elites. As documented by a recent assessment, research on the top ranks of these organizations and on their impact on international policymaking is still limited. This is partly because realist interpretations of the international scene have concentrated their attention mainly on the role of

states and of their leading elites (Bauer et al. 2009). There is, however, a small and somewhat discontinuous stream of research which, adopting different theoretical perspectives (bureaucratic theory, sociological institutionalism, rationalist institutionalism, management theories) (Cox and Jackobson 1973; Haas 1990), has tried to investigate the role of international bureaucracies and of the elites which are formed within their framework. Existing research suggests that their role should receive greater attention, especially in the field of norm creation: operating behind the scenes, these elites contribute significantly to establishing norms and rules of international relations (Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Bierman and Siebenhüner 2009).

Attention should probably focus on the more specialized institutions rather than on the United Nations highest bodies (such as the General Assembly and the Security Council), which mainly offer a world forum for national political leaders to gain some international visibility and to promote their agenda but have not gained a decisive influence upon global affairs, nor fostered (with limited exceptions) the birth of a significant global elite. Some of these specialized institutions have had, for better or worse, a more significant impact on state decisions, and their top ranks must be reckoned as components of a sort of technocratic global elite (Bauer 2006). The IMF (Stone 2002; Thacker 1999; Steinwand and Stone 2008; Copelovitch 2010), the World Bank (Vaubel 1996; Woods 2006) and the WTO (Woods and Narlikar 2001; Lang and Scott 2009) stand out as probably the most significant. Their highly specialized and qualified bureaucracies have developed specific ideologies and policy narratives, which to some extent guide their action. There is a lively debate as to the extent to which these international elites define their policies independently or under the influence of some states (the United States, in particular). In the countries where their programs are adopted and applied, national elites may be strongly subordinated in their policy choices to these organizations (Vreeland 2005). Within national elites, the controlling intervention of these international elites has triggered, in a number of cases (in Latin America especially but more recently in Greece under the "troika"), a harsh confrontation between local "IMF protégés" and defenders of national sovereignty.

Other international elite phenomena have a more "private" character. The Trilateral Commission, the Bilderberg, or the Aspen Institute, just to mention the best known cases, are examples of voluntary international associations bringing together top business executives, public officials, opinion leaders and seasoned politicians (Sklar 1980). Attacked by some opponents as quintessential representatives of a world (capitalist) conspiracy, a more realistic

assessment would probably consider them as networking instruments, pressure groups or clearing houses among powerful political and economic actors.

Political Elites and European Integration

Among the existing examples of supranational integration, the increasing importance and the peculiar features of the EU have understandably stimulated a broader scientific debate concerning the role of elites in its development. As it is clear that European integration was neither initiated nor pushed, at least for a long time, by the populace and that it was rather an elite-driven process (Haller 2008), the main questions arising are who were the actors conducting the process and what was the role of national and of supranational elites? And further, what are the relationships between elites and the population at large and how have they developed over time?

The process of European integration, developing since the 1950s, progressively involving an increasing number of nation states of the old continent and encompassing a broader range of policy areas, has with time generated a new and very peculiar political order in Europe. This implies a political space where we can assume that a special configuration of political elites must have also developed. While nation states have not withered away (or have even profited from this new arrangement) (Milward 1992), a new encompassing polity has embraced them in a dense network of common institutions and decision-making processes. This situation has undoubtedly produced new opportunities and challenges for the national elites of the member states and has, at the same time, fostered the creation of at least an embryo of supranational elite.

An interesting aspect concerns the elite configuration, which has emerged in this peculiar context. As the new European community and its institutions have neither eliminated nor fully subordinated the member states and their domestic political authorities, we must reckon with the persistence of powerful national elites, who still rely significantly (or even predominantly) upon domestic resources and mechanisms of empowerment. The electoral competition, which is the fundamental instrument of legitimation and accountability of democratic political elites, has remained national, and national leaders understandably feel accountable and responsive to the moods of their voters. As a consequence, within the EU polity, there are as many (national) elite groups as there are member states. It must be highlighted, however, that the top layers of these national elites are continuously involved in the processes of European decision-making through the European Council and the Council of Ministers. It could be said, therefore, that taken together, they form a sort of

European elite *directorium*. At the same time, European institutions, and particularly those with a more clearly supranational character, such as the European Commission, the European Parliament (EP), the European Central Bank and the Court of Justice, are to be considered as the institutional loci of what may be legitimately called a truly European elite. An important part of this elite component has a clearly technocratic nature and derives its legitimacy mainly from its professional competencies, supposedly matching its policy responsibilities and from its ability to produce satisfactory outcomes. Functional and output legitimacy are then its main resources. The democratic legitimation of other components is mainly indirect (as happens for the European Commission) or when direct (as in the case of the EP) has until now been seriously weakened by the "second-order nature" of European elections (Schmitt 2005). In view of the different elites at work in the European community, it is perhaps appropriate to speak of a composite *European Elites System* (EES) which includes both the national elites of the member states closely interacting together and the more truly supranational political and bureaucratic elites institutionally entrenched in the center of the EU (Cotta 2012).

The predominant role of elites in the process of European integration has often been highlighted (Haller 2008). For a long period, the "permissive consensus" formula has well encapsulated the prevailing interpretation of the integration process. According to this view, elites were to be seen as the leading actors of the process, while public opinion lent more or less unconditional support to their decisions (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; Inglehart 1970; Hooghe and Marks 2008). On European matters, as compared to other policy fields and to the ordinary domestic arenas of competition, political elites have, according to this view, enjoyed an unusually large leeway. A number of reasons (perceived benefits of European integration, opacity of the community decision-making processes, limited understanding by the common citizen of the highly esoteric EU matters, etc.) conspired to make public opinion rather quiescent for a long time as regards European affairs and ready to follow the leadership of elites.

More recent research has started to question the permissive consensus model or rather to point to its progressive demise and to its substitution by a "constraining dissensus" (Hooghe and Marks 2008). According to this view, public opinion has, since the 1990s at least, become less willing to accept elite decisions on European matters and when given the opportunity to express itself (through referendums), is more ready to reject treaty changes (or even endorse exit solutions such as with the 2016 British vote to leave the EU). National and European political elites have thus become much more

constrained than in the past and have had to adopt a much more cautious position on European matters.

An increasingly important phenomenon developing along this changing balance between elites and public opinion is the rise in most European countries of new elites and leaders at the head of Euro-critical parties and movements straightforwardly challenging the pro-European positions of established parties (Duff 2013; Leconte 2015). These new anti-establishment elites were particularly successful during the post-2008 crisis years in capitalizing on popular discontent regarding European policies. Paradoxically (in view of the fact that they are asking for a renationalization of politics), they seem to have been more successful than traditionally pro-European elites in projecting the image of a common (negative) transnational front.

A lively scientific debate has developed concerning the relative weight of the different components of the European elite system. Who was really driving the process: the Europeanized elites of Brussels pursuing an integration scheme or rather the national elites promoting their domestic interests (Pollack 2003)? An important contribution to this debate was offered by the ground-breaking work of Moravcsik (1998). Challenging the views of the functionalist school (Haas 1958), and on the basis of an accurate analysis of some of the major steps forward in the process of European integration, this author affirmed the predominant weight of national preferences articulated by domestic governing elites and the more marginal role of the Commission Eurocrats in the bargaining processes. Other authors, however, have suggested the need for a more balanced view. While national interests and actors play an obviously important role, especially in big European decisions, the importance of supranational institutions in the adaptation and implementation of these decisions, in the many medium-level decisions and thus in ensuring the continuity over time of the context within which domestic elites operate, should not be underestimated (Pierson 1996; Sandholz and Sweet 1998).

Empirical Research on European Elites

The study of European elites has generated a stream of empirical research which, while not very large, is significant and growing. This research has addressed, on the one hand, recruitment and career patterns and, on the other, the attitudes, values, and behavior of elites. With regard to these two aspects, a significant number of studies on the members of the EP (MEPs) and a somewhat smaller one on the European Commission are to be considered.

One of the central themes in the study of MEPs has been the extent to which domestic background and allegiances, or on the contrary European institutional involvement and supranational linkages, prevail. MEPs raise a number of interesting questions. They are elected through elections which have maintained a predominantly national character; at the same time, they are durably based within an institutional space which is fully supranational, and because of incompatibility rules, they do not have a national institutional base. This makes for an important difference with other components of the EES such as the members of the European Council and of the Council of Ministers. Heads of governments and ministers who sit in the latter European institutions continue to sit also in their national institutions: in fact, they are members of these European institutions only as long as they maintain their national government position. Their role in the decision-making process of the Union is important, but their identification with the European institution is presumably more uncertain. It is therefore particularly interesting to explore the careers, values, and behaviors of the MEPs who compose a peculiar group of politicians. They have, at least temporarily, fully opted for a European institution, abandoning *pro tempore* national offices. This interest is today increased by the fact that the EP has gained a greater relevance in the decision-making process of the EU.

With regard to the career of European parliamentarians, the available studies have discussed the extent to which a European career is dependent on a national career or is an alternative to the former and what its main determinants are (Verzichelli and Edinger 2005; Borchert 2011). As could be expected, the results of empirical research show that the careers of MEPs are still significantly more fragile than those of national MPs. Turnover rates in the EP are on average higher than in national parliaments: a significant number of MEPs abandon the institution during their mandate, and the tenure of most MEPs is limited to one legislative term. There are good institutional and material reasons for this. A domestic political career is still more politically attractive as it has more chances of leading to a ministerial position. Being away in Brussels for a long time may endanger national career progression and also the distance of Brussels from the home base makes the European experience more costly and so on. At the same time, the empirical evidence suggests that a process of institutionalization and consolidation has taken place over time. Turnover has slightly declined and it appears that there is a positive relationship between tenure and acquisition of the most important institutional positions in the EP (such as holding leadership positions or being a member of an important committee) (Whitaker 2014).

A crucial question concerns the representative role of this elite group. Whom do they represent and how? In particular, do they represent their country or Europe? Do they respond to their party or act independently (Raunio 2000)? The traditional dilemmas of representation debated at the national level from Edmund Burke onward are still fully relevant for the EP. These questions have stimulated a growing field of research concerning the attitudes and behavior of MEPs.

Under the framework of the European Election Studies, an important book of 1999 has for the first time explicitly addressed in empirical terms the question of representation at the European level. A survey of the ideological orientations of MEPs as well as of their attitudes toward different aspects of the European project, from general approval of the integration process to the preferred territorial level of decision-making in different policy fields, was conducted in parallel with a similar survey of ordinary citizens and national parliamentarians (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999). Not surprisingly, the results show that with few exceptions, MEPs have the most pro-European attitudes. National MPs follow, on average, at a limited distance, while citizens are generally somewhat more lukewarm toward Europe. In particular, voters are generally less proud of being European (Scheuer 1999, p. 37) and less oriented to choose the European level of decision-making as against the national or regional one in the most important policy areas (unemployment, crime, and environment) than European MPs. On the latter aspect, the positions of national MPs are closer to those of citizens (De Winter and Swyngedouw 1999). This evidence seems to suggest that while both national and European parliamentary elites express a somewhat stronger European identity than the ordinary citizen, when it comes to allocating decision-making powers to the different territorial levels, the national parliamentarians are quite understandably less keen than their European counterparts to shift competences to Brussels. Institutional positions (and the connected political interests) exert their influence upon elite preferences on matters more closely associated with crucial institutional roles.

Differences between voters and both national and European representatives emerge again when matters such as borders and currency are at stake. Here the elite/mass divide was very clear at the time of the study: while citizens were far from homogeneous in their preferences and a significant group was against European borders and currency substituting the national ones, elites showed a larger consensus for the Europeanization of both dimensions (Thomassen and Schmitt 1999). The study, conducted well before the deep crisis period unwinding after 2008, indicated the existence of a double face in the European representation system: if on the classic left/right dimension the

positions of voters and European parties were fairly well aligned, in other dimensions, more strictly related to the path of European integration (currency and borders), the positions were remarkably distant. The traditional left-right alignment still dominated the European representation system, while on the other aspects, political elites could diverge from voters without apparently facing (at that time) many problems.

Things started to change in the following years when different democratic instruments such as referendums allowed for a more direct and open politicization of some European issues and made the elite-mass difference politically relevant and evident. Later, European elections (together with national ones) also began to show that the distance between the public and established elites/parties could be exploited by new parties. This has contributed to producing in the EP a new political landscape where the established elites and their pro-European attitudes could be challenged by new elites expressing different shades of opposition to Europe.

Other aspects of the representation puzzle have been addressed through different empirical instruments. An important contribution is the study of European parliamentarians' behavior using roll call votes in the EP to assess the extent to which MEPs follow national lines or European party lines in their legislative choices (Hix 2001). The purpose of this type of analysis is to determine whether the MEPs are still predominantly linked to the domestic dimension of politics, which they would simply replicate in Brussels, or on the contrary have become part of a supranational elite structured along the lines of a European level interparty competition. In spite of disputes on the limitations of this tool of analysis, the empirical evidence obtained provides some significant support to the latter hypothesis: party lines of division, more than national lines, characterize a large majority of MEP votes (Thomassen et al. 2004; Hix et al. 2007). We can thus argue that the development of the EP has contributed to the formation of a group of politicians who, while still maintaining strong national roots, have also acquired truly transnational features.

The European Commission and its members are another important component of the EES. It may be debated whether the role of the Commission in the institutional system of the EU has increased or, on the contrary, declined compared to that of more intergovernmental institutions such as the European Council or the Council of the EU. The Commission and its members are also at the center of political and academic disputes concerning their nature, (are they technocrats or politicians?), their legitimacy (is it democratic or not?),their responsiveness to the needs of the people, and so on. It cannot be doubted in any case that the Commissioners and the larger group of high bureaucrats that

surround them play a powerful role at the supranational level and thus warrant careful study. Over recent years, a number of scientific works have explored different aspects of this elite component. To some extent, these studies replicate the pattern discussed above for EP members. There are studies devoted to analyzing who the Commissioners are and how their careers are shaped and change over time (Mc Mullen 1997; Smith 2003; Doering 2007), and other studies are devoted to their values and political behavior (Hooghe 2001, 2012; Thomson 2008; Wonka 2008). A crucial underlying question concerns the degree to which the Commissioners and the Commission are to be seen as (strongly controlled) agents of national governments or, on the contrary, as actors enjoying a significant amount of autonomy and responding to different sets of preferences determined by their supranational position and role (Doering 2007).

With regard to background and careers, the data available indicate that Commissioners are predominantly politicians rather than technocrats and that the importance of their previous positions in domestic politics is growing with time (Wille 2012). Commissioners are increasingly drafted from (high) ministerial positions and the presidents of the Commission have been, since the mid-1990s, regularly recruited from the position of Prime Minister (Doering 2007). This phenomenon can be plausibly related to the increasing importance of the Commission.

Other empirical research has discussed the values and attitudes of the Commission bureaucratic personnel. Hooghe, in her pioneering work (2001, 2003), has evidenced that the (understandably) high support of top-ranking officials of the Commission for European integration gives way to more nuanced positions when it comes to support for EU responsibility in different policy areas. While Commission officers are predominantly in favor of a European competence in "high politics" policy sectors (such as foreign policy, currency, humanitarian help, and immigration) but also in agriculture and environment, they are much less favorable in the sectors of employment, social inclusion, and health care. A comparison conducted with the positions of public opinion on the same issues shows that in the majority of policy sectors, Commission officials are more pro-European than ordinary citizens but not in social policy and redistribution sectors where the opposite is true (Hooghe 2003). These data indicate the existence of significant differences in what citizens and EU officials expect from Europe. EU high officials are generally keen to strengthen the role of the Union along its traditional developmental lines but not necessarily in fields that are less typical and which might possibly generate conflicts with member states. It would be

particularly interesting to know how much these differences have changed following the recent crisis years.

With regard to foreign policy, and in particular transatlantic relations, two recent research projects *European Elites Survey* (EES 2016) and *Transworld: Transatlantic Relations and the future of Global Governance* (Transworld 2016) throw further light on the differences in opinions between EU high officials, MEPs and the general public.

When it comes to interpreting how the Commissioners behave, do they adopt predominantly a "portfolio role," acting in the interest of their department, a "national agent role" defending the reasons of their country, a "national party" or a "transnational party role," following the line of their national party or of the European party federation they belong to? Research on these aspects is still scarce and made more difficult by the limited publicity of the internal proceedings of the Commission. The first in-depth case studies suggest that Commissioners work under multiple influences: the portfolio and the national agent seem to be the two most powerful roles (Wonka 2008).

At the end of this survey, we can mention also studies of national elites, focusing on their attitudes toward the EU. Within the peculiar institutional structure of the European polity, national elites must be seen as an important component of the EES. National elites who individually play a domestic role also have, collectively through the mechanisms of indirect delegation, a European role and influence the processes of EU decision-making. A series of empirical works have in recent years explored the attitudes of domestic elites toward the EU for what concerns the dimensions of identity, representation, and scope of governance. Publications originating from the *Intune* research project have provided, for the first time, a detailed mapping of the European views of members of national parliaments and of other social and economic elites (Best et al. 2012; Conti et al. 2012). Surveys conducted just before and in the initial phase of the financial crisis which exploded in 2008 showed the broad support prevailing at that time among national elites for the European project but also some important (and expected) differences across countries. From these, data variations also emerged across the multiple dimensions of support (and opposition) to the EU. The process of integration in itself, the institutional arrangements which govern the Union and the specific policies to be conducted in the economic or social field elicited different responses suggesting a "Europe à la carte" attitude, by which national elites choose and support different mixes of Europe (Cotta and Russo 2012; Russo and Cotta 2013). For mainstream national elites, at least before the full development of the crisis, the EU was an accepted part of the political landscape and perceived as an instrument of governance which was complementary rather than an

alternative to national ones in different fields of political action. This complementarity was particularly evident with regard to identity feelings: a European identity was in general positively rather than negatively correlated to national identity. The fact that different aspects of the EU could elicit variable support from different elite groups suggests also that in European matters rather than a unified front in favor of (or against) something, it would be easier to find variable majorities of supporters in different fields.

The comparative investigation of elites and public opinion attitudes conducted in the same research project has shown, as expected, a generally more favorable position of elites toward Europe (Best 2012; Sanders and Toka 2013). However, it has also confirmed at this level some previous findings indicating that the general public is more favorable than elites to a "social Europe," while the latter are more inclined to support the role of the EU in establishing an open and competitive market. This representative mismatch may contribute to explain the mounting popular dissatisfaction with the EU of recent years.

Concluding Remarks

The different streams of research presented here indicate the existence of interesting elite phenomena "beyond the state" which are worth studying. Compared to the relatively more simple landscape of state elites, elites operating in the international and supranational arenas are more diverse and heterogeneous, and their configurations are more fuzzy. Their role is more difficult to interpret but nonetheless significant. Empirical studies are rapidly growing, but we still lack the kind of systematic and diachronic evidence available for domestic elites. Who are their members? Where do they come from and through which career patterns? On what resources do they build their authority and from where are these resources drawn? What are their values and attitudes? To what extent do they compete or cooperate with national elites? The questions to be answered are not so different from the questions raised in traditional elite studies. The answers are perhaps more difficult but no less interesting. Progress in the study of international and supranational elites can contribute significantly to a better understanding of politics beyond and between the states, but also within them.

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