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Researching Elites and Power

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Researching Elites and Power

Theory, Methods, Analyses

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Chapter 1
Introduction

François Denord, Mikael Palme, and Bertrand Réau

Idolized or spurned, the "elites" are a prominent talking point in political debates. Their advocates claim they have rare, exceptional qualities; meanwhile, their foes deem them guilty of everything wrong with the world. The social sciences, free of such extreme passions, have connected the study of elites with the study of power. Like all other social groups, the elites may be subject to multiple investigations, drawing on tried and tested methods (archival research, interviews, observations, statistical analysis, etc.). As Shamus Kahn puts it, "Being an elite is not a mere possession or something 'within' an actor (skills, talents, and human capital); it is an embodied performative act enabled by both possessions and the inscriptions that accompany experiences within elite institutions (schools, clubs, families, networks, etc.)" (Khan 2011, p. 136). However, the elites are not only characterized by their exclusive social circles: their power is related to institutions and pre-exists them. Access to dominant positions requires a set of dedicated properties and a constant effort to conform to expected standards, values and behaviors.

Whether power is political, economic, familial, military or religious in nature, the social sciences analyze an unequal distribution of resources legitimated by institutions (the Firm, the Church, the State, the School, the Party, etc.) and highlight two key processes: differentiation and hierarchization. On the one hand, we have societies where an increasingly pronounced division of labor results in distinct

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resources, beliefs and lifestyles; on the other, an asymmetry of power derived from a socially legitimated brand of arbitrariness. Societies produce relatively autonomous social spaces, a small number of which affect all individual trajectories.

Sociology of Elites or Sociology of Power?

As an asymmetrical relation that can manifest itself in highly diverse areas of activity, power has elicited a wide variety of theoretical developments. In some cases, it escapes topography entirely. For instance, Michel Foucault considered power simultaneously as a force for the repression of "irregular modes of behavior" and the production of knowledge (Foucault 1990, p. 9). The philosopher suggested shifting our gaze from the protagonists to the diffuse power relations whereby bodies and minds are disciplined. Power, such as it operates (with its clinics, asylums, prisons, etc.), mobilizes techniques and knowledge, those of the government of the self and others (Foucault 1977). Thus, the analysis of power is the analysis of "governmentality". Power is not, strictly speaking, a matter of politics or economics; it is everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

Conversely, other theories anchor power at specific points in social space and describe its unequal distribution between agents. Among them, Marxism has most directly connected the exercise of power to the economic sphere. In the age of capitalism, the ruling class, which possesses not only land, but also the means of material production, holds a dominant position in the ideological and political order. The thesis defended in *The German Ideology* (Marx and Engels 1986) has been extensively elaborated upon by scholars who have mainly addressed the role of the State and of the institutions that depend on it, as well as the internationalization of contemporary capitalism (Petrucciani 2016). These authors have sometimes made a distinction between social classes and forces, identifying an internal cleavage within the dominant class, "between two poles, power-capital on the market, and power-knowledge in the organization" (Bidet 2016, p. 41). Reconciled with Foucault and power-knowledge, Marxist theory has paradoxically reconnected with managerialism (Berle and Means 1932), which holds that since the advent of corporations, the owners and managers of firms tend to form two distinct groups, and that the managers, owing to their skills, will eventually supplant the inheritors. This idea had been suggested by former Trotskyist James Burnham in his internationally successful *The Managerial Revolution*.[1] The book argued that the twentieth century would witness the emergence of a new ruling class, formed by managers, who now controlled the means of production in developed nations and would before long go on to seize political power. This argument has for a long time been challenged by other authors inspired by Marx, noting that owners and managers share social origins and

[1] On the reception of his work in France, see Joseph Romano, "James Brunham en France: l'import-export de la "révolution managériale" après 1945", *Revue française de science politique,* n°2, 2003, p. 257–275.

lifestyles. The capitalist system effectively tends to harmonize their interests: according to Ralph Miliband, "like the vulgar owner-entrepreneur of the bad old days, the modern manager, however bright and shiny, must also submit to the imperative demands inherent in the system of which he is both master and servant; and the first and most important such demand is that he should make the 'highest possible' profits" (Miliband 1969, p. 33).

The so-called "elite theories" of power were developed in reaction against the Marxist analysis – especially those of the Italian neo-Machiavellians (Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto in particular).[2] These scholars naturalized power. Pareto wrote, "Every people is governed by an *élite*" (Pareto 1935, p. 169 [§246]). "In all societies, Mosca concurs, […] two classes of people appear – a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent."[3] Pareto admittedly envisions that each domain of social life may produce distinct elites, but effectively favours a distinction between the ruling elite and the ruled mass (although he acknowledges the existence of a "non-ruling" elite). In *The Mind and Society*, he wrote:

> Let us assume that in every branch of human activity each individual is given an index which stands as a sign of his capacity, very much the way grades are given in the various subjects in examinations in school. The highest type of lawyer, for instance, will be given 10. The man who does not get a client will be given 1- reserving 0 for the man who is an out-and-out idiot. To the man who has made his millions – honestly or dishonestly as the case may be – we will give 10. To the man who has earned his thousands we will give 6; to such as just manage to keep out of the poor-house 1, keeping 0 for those who get in […] And so on for all the branches of human activity […] So let us make a class of the people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity, and to that class give the name elite.[4]

This seemingly empirical proposition raises more problems than it solves, as the number of scales and grades remains up to the researcher.

The theoreticians of the ruling class have embraced one of the main theses of the "rhetoric of reaction", namely the "futility thesis" (Hirschman 1991), which holds that democracy cannot prevent a minority from hoarding the main positions of power. Pareto directly linked wealth and membership in the ruling class. Mosca added military valor (at least historically), birth and personal merit (Genieys 2011, p. 91). The former openly rejected democracy, whereas the latter admitted that the representative system allows "many different social forces to participate in the political system, and therefore to balance and limit the influence of other social forces and the influence of bureaucracy in particular".[5]

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[2] For synthetic works on these theories, see Bottomore (1993) and Coenen-Hunter (2004)

[3] Cited from Bottomore, *Elites and Society,* p. 3.

[4] Pareto, 1935, p. 1422–1434, §2027–§2031

[5] Cited from Bottomore, *Elites and Society,* p. 4.

While Mosca and Pareto did not support the same theory of elites, many debates on the sociology of elites, including critical ones, have built on their work. Mosca stressed that the specificity of the ruling class, compared to the mass, is that it is able to organize. When his research was imported to the US, it fueled debates on the "ruling class" and the 3Cs model – a "conscious", "coherent" and "conspiracy" class (Birnbaum 1971, p. 133). Although he criticized "parliamentary democracy and the socialist utopia" (Aron 1960, p. 265), Pareto found an extension of his work in Raymond Aron, who turned Pareto's tripartition into a distinction between "elite", "political class" and "ruling class".

These founding debates of the sociology of "elites" had an impact on its subsequent development. This sociology has sometimes reified the existence of a minority purported to be more gifted than the majority of the population: the empirical observation of the existence of hierarchies has in some cases become a normative prescription (the elite is necessary). It has legitimated a form of domination that presents itself as natural, drawing on the gifts, merits or material success of an individual. By challenging the Marxist analysis of power, theoreticians of elites have given politics a leading role or taken refuge behind the argument of pluralism. In liberal democracies, they claim that the competition between the individuals and organizations representing a variety of interests leads to a form of balance and accordingly serves as a protection against the capture of the state by interested minorities, beginning with the representatives of economic power (Dahl 1961). In other words, the pluralists, who C. Wright Mills sarcastically called the "balancing boys" (Geary 2009, p. 158), pretend as if all powers were equal.

The Marxist analytical model has also been contested in terms other than the reversal of base and superstructure. Norbert Elias, for instance, faulted Marx for connecting power and control over the means of production, and making the economic realm the locus of power *par excellence*. He criticizes his view of "the 'economic' sphere as an autonomous self-contained functional nexus with laws of its own, but within the functional nexus of the whole society" (Elias 1978, p. 140). Instead, he argues that the sources of power are "polymorphous": "In so far as we are more dependent on others than they are on us, more directed by others than they are by us, they have power over us, whether we have become dependent on them by their use of naked force or by our need to be loved, our need for money, healing, status, a career, or simply for excitement" (p. 93). In Elias's work, interdependences remain preponderant, but they are not hierarchized. At odds with Marx, some approaches to power have focused on the observation of face-to-face interactions between the rulers and the ruled to evidence the resources on both sides. They have the merit of giving serious attention to the question of the relationships between the powerless and the powerful. What do the weak do? Generally, they toe the line, even when they disapprove of their lot, as "the more menacing the power, the thicker the mask", wrote James C. Scott (1990, p.3). When the opportunity arises, they seek to improve their lot, to find a field in which they excel. On the other side, what do the powerful do? They accept to play the game or not (Sherman 2007). Yet, despite what these dramaturgical metaphors may suggest, power relations are not simple

relations of communication where maintaining face in the interaction is the only thing at stake. The asymmetries of the social world are not easily reversed.

How are we, then, to explain, that the vast majority of us agree to participate in a social game where injustice is the rule? Most classical sociologists point to the importance of socialization: we play the game because its rules seem natural to us. Emile Durkheim calls this social phenomenon "regulation": "Each person is then at least, generally speaking, in harmony with his condition, and desires only what he may legitimately hope for as the normal reward of his activity" (Durkheim 2005, p. 211).

Domination and Institutions

Among the many typologies of power (Lukes 2005), the one C. Wright Mills proposed has simplicity going for it. Power can be "coercion" when violence is used, "manipulation" when ruse and secrecy are employed and "authority" when it is "justified by the beliefs of the voluntary obedient" (Mills 2000a, p. 41).[6] Many power relations fall under this third category: they are relations of domination. Following Max Weber , we can define domination as the capacity of an order to find itself obeyed without recourse to physical violence: the fact that "the manifested will (*command*) of the *ruler* or rulers is meant to influence the conduct of one or more others (*the ruled*) and actually does influence it in such a way that their conduct to a socially relevant degree occurs as if the ruled had made the content of the command the maxim of their conduct for its very own sake (…) obedience" (Weber 1968, p. 946). Domination requires swift and automatic obedience "by virtue of an acquired disposition", "a minimum of voluntary compliance, that is an interest (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in compliance" (Weber 1968, p. 211). Domination, then, only works provided there is a form of complicity between the rulers and the ruled, which may be obtained by coercion or threat. On the one hand, there has to be a *libido dominandi*, whose fulfilment requires the resigned acceptance of its object. On the other, the desire of the ruled must align with that of the rulers; a complex foundation of beliefs is needed for such social magic to work properly.

Weber's approach has primarily descriptive aims. It tells us nothing about the deeper reasons of obedience, apart from a belief in the legitimacy of the command. Why do we obey? Paradoxically, Weber himself answered this question in relation to bureaucrats, without broadening the scope of his answer to the population at large. The administrative staff does not only obey out of a belief in the legitimacy of the ruler: "it is bound equally by two other factors that appeal to personal interest: material reward and social prestige" (Weber 2004, p. 36). Domination draws on

[6] A fairly similar classification to Mills is found in the work of Bertrand Russell, see *Power. A New Social Analysis* (1948), p. 35-36

what matters to individuals: sad affects (finding means of subsistence) and cheerful ones (securing recognition, affection) (Lordon 2010).

The ways in which domination exerts itself vary widely according to the number of individuals subjected to it. On a broader level, domination operates at a distance, through institutions (the state, schools, corporations, etc.), making it more impersonal but no less efficient. Such an institutionalization of domination diminishes accountability: domination is diffracted at all institutional levels (Lordon 2010, p. 40); having no identifiable origin, it becomes elusive.

Domination thus relies not only on institutions but on the categories we use to conceive institutions. It consists in successfully claiming to impose ways of acting and perceiving. Therefore, it requires the material and symbolic power of institutions. They "institute" social reality, give meaning to ordinary lives and teach individuals to make a virtue out of necessity. Institutions format the "trials" the common man has to face, i.e., the moments when the ratio between one's hopes and chances is evaluated (Boltanski 2009). Domination and institutions are thus closely connected. Hierarchical forms are crystallized in institutions that should be seen in a Durkheimian manner, as material constructs and perception schemes. They are supporting pillars of the social order. "The only societies without institutions", wrote Paul Fauconnet and Marcel Mauss, are "social aggregations which are either highly unstable and ephemeral, for instance, crowds, or else those which are in the process of formation" (Mauss 2005, p. 11). Institutions contribute to the perpetuation of the social order. They are primarily material apparatuses, but they also delineate what is possible and thinkable in their respective areas (Boltanski 2009). History keeps producing new, "living" institutions.

Social Fields or Institutional Orders?

Many of the contributions to this book conceptualize the modern social order as regulated by what Pierre Bourdieu sees as historically evolving social fields where particular, and in part very different, material and symbolic values are at stake. These values are protected by the *illusio* of the entrants, the taken-for-granted beliefs pertaining to the *doxa*, the unspoken principles, *nomos*, separating fields from each other, the stakes, *enjeux*, of the game, and, above all, the demands of the investements in field-specific assets (Bourdieu 2000). The distribution of this field-specific capital creates relations of dominance between those who take part, institutions as well as those who Bourdieu prefers to name agents, the individual bearers of symbolic capital and field-adapted habitus. The State, through monopolizing the education system and the symbolic assets it confers, and through playing a key role in the struggles in the "field of power" which define the exchange rate of field-specific species of capital, occupies a crucial role in maintaining order (Bourdieu 1996, 2018; contribution to this book). Dominant agents from differentiated areas of activity (economy, politics, military, religion, etc.) struggle over the commanding principle of legitimation. The outcome of this struggle is the definition of the

hierarchy between those areas and their specific resources. The concept of "field of power" offers a way out of the stale debate between pluralism and monism. It implies a hierarchy of those in power, reflecting the contested valuation of the means at their disposal.

Bourdieu's analysis bears some similarities to that of Hans Gerth's and C. Wright Mills' view of "institutional orders", meaning sets of institutions that pursue similar ends within a social structure (Gerth and Mills 1953). In *Character and Social Structure,* a social psychology treatise written in the 1940s, the authors proposed a model to study the links between character structure and social structure, combining two main pairs of authors: on the character structure side, Georges Mead and Sigmund Freud; and, on the social structure side, Karl Marx and Max Weber. The concept of role serves as the linkage between the two sides. On the one hand, social actors internalize ways of acting and thinking depending on the social roles they play; on the other, each institutional order forces them to play social roles whose distribution is performed and maintained by an authority. According to Gerth and Mills, there are five main institutional orders in developed societies: the economic, political, military, religious and kinship orders. Each of these lays claim to a monopoly, over the allocation of capital and labor, the devolution of power, legitimate physical violence, the management of salvation goods, sexuality and the family model. In the case of most European countries, it is tempting to add a sixth institutional order to the list: that of the State, which claims a monopoly over the common interest. The state order is actually a perfect illustration of the relation between institution and domination (Lenoir 2012). Its specificity does not lie in its bureaucratic or simply administrative organization, but in the domination it exerts, supported, when needed, by a monopoly over physical violence, and considered legitimate by those on which this domination is exercised (Weber 2004). However, the State also has a cognitive function, being, as Emile Durkheim wrote, "a group of *sui generis* officials, within which representations and volitions are worked out which commit the collectivity, even though they are not the product of the collectivity" (cited from Turner 1993, p. 99). Pierre Bourdieu reconciled these two dimensions by arguing that the State holds a monopoly over legitimate physical and symbolic violence.

As institutional orders are delineated and combined and their relations examined, the social structure, the "skeleton" of a society comes to light. Depending on the era, some orders may not exist, others dominate, and all may operate under diverging principles, intermingle, compete with each other, etc.

While these institutional orders have their own rationalities, they frequently compete because they rarely always stick to their own jurisdictions. An institution is in crisis when it cannot resist an institution from a different order that lays claim to telling the truth on its action perimeter – when the economic order supersedes the political and military orders, when the religious order takes over the State and kinship order, when the kinship order overthrows the economic and political orders – the confusion of roles delegitimizes institutions that must be credible to exercise their domination. Historically, their authority has primarily relied on physical means, on violence. The monopolistic appropriation of material and spiritual goods

has never occurred peacefully. In the political realm, Norbert Elias has shown the considerable extent to which state centralization was owed to the war between feudal lords, gradually leading to the state acquiring a monopoly over physical and fiscal violence (Elias 1994). In Bourdieu, social fields and the institutions proper to them, fulfil similar functions. Having gained a relative autonomy in relation to other social fields, as well as to the State and to the larger social space as a whole, they monopolise the mechanisms of recognition that are the foundation of their internal hierarchies, and defend their borders from intrusion from competing fields.

The mechanism evidenced by Elias in the state order is arguably found in other institutional orders. The power of institutions gradually shifts from coercion to self-restraint. Individuals internalize the rankings, ways of acting and thinking promoted by institutional orders. The authority of institutions rests on beliefs and interests. This means the forms of legitimacy defined by Weber in his conception of the political order are also liable to apply to other areas of practice. What can we say, for instance, about an economic order, depending on whether its principles of legitimacy are connected to charisma, tradition or reason? In the first case, the economy's essential function is to reveal the ruler's power. His consumption will be ostentatious, so as to assert his rank and reassure as to his identity (Veblen 2007). In the case of an economy where tradition prevails, the finality of economic activity will essentially be the subsistence of producers and consumers and the perpetuation of ways of doing things. The same type of reasoning can be applied to the military, kinship, religious and political orders.

As for the relations between these orders, one of *Character and Social Structure*'s most valuable original contributions is to show that a society can be characterized through its arrangement of institutional orders. The social structure can thus be defined as the "modes of integration by which various milieus are linked together to form a larger context and the dynamics of social life" (Gerth and Mills 1953, p. 354). Three main principles of integration, which can also be understood as driving forces of historical change, are evidenced.

The first, correspondence, reflects the idea of a social structure where several institutional orders operate autonomously, but according to the same principle. This is best exemplified by the United States in the nineteenth century, characterized by the coexistence of federated states, public and private militias, small businesses, cults and churches, etc. "The principle of integration – which is also the basic legitimation of this society -", Mills wrote in *The Sociological Imagination*, "is the ascendancy within each order of institutions of the free initiative of independent men in competition with one another. It is in this fact of correspondence that we may understand the way in which a classical liberal society is united" (Mills 2000b, p. 45). The second principle, coincidence, refers to a situation where the different underlying principles of the different institutional orders combine, in some cases resulting in a new social structure. The most famous example of this was given by Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic* (Weber 2001). The rationalization of the protestant ethic encountered the ascetic bourgeois moral, thus favoring the emergence of a rational capitalism. The third and last principle, co-ordination, was one of the most widespread in the twentieth century, which saw totalitarian regimes flourish and

power concentrate. It involves the submission of most institutional orders to one or several others. The Nazi regime was its most accomplished form, but the post-war United States also tended to perform such an integration, which is more frequent in highly differentiated societies (Mills 2000b).

Book Outline

This book focuses on how theory and method necessarily combine in the study of elites and power. While some contributions centre on theoretical issues without forgetting their methodological implications, others give emphasis to how elites and power as theoretically constructed research objects can be approached methodologically. A number of contributions are case studies. With a view to accentuate the importance of seeing research in this area as part of evolving traditions, three interviews are included with prominent scholars who have inspired current research. The contributions are divided into four sections.

Power Structure Power is relational by nature: it implies an asymmetric relation between people who are not equal. This asymmetry has less individual than institutional grounds. Rather than depending on individual actors' strategies and their actual decisions, power is a capacity that, first and foremost, depends on positions individuals or groups occupy. This concerns making decisions or not, but also setting the agenda and framing collective interests (Lukes 2005). Studying "elites" requires, therefore, analyzing the power structure in which powerful people operate.

William G. Domhoff's contribution comprises a discussion of the history of power-structure analysis in the American context and the exposition of his "class-domination theory of power" (2013), mainly operationalized through affiliation networks. He actualizes C. Wright Mills' study of the US "power elite" (Mills 1956) whose few members share similar dispositions as well as antagonisms that depend on the relations between the respective domains of activity they coordinate.

Pierre Bourdieu's original contribution revisits the sociology of prominent individuals and develops a field analysis of power (Bourdieu 1996). Prominent figures of critical organizations from different domains of activity compete in a structured space of positions in which diverse forms of legitimacy confront one another. The concept of "field of power" overcomes the worn-out debate between pluralism and monism. It implies a hierarchy of those in power, which reflects the contested valuation of the means at their disposal.

The empirical contributions share the structural perspective of these two theoretical stances, but they contrast sources and methods in different cultural environments. Johs Hjellbrekke and Olav Korsnes retreat pre-existing national surveys to investigate the diversity among the Norwegians who occupy positions of power (from bishops to businesspeople, through academics, judges, civil servants and elected politicians). Jacob Aagaard Lunding, Christopher Houman Ellersgaard and Anton Grau Larsen propose a toolbox for identifying publicly available sources of

information, extracting the relevant data and mapping individuals and organizations in order to visualize power structures. Christophe Charle suggests a comprehensive interpretation of relations between the elite corps serving the French State during the last two centuries. He emphasizes the overarching continuities and recurring phenomena in the ways various regimes (France, Germany, United Kingdom) have exercised State power.

Economic Power Not all powers are equal. The book's second section addresses an order, to speak with Mills, that is dominant in our contemporary societies; the economic. Economic power refers to three types of asymmetrical relations: the ascendancy of economic institutions (in the Durkheimian sense of "all the beliefs and all the modes of conduct instituted by the collectivity"; Durkheim, 1964 [1894], p. 13); the ability of dominant agents to tilt exchange mechanisms and/or modes of production in their favors; the contested control over how firms function.

Even though the ascendancy of the economy characterizes capitalist societies, this predominance varies across time and space, as explained by Michael Hartmann. In an interview, Hartmann discusses how his research on professional and corporate elites has developed. He has, among other things, contrasted the specificities of corporate executives in various countries. To assess its variety, social scientists study the overlap of political and economic domains, their boundaries and arrangements being always contested (Hall and Soskice 2001). The object of inquiry can be a set of crucial organizations, the rules that frame their relations, or the system of relations through which are transferred resources from one domain of activities to another.

Frédéric Lebaron and Aykiz Dogan's contribution addresses a crucial domain of economic power. In differentiated societies, power as domination is institutionalized through sets of organizations. Some of them occupy key roles in the sense that they bridge different domains of activity. Studying the dynamics of those organizations implies documenting the power plays between these domains and their specific logics. When studying rules that affect the production of goods, the provision of services or the redistribution of wealth, social scientists usually investigate the power of lobbyists and the manufacturing of consensus (Laurens 2018); they test the pro-capitalist bias of the legislation (Gilens and Page 2014) and the effects of institutional settings that are more or less favourable to the promotion of the interests of corporations and the agents who control them (Stepan and Linz 2011). One such institutional setting that is decisive for the monetary regime is the central banks that have become independent from elected officials. Lebaron and Dogan combine geometric data analysis and linear regression in order to sketch the system of relations among central bankers and to assess to what extent their social and professional trajectories tend to determine the monetary policies and the decisions they make.

Saidatou Dicko's contribution connects to the interlocking directorates approach as a preferred sociological method for investigating relations between firms (Mizruchi 1996). Mixing this literature with accounting analysis, Dicko investigates the impact of political connections on the government contract success rates of

publicly listed companies in Canada (2010–2014). Her study illustrates how public information, basic financial accounting and Two-Stages Least Squares (2SLS) estimation can be used to analyse the power plays between public authorities and large corporations. The results show that political connections are frequent among publicly listed Canadian companies. These connections are positively, significantly and weakly associated with the winning of government contracts.

Economic power is not reducible to the prosopography of corporate executives. For instance, consultants' prescriptions and persuasion, Sylvain Thine argues in his contribution, rely on their pedigree. Consultants' inherited social characteristics, especially their proximity to the business community, and their academic achievements play a crucial role. Nowadays, consultants incarnate the deserving inheritors, who combine economic and cultural credentials.

This section ends with a contribution exemplifying how historical sociology can be used for exploring economic power. Bruno Monteiro and Virgílio Borges Pereira demonstrate how historical primary and secondary sources can be used when analyzing economic power relations. They excavate archival materials and press-coverage from the 1960s in order to reconstruct the biographies of prominent Portuguese industrialists and their strategies of (social) reproduction.

Elite Formation The third section of the book addresses yet another domain where elites and power are produced and reproduced. In societies where inheritance is not considered as the most legitimate mode of reproduction, access to dominant positions is made possible by selective and exclusive training systems. The analysis of their transformations in several countries, taking into consideration the question of what methodology should be used to grasp the globalization of educational institutions, sheds light on strategies of adaptation and perpetuation of social reproduction. Seemingly incomparable national education systems bear similarities in terms of the function they fulfil, while being endowed with an autonomy that allows them to produce specific hierarchies.

A comparative international perspective is particularly heuristic in this area of research, for it helps deconstruct what may seem implicit or obvious within national contexts. Ciaran O'Neill introduces a transnational historical approach to elite education. Written from the perspective of a historian of nineteenth century elite education, the chapter probes the various methodologies that historians of elite groups and elite culture can approach in their work.

Two contrasted cases are next presented. Firstly, Mikael Börjesson, Donald Broady and Mikael Palme make use of the rich statistical data available to construct elite education as research object in Sweden, while discussing epistemological and methodological obstacles: strong national egalitarian beliefs that potentially influence this construction; the dangers of relying on categorizations created for administrative purposes; and one-dimensional classifications of students' origin and assets. Next, Aline Courtois explains how elite schools may be identified in a context where a postcolonial narrative and the paucity of statistical data have traditionally made conversations on elite education difficult. The chapter reports on a study conducted in Ireland (Courtois 2018). In contrast to the Swedish case, data on the

socio-economic profile of students are not publicly available. In addition, due to local specificities, the criteria established by researchers in the UK and US contexts to separate out elite schools from other private institutions are not directly applicable.

Based on multiple studies of French elite schools, the chapter of Anne-Catherine Wagner focuses specifically on international capital in its institutionalized form (e.g. international schools and diplomas, in particular MBAs) and on the difficulties in establishing its position in the symbolic hierarchy in the national space. It outlines how the instances of legitimation of elite education are becoming internationalized and argues that international capital amplifies the chances of accessing elite positions for those already privileged, but has little value on its own. The chapter calls for more fine-grained analyses of the conditions that allow the international capital awarded by such institutions to be mobilized.

Symbolic Power There is no economic wealth dissociated from symbolic assets. The accumulation of material resources in the form of stocks, land or estate, which is the privilege of economically forceful fractions of the elites and the bourgeoisie, cannot be separated from entitlement, i.e. the social recognition needed for inheriting, acquiring and reproducing property. Studies of the wealthy elite often address its power to secure the existence of a well-protected social space in which social networks, information and the transmission of privilege are restrained to its well-selected members.

Among cultural fractions of the dominating class, such as university professors, art producers, intellectuals and journalists, elite positions require the acquisition of specific forms of recognition awarded by the particular fields in which they uphold their positions. For a painter to be recognized as a leading artist, the appreciation of the artistic field, its institutions, awards and critics, is primal. While strong economic assets may facilitate, they do not entitle the occupation of dominant positions, their visibility even being potentially harmful. Whereas studies of the academic, cultural and media elites do not neglect their links to the economically powerful or the importance of economic capital in shaping their positions, they typically give special attention to the significance of their contributions in the field in which they are active.

While global economic flows and social networks are not new to the bourgeoisie, globalization increasingly affects how symbolic assets in all areas of social activity are defined, and, as a consequence, how elites in those areas are shaped. Internationally or transnationally valid assets in the form of knowledge, skills and contacts challenge those embedded foremost in national contexts and histories. The emergence of transnational or global elites in various social fields, less dependent than before on national languages, culture and institutions and oriented towards an international labor market, is one of debate in current elite research.

Two contributions focus on the study of the dominating class. In an interview, Monique Pinçon-Charlot and Michel Pinçon reflect on their decades-long and now classical work on the French *grande bourgeoisie*. Exploring how the super-rich have appropriated the St. Tropez peninsula, transforming it into a restricted, privileged area for the upper-class, Isabelle Bruno and Grégory Salle illuminate the

conditions for ethnographic studies of the wealthy elite, in particular the advantages and dangers of being a native insider. Focusing on a different part of social space, Martin Gustavsson and Andreas Melldahl investigate how the elites in the field of art producers, the most respected and acknowledged Swedish painters, can be analyzed solely using indicators emanating from the field itself, such as exhibitions, awards, grants, paintings purchased by art museums and mention in articles by renown art critics. Further, Felix Bühlmann and Sylvain Laurens approach theoretical and methodological dimensions of the study of social recognition and symbolic capital in elite research. Bühlmann discusses possibilities and limitations in the conceptualization and empirical application of the idea of international, transnational or global symbolic capital, whereas Laurens critically examines the frequent use of *indicators* of capital possession in elite studies, arguing that it needs to be accompanied and supported by ethnographic research that clarifies why and how the chosen indicators are effective.

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Part I
The Power Structure

Chapter 2
The Power Structure and Affiliation Network Analysis

An Interview with G. William Domhoff

François Denord, Paul Lagneau-Ymonet, and Sylvain Laurens

Let's start from the very beginning. Basically, your background, education...

So, I'm a middle American from the Midwest. I'm from Ohio. And I grew up in a family that was not very political, if it was political at all. I never heard anything about politics. My father was not very religious, and neither really was my mother, but she took me and my sister, who is 3 years younger than I am, to a Methodist church. I grew up in that atmosphere, which made me part of the mainstream, but my parents, probably inadvertently, left enough room for doubt, which I now can see made it possible for me to become a scientific thinker. My dad worked as a manager of an office owned by a small loan company, and my mother was a homemaker, who was always focused and in motion. For me, it was a very apolitical time in the 1950s. I later learned, though, that I grew up in one of the most ethnically diverse and segregated areas in America, Cleveland and the many surrounding suburbs. Cleveland was one of the sixth or seventh largest cities in the country in the 1940s and 1950s, if you can imagine that today, now that Cleveland has shrunk to a minor and failing city.

When I later looked at the voting records of people in the suburb of Cleveland where I grew up, I learned the place was 80 or 90% Republican. I grew up in a world of white Republicans, although I didn't realize that at the time because I wasn't interested in politics. However, starting at age 18, I accidently ended up with a very wide experience over the next 8 or 9 years. I spent 4 years in North Carolina and three in Florida. I met a woman from California when I was traveling in Europe in

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the summer of 1960, and we were married in the summer of 1961. We moved from Florida to California in the spring of 1962, and I have loved that state and lived there ever since. But, that is getting ahead of the story a little bit. It was a future I never could have predicted.

Anyhow, during my high school years, I was a very good student, in the sense of learning what I was supposed to learn and receiving excellent grades, but my passion was sports. I was successful as a member of the football, basketball, and baseball teams. As a result, I went to college to play baseball at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, in the Fall of 1958, which seemed a million miles away from Ohio in that era. It turned out to be a different world, one that was fully segregated in every aspect. I soon learned I wasn't much of a baseball player, although I was a starting left fielder for 2 of the 3 years I was on the varsity team. At the same time, I was considered to be an oddball by most of my teammates because I was a good and serious student, so I began to learn what it feels like to be marginal for the first time in my life. I was also in a fraternity and worked for the college newspaper, which came out once or twice a week. And I did receive a great education both inside and outside the university. It included a two-semester class on the Bible, which was required of all first-year students because Duke was a strongly Methodist school at the time, although I did not know that fact when I decided to go there. The Bible course, Old Testament one semester, New Testament the other semester, was in effect a course in history and anthropology, and was fascinating. It had the opposite effect on me and many other students than I would suppose the founders of Duke had imagined when they insisted upon that requirement back in the 1920s.

Outside the classroom, I learned about the diversity of the Cleveland area in detail during the summer between my sophomore and junior years in college, due to an interview and observation study I did as a temporary summer polltaker for a large local newspaper back in my home area. The newspaper's leaders, who bragged on the masthead that the newspaper had the largest circulation of any newspaper in Ohio, had decided they wanted to know about the demographics and reading habits of its readers. I was chosen to do the interviews because I already had worked for them for a summer doing chores and errands in the newsroom, including carrying newly finished drafts of stories down the stairs to the floor where the newspaper was printed. I went to every possible neighbourhood in the Cleveland area over the next 3 months, knocking on doors, with a different page of the newspaper in my hands each week. I realized a few years later that this interviewing experience may have been my first introduction to sociology. Back then, though, I was basically headed for a career in journalism.

Another big part of my extra-curricular education during my college years, based on knowing elite Southern white students, turned out to have a lifelong impact. I came to realize soon thereafter that elite southern whites have a very complicated and contradictory sociological outlook on their position in the power structure. On the one hand, they grew up in, and still today grow up in, an arrogant, dominant, white-supremacist culture, due to their total control of the black population, in one way or another, from the middle of the sixteenth century until the late 1960s. This control always involved the quick and brutal use of murderous force, whether

during the centuries of slavery, or the century of total segregation. On the other hand, they see themselves as a conquered and humiliated group because they have been defeated twice by more powerful whites in the North. First in the Civil War in the 1860s, and then during the civil rights movement in the late 1950s and the 1960s, when the federal government sent in troops to enforce desegregation as the new law of the United States.

As a result, all Southern-born whites who stay in the South resent and dislike "Yankees." They developed a culture of resentment, which became even more open and strident as they moved into the Republican Party starting in 1968, and became the core of the racist and anti-immigrant white patriarchal nationalism that has been at the heart of that party since at least the 1980s. They exude the same white resentment the Southern rich displayed when they were the ultimate power brokers in the Democratic Party in the century after the Civil War. Back then, the Southern Democrats, who controlled Congress through bloc voting on race and labour issues, and on seniority, they made sure that any new legislation that helped lower-income whites in the North, such as the Social Security Act and the National Labor Relations Act, always included provisions that excluded African Americans from any new benefits and protections. This didn't bother most white Northern Democrats before 1965.

Like most social scientists of the era, I thought that some combination of increased inter-racial personal contacts, the country's highly individualistic values, and maybe even eventual class solidarity in the blue-collar class, would lead to a gradual decline in segregation. At first that seemed to be correct, but by the beginning of the twenty-first century, I had concluded that the continuing segregation in all aspects of life meant that the United States still had strong remnants of the old caste system. I wrote in my most recent book, *The Corporate Rich and the Power Elite in the Twentieth Century: How They Won, Why Liberals and Labor Lost* (Domhoff 2019), that the United States is rather uniquely characterized by both a class system and a caste-like system, based on once having the largest, most powerful, and most lucrative slave system in history.

Immigrants always have faced discrimination when they first arrive in this country, but they left their home countries for a reason, and with hope, and they have the protection of their own language and culture until they eventually are accepted. The same thing is now happening for the more recent immigrants from Latin American and Asian countries as happened for white immigrants from Europe, and at the same pace, but the caste-like segregation of African Americans continues.

You were a psychology major in college, so could you tell us what psychology was all about back in those days? What were the main references, what was the kind of stuff you were interested in?

Well, psychology was a very divided field at the time. By far the dominant influence was "behaviourism", which was focused on studying how learning occurs, using animal models, namely rats and pigeons, with many of the results generalized to humans. I intensely disliked that kind of work, and didn't think it was worth much, so I avoided it as much as I could. I was interested in personality and

motivation, and in social psychology. And that was a smaller part of psychology back then. And the whole field of what is now called cognitive psychology, which got started through the work of the *Gestalt* psychologists, who came to this country from Germany before World War II, and also the work of the Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, was not a very significant part of psychology at all. But despite the behaviouristic emphasis overall, I enjoyed several of my courses and I became a psychology major. And I had a couple of anthropology courses, and a couple of sociology courses, and eventually I decided to go to graduate school in psychology rather than become a journalist.

I earned an MA in the summer of 1959 at Kent State University in Ohio. I then went to the University of Miami in Florida and finished my PhD in the late summer of 1962. At this point the fact that I happened to be born in 1936 enters the picture as an important factor in my life, as one of those accidents of fate. It meant I was too young to serve in World War II or the Korean War, and too old for the Vietnam War by the time I had finished graduate school and that war came to involve a large number of American troops. Besides, I was married by then, and also had children, which in that era led to deferments from the military whatever your age. So, I never had to face the problem of going into the military and fighting in a war, and by the fall of 1962, at age 26, I had a faculty position, which virtually never happened for anyone who went to college from the 1960s onwards, because everything changed due to the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War.

By comparison, slightly younger people had their lives interrupted by the Vietnam War, and they had to make tough choices. And due to the civil rights movement, many white college students outside the South, women and men, came to be activists and postpone finishing their college educations. Both the civil-rights and anti-war movements had a big influence on me, and soon thereafter, the feminist, gay and lesbian movements. I admired those activists, and I think that was one of the main reasons I moved into sociology. Furthermore, my experience with Southern whites gradually led me to fear that they would kill as many black people as they thought they had to in order to maintain white dominance, which was a chilling and sobering thought for me. I think my effort to understand that kind of mentality was another factor in why I eventually turned to the study of power within a sociological framework.

And how did you come to teach at California State College in Los Angeles? How long did you stay there?

Well, it was the best job I could find at the time in California, where my wife wanted to be, and I did, too, as I already said. I spent three enjoyable years at Cal State LA between 1962 and 1965, where I made many new friends on the faculty in political science and anthropology. They helped to open up a whole new world for me that very much fit with my interest in the civil rights movement, and then the anti-war movement and later social movements. As a result of my new interests, I was asked by students to speak at some of their rallies on campus, and in that way became very peripherally involved in the world of political activists. In addition, some of the students in my social psychology courses were activists.

And how did you encounter C. Wright. Mills?

I began to read C. Wright Mills right around the time I was becoming interested in power because of the civil rights and anti-war movements. Mills died in 1962, shortly before I had begun to read his work, and I didn't know anything about his life or personality when I began my research. Reading *The Power Elite* (Mills 1956) had a big impact on me. I think it shows how the leaders of large institutions, including the owners and top-level managers in large corporations, are able to work together to maintain themselves as the dominant power group. It provides a starting point for figuring out how they shape the federal policies that have a big influence on the lives of everyday people in terms of their incomes, their job security, and their overall well-being. At the same time, I thought the book demonstrated very nicely that the members of the power elite are divided into two factions, as they still are today, the "sophisticated conservatives," whom I usually call the "moderate conservatives," and the old-fashioned, hidebound conservatives, whom I call the "ultra-conservatives." And that division sometimes leads to policy conflicts among rival corporate leaders on a few issues. I think Mills showed that both cohesion and competition characterize the power elite.

However, I also want to emphasize that I also read every past criticism of Mills's *The Power Elite* that I could find. I wanted to have a better basis for making up my mind about all aspects of it when I started to do my own research. That gave me the basis for comparing rival hypotheses based on my own data. A few years later a political science friend of mine at Cal State LA, Hoyt Ballard, suggested that we put all the various criticisms of *The Power Elite* into an edited book, and write a commentary on both the critics and Mills. His idea led to a co-edited book in 1968 that I still think is very useful. It's called *C. Wright Mills and the Power Elite*. It also allowed us to critique all the different theorists of the day including Mills, and thereby establish our own perspective.

From the mid-1960s to this day, I have been involved in an inner dialogue in my thinking with Mills, as well as with the pluralists and Marxists he criticized, and who in turn were highly critical of his work. Based on my reading and research, I always disagreed with Mills's claim that the military was anywhere close to having equal standing in the power elite with the corporate rich, which is the very useful term Mills coined to stress that the upper class had been reorganized since at least the 1940s to include corporate executives as well as wealthy owners. And I came increasingly to disagree with his views on the "mass society" as I read more sociology. I think there are many power niches and potential bases for exercising power below the top. I mentioned those disagreements here and there in my work over the next several decades, but I spelled them out more fully in an invited retrospective review of *The Power Elite* written for *Contemporary Sociology* on the occasion of the book's fiftieth anniversary (Domhoff 2006), "Mills's The Power Elite 50 years later," which is most readily available on my website.[1]

[1] http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/theory/mills_review_2006.html

In my view, the problem is not lack of power bases below the top, but the disagreements among the people on whom these various power bases are built. Middle-level workers, for example, try to keep advantages over lower-level workers, and the established racial, ethnic, and religious groups attempt to hold on to the advantages they have over more recently arrived or previously subjugated racial, ethnic, and religious groups. In the specific case of the United States, there is a loosely knit liberal-labour coalition, as I've already noted in passing, and it is sometimes joined by progressive social movement activists. This loose-knit coalition was able to develop some degree of power, especially to hang on to unions from the mid-1930s through the mid-1970s, as part of the complex electoral coalition within the Democratic Party. Later it was able to stop the full cuts in Social Security that the corporate rich fought for in the 1980s, but those small victories were hardly enough to make the United States a "pluralist" society back then.

And then, as part of my further studies on power, I read Baltzell's work (1958), in which I discovered that the upper class had an in-group telephone book, so to speak, where they list themselves. It was called the *Social Register*. It immediately hit me: that's something I could use as an indicator that a person is a member of the upper class or not. Building on listings in the *Social Register*, along with memberships in the exclusive social clubs listed in the *Social Register*, and attendance at the expensive private high schools listed in the *Social Register*, I realized I could then use a list of what I called "social indicators" to determine if there's a disproportionate number of these *Social Register* people that are in positions of power, which is to my mind a good indicator of power. Sure enough, my students and I then found that many upper-class people are on many different organizational boards, including corporations and foundations. All that was a revelation to me, coming as I did from the middle class, and having had no previous knowledge of exclusive clubs and expensive private schools. It was exciting, too, because I had been taught to be as empirical as possible, and to collect data, and I liked that approach.

At that point I also knew a little about social networks due to the British social anthropologists who studied family networks, and I also knew about the work of Jacob Moreno on sociometry (Moreno 1960). Then, when I read sociologist Floyd Hunter's 1957 book, *Top Leader, USA*, in about 1965 or 1966, I saw he used networks that were inspired by Moreno. Then I studied his list of leaders, which he had developed through his nationwide interviews with corporate leaders, by basically asking them "who are the big deals?", an approach I will explain more about in a minute. When I studied the names on his list by looking at my social indicators, I found many of the same people that I claimed were members of the upper class. I was surprised that some of them were still important 8 or 9 years after his data gathering was completed. It gave me more confidence in my method and findings. Today we would say I had convergent evidence based on the use of two very different methods, Hunter's and mine.

By the 1960s, however, Hunter had little or no influence in sociology or political science. I learned he had been marginalized and even demonized by the pluralists by the time I was working on these matters, who said that his interview method was merely learning about "reputations," so his work allegedly was of no use. When I

coincidentally came to know Hunter personally in the 1970s, and I read his other work on power more carefully, I realized his work was even better than I initially thought. By the late 1970s, his method had received strong vindication in a big interview study in which important American decision-makers were interviewed in a variety of issues, the best summary of which appeared in an article in the *American Political Science Review* in 1981, written by sociologists John Higley and Gwen Moore (1981), and entitled "Elite integration in the U. S. and Australia".

Since Mills had died in 1962 and Hunter had been marginalized by the 1960s, there was no ongoing tradition of power structure research at that time. The people doing power structure research were the activists working in social movements, who did useful pamphlets such as *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures*, which was used by civil-rights activists to figure out which corporations in the North were indirectly supporting segregation in the South. Soon activists also wrote *Who Rules Columbia?*, *How Harvard Rules*, and *Go to School, Learn to Rule*, the latter of which was about the ways rich elite Yale graduates involved themselves as leaders in the power structure. Perhaps Baltzell could be said to do power structure research, but his main concern in the 1960s was that the members of the upper class were not open enough to upwardly mobile Catholics and Jews, which would eventually weaken class power if that didn't change (Baltzell 1964). He didn't have a very deep analysis, in my opinion, although I did find his work on the social aspects of the upper class to be very important to my work at that time.

In the winter-spring semester of 1965, which turned out to be my last semester at Cal State LA, I went into my social psychology class and said something like "students are now saying they want to learn something new and more relevant, so we are going to study this power structure stuff; and I tell you that at the outset so you can switch to a more typical psychology class if you want to." Most of them stayed and they did studies of foundations, or corporations, or banks, or whatever they wanted to study that related to the power structure. You can see their names in the endnotes in the first edition of *Who Rules America?*.

Was it at that time, when you moved from Los Angeles to Santa Cruz, that you switched from psychology to sociology?

Yes, although I did begin changing my interests while I was at Cal State LA, as I already mentioned. At that point, the University of California system, which has more money and a lighter teaching load than the state-college system, opened up a new campus in Santa Cruz in 1965, as well as new campuses in Irvine and San Diego. More generally, the University of California was hiring professors like crazy because it was expanding very rapidly in the face of the big "Baby Boomer" generation born shortly after World War II. To my good fortune, the Santa Cruz campus was run by people who were atypical; they were very liberal about education, and in general iconoclastic, and were breaking way from the standard university way of educating students at that time. For example, they didn't like the way in which big-time sports teams, like football and basketball, dominated the atmosphere on most university campuses. They didn't like the fraternity/sorority system either, and they

didn't like how rigid and separated the academic departments were, and still are, on virtually all university campuses. They tried to break all that up.

The people doing the hiring at Santa Cruz were glad to have a young faculty member who was interested in both psychology and sociology, and who was working on an atypical topic, power, besides. They mostly succeeded in instituting their plans until about the year 2000, because the Santa Cruz campus did not have fraternities and sororities for decades, and still doesn't have any big-time athletic teams. The campus therefore has a very different atmosphere than most campuses. However, the departments slowly came back, and the campus has big, fairly rigid departments by now, in part because it went from a few thousand students to 18,000 students, and in part because a new, more conventional set of professors slowly replaced those of us who originally came to the campus.

Thanks to coming to Santa Cruz in the mid-1960s, I was able to become even more involved in studying power, and I had even more students who were interested in studying this topic, both in classes and as research assistants. They made it feasible for me to do the further work that made it possible to publish *Who Rules America?* in 1967, as well as doing a large amount of original research for my next book, a set of empirical essays entitled *The Higher Circles* (1970).

Your 1974 book on the Bohemian Grove (Domhoff 1974) *deals with the cohesion's question*

Ah yes, and glad you mentioned that book. *The Bohemian Grove and Other Retreats: A Study of Ruling Class Cohesiveness,* which is based on archival data, interviews, and a visit to the Bohemian Grove itself, was important to me as an answer to the pluralists of that long-ago time. They said, in effect, "Look, you are talking about these rich owners and top corporate executives as if they are cohesive and as if they get together and make policies, but you haven't shown us that." Contrary to their assertion, my study of the Bohemian Grove showed the rich and powerful were members of a handful of for-fun retreats and clubs, and thereby knew at least someone who knew someone else, so they were part of what is today called a small-world network. Furthermore, and this was the real reason I did so much empirical work on a seemingly frivolous side show like the Bohemian Grove, I had figured out through name-tracing that the corporate owners and executives in the network of retreats and social clubs were also the trustees of foundations and think tanks, and also members of the elite policy-discussion groups where policy consensus is reached. I also could show by then, better than I had been able to in the previous 10 years, that their policy statements help shape the overall policy dialogue, and that those statements are put in the hands of government decision-makers. Moreover, some of those decision-makers are corporate executives that have been appointed to government positions.

In addition, I drew upon the social psychology literature to show that social cohesion does in fact facilitate policy cohesion. Social cohesion causes people to like each other more, trust each other more, and listen to each other carefully in policy-discussion groups. Coming to know people better in a relaxed, high-status setting therefore facilitates policy cohesion, as social psychologists claim, and hats off to

the great social psychologists who did that research decades and decades ago. In my mind, the book was also a replication of my earlier use of exclusive clubs and private schools as indicators of upper-class standing, since it used a very different starting point and ended up with the same findings as far as who ran the corporations and held top positions in government. I therefore used the last chapter of that book to bring together everything I had learned up to that point. Anyhow, I thought I had the pluralists dead to rights with my new evidence. And by that point the younger members of the upper class were losing interest in the *Social Register*, so the list of names grew shorter and it lost its usefulness as an upper-class indicator.

And it's not a minor point to add that I lucked into this study because I interviewed a very open and liberal person for my book on campaign finance, *Fat Cats and Democrats* (Domhoff 1972). He was a member of two elite clubs in San Francisco, and he was willing to give me the list of members for both of those clubs. That's what made the initial network analysis possible, and then to carry out my historical analysis, and then do my interviews. Then, too, the interviews gave me the opportunity to do observational analyses three different times at the Bohemian Club, which sponsors the Bohemian Grove retreat, asking my same seemingly dumb and innocent questions each time. I even had the chance to do that kind of thing once at the Bohemian Grove itself at one of their one-day events in June, an event that happens about a month before their annual 2-week retreat to the Bohemian Grove that began in 1880 and still goes on to this day. Sometimes it's necessary to be very opportunistic in doing power structure research due to problems of access.

How do you define "power"?

Power is one of those words that's intuitively easy for most people to understand based on their own experience in groups and workplaces, but hard to define in a precise manner. We know it means "clout" or "juice" or "muscle," or being a "rainmaker," which is one of the in-group slang terms for power in the power elite. More academically and formally, I agree with those social scientists who define "power" as "*the capacity of some persons to produce intended and foreseen effects on others*" (Wrong 1995). This is a very general definition that allows for the many forms of power that can be changed from one to another, such as ideological power (which usually is based in religious organizations), economic power, military power, political power, and also intellectual power, by which I mean knowledge and expertise produced in universities and think tanks. That definition leaves open the question of whether "force" or "coercion" is always lurking somewhere in the background in the exercise of power, as many definitions wrongly imply, in my opinion. However, a formal definition does not explain how a concept is to be measured, or "operationalized," as we say in the trade. In the case of power, it is seldom possible to observe interactions that reveal power in operation even in a small group, let alone to see one "social class" producing "effects" on another. It is therefore necessary to develop what I call "indicators" of power.

Starting with the idea of power indicators, power can be thought of as an underlying trait or property of a social group or social class. So "power" is measured by indicators that bear a probabilistic relationship to it. This means that all the

indicators do not necessarily appear each and every time power is manifesting itself. Research proceeds through a series of "if-then" statements: "if" a group or class is powerful, "then" it should be expected that certain indicators of this power will be present. Ideally, there should be more than one power indicator if possible, and they should be of different types so that any irrelevant components in them will cancel each other out.

What are the main power indicators you use?

There are three primary indicators of power, which can be summarized as (1) who benefits? (2) who governs? and (3) who wins?, all of which come from different types of research information. But it's also important to note that Hunter's indicator for power, a "reputation" for power, is a good one too. In fact, it usually overlaps well with the other three indicators, and sometimes uncovers a few leaders that aren't easily detected through public records. But the reputation indicator is more difficult to use because it requires access to people in the group being studied, or to people who follow policy-making closely, such as civil servants, social workers, or maybe best of all, the journalists who cover business or government. It also takes two or three rounds of interviewing. But as I said, it's been proven to be useful when it is feasible to employ the method, contrary to the pluralist critiques of it.

Returning to the three power indicators that are most frequently used, we know from anthropological and sociological studies that every society has experiences and material objects that are highly valued. So, if it is assumed that everyone in a given society would like to have as great a share of these experiences and material objects as they possibly can, then the distribution of values can be utilized as a power indicator. Those who benefit the most, by inference, are powerful. In American society, wealth and well-being are highly valued. People seek to own property, earn high incomes, to have interesting and safe jobs, and to live long and healthy lives. And there's much economic information that can be used to study these distributions. All of them show the same small upper class of owners and top managers at the top. Based on all the studies of the huge changes in the wealth and income distributions in the past 20 years, which everyone agrees are very solid studies, no one doubts this power indicator any longer. However, it's important to remember that the concentration of wealth and income in the top 0.5% was very high in the 1950s and 1960s, so not as much has changed as the social scientists who don't know the past literature may think. That assertion is demonstrated in detail in the second chapter of the first edition of *Who Rules America?*.

Then, too, power also can be inferred from studies of who occupies important institutional positions and takes part in important decision-making groups. That's the method I relied on the most in *Who Rules America?*. If a group or class is highly over-represented in relation to its proportion of the population, it can be inferred that the group is powerful. If, for example, a group makes up 1% of the population but has 30% of the seats in the main governing institutions, then it has 30 times more people in governing positions than would be expected by chance, and there is thus reason to believe that the group is a powerful one. Once again, that kind of information is readily available. Every study that has been done since the 1950s,

including many by me and my students, has shown that the corporate rich have been appointed to these positions in disproportionate numbers ever since the 1940s. No one can any longer say, as the pluralists used to, that the Eisenhower Administration, which Mills focused on in *The Power Elite*, was somehow unusual.

In terms of the third power indicator, who wins in policy disputes, there have been many studies by now of policy issues over which the corporate rich, the liberal-labour coalition, and others groups disagree. In the United States at least, there always have been different policies suggested by opposing groups on such important issues as foreign policy, taxation, welfare, and the environment. This indicator, which focuses on who successfully initiates, modifies, or vetoes policy alternatives, comes closest to approximating the process of power that is contained in the formal definition. But it has to be stressed that it is no less an inference to say that who wins on issues is an indicator of "power" than to do so on the basis of value distributions and positional over-representation. The problem with the who-wins indicator is that decision-makers are rarely willing to let social scientists sit in on power discussions, so reconstructing a decision-making process is based on after-the-fact interviews, and if the researcher is lucky, through access to documents that were part of the final process. Even then, it may be difficult to gain access to decision-makers to interview them, some interviewees may exaggerate or play down their roles, and people's memories about who did what often become cloudy shortly after the event. Contrary to the pluralists, it is not the ideal power indicator.

With all those cautions kept in mind, the fact is that a large accumulation of decisional studies over the past 100+ years shows that the corporate rich win on the issues of most concern to them virtually every time. I summarized the new studies that make this point in later editions of *Who Rules America?* In *The Corporate Rich and the Power Elite in the Twentieth Century*, I showed corporate dominance for a whole range of big issues relating to unions, government social benefits such as old-age pensions and health insurance, and trade expansion overseas for the entire twentieth century. Since the who-wins indicator is the only one pluralists think is fully legitimate, I frankly don't see how anyone can claim to be a pluralist any more, any more than Marxism holds up as a theory in the face of all the evidence that does not support the key aspects of the theory. I think the 60+ years of research since Mills wrote *The Power Elite,* and the 50+ years that have passed since the first edition of *Who Rules America?* appeared, completely supports the common aspect of our views, which is that power is based on control of the major institutional structures of a society, and in the United States that means the big banks, corporations, and agri-businesses.

I fully recognize that most social scientists probably still don't agree with my conclusion, but I also know that fewer and fewer sociologists focus on big issues like societal power, and that the political scientists who study power still focus mostly on government, and entirely ignore what Mills and I have written. According to most political scientists, power was concentrated until the Progressive Era came along and changed some things, and then power calcified at the top again until the Great Depression disrupted the established order. After that, the political scientists continue, power supposedly didn't start to become highly concentrated again until

the late 1970s, and then became highly concentrated in the past 20 years. So, even if some political scientists are familiar with the work Mills and I did, they figure we were wrong for the era we wrote about.

So, what is power structure research, exactly, and how can power structures be studied empirically?

In today's terms, it is first of all an attempt to construct the networks of people and institutions that run the show, although it must immediately be added that the overall theory concerns more than the top levels of society. Power relations run from top to bottom, like a pecking order, only more complicated. The social structure is not simply an organized elite or class at the top, with an unorganized mass below it, as I noted in stating my disagreements with Mills in my answer to a previous question. Nor, for that matter, is there a more or less unified working class below the top levels, as Marxists claim is at least potentially the case. As my critique implies, the power structure is more like a pecking order, and in that regard there is an old German folk saying from two or three centuries ago that captures what it's like to live in a power structure: "life is like a chicken coop ladder". Which I read about in a book by a great folklore professor at the University of California, Berkeley, Alan Dundes, who uses that folk wisdom as the book's title (Dundes 1984). That is, all the bad stuff goes raining down the social ladder, and eventually really piles up on the people on the bottom. The only saving grace that social scientists can add is that there are multiple status hierarchies in human societies, which means that people can find enjoyment and solace outside the power hierarchy through being a great athlete, or a fine musician, or a popular entertainer.

From an empirical point of view, how do you study the power structure?

The empirical study of power begins with a search for connections among the people and organizations that are thought to constitute the powerful group or class. This procedure is called *membership network analysis.* It starts with a study of people and all the organizations to which they belong. Or conversely, you could say the study starts with a list of organizations that also includes all of the members of each organization. Either starting point leads to the same results. These results are usually presented in the form of a matrix. The people are listed from the top to bottom and the organizations are arrayed from left to right. The "cells" or boxes created by the intersection of a person and organization are filled with "relational" information such as "member," "director," "owner," or "financial donor." The attitudes a person has toward any given organization or person in the matrix also can be included, such as "supporter" or "opponent." Maybe think of attitudinal information as a "psychological" relation to an organization or person. The information used in filling the cells of the matrix is obtained in a variety of ways, which mostly means written documents, surveys, and interviews.

Large and complicated membership networks can be analysed using computer software based on sophisticated mathematical techniques, such as graph theory and matrix algebra. Once the membership networks have been established, there are many other types of links that might be analysed, such as money flows among

organizations. After the most central organizations and people in the one or more cliques, factions, groups, or classes in the network are established, then it is necessary to study the "output" of those organizations and people, such as the policy and public relations statements published and disseminated by the organizations, which reveal the shared positions within that clique or the overall network. It's equally important to examine the speeches and interviews by the most central people in the network that are available in text form, which provide an excellent indication of what the main leaders are thinking, or at least saying. Here I am talking about a long-established methodology in the social sciences and communication studies. It's called "content analysis," and it can be done with quantitative analyses, including examining word networks. These methods are just as rigorous as those used in doing membership network analyses.

At that point, it's time to interview spokespersons for the organizations, or the top leaders to whom you can gain access. You then ask all your warm-up questions, the easy questions, so to speak, and then you ask increasingly difficult questions. Finally you ask the biggest questions on your mind, which may have been refined for you by hearing their earlier answers. It's at that point that the interviewee may kick you out of the office. I call it the onion theory of interviewing, in which you start on the outside, and gradually peel back layers, until you reach the core. Here I think of the great interview study of upper-class women carried out by sociologist Susan Ostrander for her book on *Women of the Upper Class* (Ostrander 1984). Using the grounded-theory methodology that has proven to be highly useful, Ostrander started with the very general question of what the woman being interviewed did during her typical day. It turned out to be a very important opening question because she unexpectedly learned that the role of "volunteer" was very important for upper-class women, at least in the first 80 years of the twentieth century. Toward the end of the interview she asked if they considered themselves to be a member of the upper social class, which usually received an awkward or chilly answer, and often put an end to the interview.

In another good example of the importance of interviewing in power structure research, a sociologist who was studying campaign finance in the late 1980s, an indefatigable and relentless researcher named Dan Clawson, asked me what I'd infer from his complicated findings on corporate campaign-finance donations to members of Congress. He asked this question based on a few puzzling patterns he found through a very fine network analysis, using money flows as the network links. I told him I didn't know, but that I'd sure ask the executives who ran political action committees (PACs) for the corporations he and his co-author graduate students were studying. And based on those questions that emerged from the network analysis, the executives told them great stuff that solved many of the mysteries, which can be found in their 1992 book, *Money Talks: Corporate PACS and Political Influence*.

For me, it was my experience doing door-to-door poll interviews during that summer between my junior and senior years in college, along with my journalism experience and reassurances from Hunter that I could gain more access than I figured was possible, that got me into interviewing. I talked to big donors to political campaigns, the experts that worked for think tanks and policy-discussion groups,

and the corporate bigwigs who are leaders in policy-discussion groups. And I of course interviewed employees and members of the Bohemian Club. In the process, one of those employees practically handed me the opening paragraphs of my book when he told me that every encampment began with a hooky, cornball initiation ceremony called "The Cremation of Care," complete with high priests, druids, tree spirits, and the mock sacrifice of the effigy of Mr. Dull Care. But I had to smoke a joint with the nervous employee before he'd talked to me. As a person who never smoked much marijuana, I ended up stoned for most of the interview, but with no regrets, just embarrassment.

As far as I am concerned, the work by Ostrander, Clawson, me, and other power structure researchers, who had our heyday from the 1970s to the early 1990s, demonstrated that interviewing powerful people is possible and useful. It takes time, and it can be disconcerting to sit in big intimidating offices, and sometimes there are refusals, but it's worth the effort. By now, though, this kind of work appears to be outsourced to the excellent researchers at a wide range of non-profit public-interest organizations, as well as to investigative journalists, who together provide valuable grist for various social-science mills to grind on.

Wrapping up on the issue of how power structures are studied, if the networks that are constructed and analysed on the basis of documents and interviews are indeed the relevant networks, then they should score high on one or more of the four main power indicators that it was possible to use in any given study: who benefits, who governs, who wins, and who has a reputation for power.

Any final thoughts?

For a long time now, it seems to me that power structure researchers in fact have been finding the right networks, and the scores on the power indicators for the organizations and leaders in these networks are higher and higher every time there is a large-scale study. Our findings and theories have turned out to be more accurate, or at least less wrong, than any of the alternative theories that have been proposed since Mills, Hunter, and I started doing power structure research in the 1950s and 1960s.

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Chapter 3
The Field of Power and the Division of the Labour of Domination

Handwritten Notes for the 1985–1986 Collège de France lectures

Pierre Bourdieu

The division into relatively autonomous fields is the outcome of a *process of differentiation* that should not be confused with the process of stratification (or division into objective classes), although it also leads to social divisions, such as the division of the dominant class into fractions: it can be described as a process of institution of different spaces of play where specific forms of capital are engendered and actualized, and are both assets and characteristic stakes of each form of game.[1]

In reaction to what he called Bergson's "unitarist vitalism", Durkheim, extending and correcting Spencer's argument that the universe moves "from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous", described the evolution that leads from the "primary state of non-division", in which the "diverse functions" are already present but in a "state of confusion" (religious life, for example, combining rites, morality, law, art and even the beginnings of a science), to the "progressive separation of all these diverse yet primitively blended functions": "secular and scientific thought became separated from mythical and religious thought; art became separated from worship, morality and the law became separated from rites".[2] Durkheim may see in this confusion of different forms of activity an obstacle to the full realization of any one of them ("Primitively, all forms of activity, all functions are assembled together, as each other's prisoners: they are obstacles to each other; each prevents the other from completely realizing its nature"), but he does not clearly evidence a link, as Weber sometimes does, between the appearance of separate domains and the institution of

Translation from French by Jean-Yves Bart

[1] This text was originally published in *Actes de la recherches en sciences sociales* 2011(5)/190.

[2] See in particular Émile Durkheim (1955), *Pragmatisme et sociologie, pp. 191–193.*

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autonomous social universes, which are the loci of a specific legality, manifested by a constitutive *as such* (the economy as such, law as such, art as such, etc.).

Being specific powers in a particular form of struggle for a particular type of power, the different species of capital are themselves subject to struggles within the field of power, as a field of power relations between the powers that may operate in the different fields and as a field of struggles to transform these power relations, or even to secure power over the different powers.[3]

The field of power is defined as the space of the positions from which power is exerted over capital in its different species. One must indeed distinguish between the mere possession of (say, economic or cultural) capital and the possession of a *capital conferring power over capital,* meaning over the very structure of a field, and therefore, among other fields, over profit rates, and by extension, over all ordinary holders of capital. In the economic field, for instance, "controlling shareholders",[4] who are the holders of the actual economic property, are at odds with the small shareholders, who are the holders of the legal property of financial capital; likewise, in the field of cultural production, the holders of mere cultural capital are pitted against the holders of a power over cultural capital, which includes the determination of the chances of profit (and reproduction) granted to that capital (for instance, the most consecrated authors, who as a result have a power of consecration, but also and arguably to a greater extent, publishers, critics and journalists).[5]

As membership in the field of power is defined not by the personal possession of a parcel of capital (in the form of a property deed or an education credential, for instance), but by the possession of a sufficient quantity of capital to dominate in one field or another, the dominant class comprises all agents that in effect hold the positions of power over capital, meaning over the very functioning of a field or over that field's system of instruments of reproduction. Because it is through the system of instruments of reproduction that the relation between positions of power and all the agents who hold them is established on a lasting basis, the dominant class, despite its divisions and antagonisms, tends to constitute *corps* – groups of agents who are

[3] There are as many forms of power (or species of capital) as there are fields. If there is accordingly a form of power specific to each field, this does not mean that the other powers cannot operate there, to a certain extent and under certain conditions. One can empirically ascertain what has the value of a power (or of a capital) in a given field at a given time; each field "activates" a particular set of properties by establishing pertinent properties – meaning efficient – to differentiate between the agents and institutions involved in that field. See P. Bourdieu & M. de Saint Martin (1978),"Le patronat"; P. Bourdieu & M. de Saint Martin (1982), « La sainte famille », P. Bourdieu (1985), *Homo academicus*). These studies, which are due to be complemented by analyses of the senior public service, journalism and artists, and especially of the system of "elite schools" in charge of reproducing the field of power in its very structure, are the companions and the "empirical" foundations of the research presented here.

[4] François Morin (1974), *La Structure financière du capitalisme français*, p. 21.

[5] This opposition can be exemplified by the case of processes whereby professors who are limited to functions of cultural transmission are, as "small shareholders", devoid of power over the space of production, at odds first with the professors who hold power of the reproduction of the body and of the culture it conveys, and second with the professors who are also producers, and as such, are endowed with a power over the very definition of culture (see P. Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*).

socially united by the imposition of an identical *name*, such as clubs, alumni associations, professional corporations, or, like families, through socially sanctioned ties of filiation and alliance, which means symbolically redoubling and reinforcing objective ties linked to their solidarity of interests and affinity of habitus, i.e., their vicinity in social space.

The objective relationships between the different fractions of the dominant class within the field of power take on two different, if not opposite aspects: when they are considered in themselves and for themselves, as if the field of power were entirely autonomous, they appear as relationships of domination (of the richer fraction in economic capital over the richer fraction in cultural capital); when they are approached […] through the lens of the relationship of domination between dominants and dominated that defines the field of power, one may glimpse that, through these internal relationships, however conflict-laden they may be, a form of division of the labour of domination is achieved. Where the agents are concerned, the duality of points of view lies in the fact that they can be characterized, particularly in terms of their interests, as either belonging to the field of power, i.e., as dominants, or as occupying a position in that field, as dominated-dominants for instance.

Thus, the organic solidarity that unites the fractions of the dominant classes insofar as they contribute to domination, and which finds itself ratified and reinforced by exchanges that allow for the introduction of two-way relationships of obligation and dependence (as each of the exchangers is dominated under one angle and dominant under the next), does not preclude the permanent struggle for the imposition of the dominant principle of domination, and at the same time, for the conservation or transformation of the structure of power within the field of power (especially today, through the conservation or transformation of the structure of the field of educational institutions in charge of the reproduction of the dominant class).[6]

The Question of Legitimacy and the Division of the Labour of Domination

The field of power is defined in its structure by the state of power relations between different powers, such as it is determined by a certain law of conversions between different species of capital (and power); it is inseparably a field of struggles over the conservation or transformation of this state of power relations, among other things through the transformation or conservation of the representation of the hierarchy between different species of capital, particularly in terms of legitimacy. Since the dominant class has to reproduce, i.e., reproduce as dominant and as legitimate in dominating, and since it must accordingly produce, as Weber puts it, "a theodicy of

[6] The maintenance of the structure of the field of power, and consequently of the internal order of the dominant class, is part of the conditions of the maintenance of domination. This is why transformations in the field of the institutions in charge of reproducing the dominant class (prestigious schools, faculties, etc.) may trigger major crises both for the dominant class and for its domination.

its own privilege", and since consequently the question of the internal divisions of the dominant class cannot be separated from the question of the legitimization of power and of the division of the labour of domination, the holders of cultural capital, *oratores*, intellectuals, although they are inevitably dominated in the struggle for power, in which the holders of political, military or economic power, *bellatores*, industry leaders, etc., have all the best cards, nevertheless have a significant advantage in the strictly symbolic struggle over the imposition of the dominant principle of domination.

The fact that each power must, to maintain itself durably, contribute to its own legitimization, and that as a result the division of the labour of domination always tends to be organized around the opposition between political or temporal power (dominated by military, economic forces, etc.) and cultural or spiritual power, explains that in very different societies we find a dualist power structure, which, with the adjunction of the dominated "commons", composes the Dumézilian triad, perfectly captured by the three concepts of the medieval order analysed by Georges Duby: *bellatores*, *oratores*, *laboratores*.[7]

The legitimacy of a power can be measured on the basis of the recognition it is granted, i.e., the misrecognition of the arbitrariness on which it *can* be based: therefore, it tends to grow as the pure imposition of violence or the open exercise of force are foregone. Symbolic power (or symbolic capital) cannot be independently generated as a recognized form of power (or of capital under one of its forms), and hence one that is misrecognized in its objective truth. The axiom stating that all symbolic power, that is, all power that manages to impose itself as legitimate by concealing its foundation in force, adds its own specifically symbolic force to that force, is only an apparent exception to the principle of the conservation of social energy: force needs to be expended to produce law; economic capital must be expended to produce symbolic capital.[8]

The intention at the root of acts of public generosity (like the euergetism of the Ancient Romans) or, closer to us, of the philanthropic or cultural actions of large corporations or their foundations, seems contradictory as a generous gift for non-profit causes or organizations made with the aim, conscious or unconscious, but always concealed, at least to others, to serve the interests of the donor, only as long as one is unaware of the specific rationality of the economy of symbolic exchanges. This upside-down economic world experiences a paradoxical form of interest – in such cases, an enlightened self-interest[9]; because disinterest is positively sanctioned, there is an interest in *showing oneself* to be disinterested: profit can be purely symbolic, as is most often the case, at least in the short term, in the universe of culture; but with the new corporate strategies, it may be an economic profit, in the restricted sense, and pursued as such: conceived as investments meant to improve

[7] Georges Duby (1978), *Les Trois Ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*.

[8] On symbolic capital and the logic of its accumulation, see Pierre Bourdieu (1980), *Le Sens pratique*.

[9] In English in the original.

the 'image of the company', meaning the symbolic capital attached to the brand, philanthropic actions must be managed like financial investments, chosen in the moment, in the occasion, in their form in such a way as to maximize their symbolic yield; as the appearance of being free is the condition of symbolic efficacy, self-interested motives must be concealed as perfectly as possible (whereas the most publicity will be given to the generosity of the philanthropist and patron) and the domain of culture, which affirms itself against the economy, is a privileged venue for such investments in the form of gratuitous acts. Corporate patronage is thus the form *par excellence* of symbolic investment: aside from the profit inherent in gratuitous generosity, it can bring the expression of recognition (in a double sense).

Where legitimacy is concerned, nothing is more wrong than the maxim that holds 'if you want a thing done well, do it yourself': the logic of enlightened egoism discussed by Tocqueville requires overcoming the tendency of all powers to take on their own celebration themselves and in doing so sparing themselves the expense and the risk of diversion that are inherent in delegation. The prince can be served by his painters, his poets or his lawyers only if he renounces to fulfil these tasks himself or to legislate directly in matters of art or law. But the partial dispossession entailed by delegation also contains the risk of a greater dispossession: the agents, painters or poets, can divert the powers of consecration that are recognized in them, to their own profit or to the profit of those who think they support them in their struggle against the holders of temporal power; and, paradoxically, the reinforcement of the dominated tends to reinforce the holders of cultural force, which is always potentially subversive, by reinforcing the need for their specific services, and the threat that they might secede.

The Potentiality of Secession

Power involves a demand for recognition. It does not content itself with the mechanical submission of the automaton who obeys every command, like a machine that can be steered thanks to a simple push on a button; it requires an autonomous agent, i.e., someone able to make the prescribed rule of conduct his own by obeying it. An order only becomes effective, efficient, through the person executing it, with the objective collaboration of his conscience, his previously shown dispositions to recognize it in practice, in an act of obedience, meaning belief. As the act of recognition has all the more chances of being recognized, and accordingly legitimate and legitimating, if it appears less determined by external constraints (for instance those exerted through economic or political calculations), the efficacy of a symbolic action of legitimation increases along with the recognized, or statutory independence of the consecrating agent or institution from the consecrated agent or

institution.[10] This efficacy is null in the cases of self-consecration (Napoleon crowning himself) or self-celebration (a writer writing his own panegyric), weak in the case of consecration by mercenaries or accomplices or even by relatives and loved ones, as is the case in all relations of direct exchange of symbolic services (tributes, prefaces, reviews, etc.), which are all the more transparent as the distance between the exchangers, as in the mutual admiration clubs where A consecrates B who consecrates A, and the temporal lapse between acts of exchange are short. Conversely, it is maximal when all visible relationships of material or symbolic interest between the institutions or agents concerned have disappeared.[11]

Thus, although apparent autonomy or unconscious dependence may have the same effects as actual independence, the symbolic efficacy that is conditioned by a degree of actual autonomy of the legitimating body has the virtually inevitable downside of a proportional risk that this body might divert its delegated power of legitimation for its own profit. For instance, as soon as a corps of professional lawyers appeared in twelfth century Poland, the ambiguity of the relationship of dependence in and through the independence between cultural power and temporal power manifested itself very clearly:[12] the autonomization that has the effect of ensuring the prince powers of a new kind, more concealed, and more legitimate, since they are based on the autonomous authority, conquered *against him*, of the legal tradition and its guardians, is also the root of the demands and power struggles in which lawyers think they are invoking the specific legitimacy of law against the prince's arbitrariness. We may also mention, as a paradigm of sorts of the relationship between cultural producers and temporal powers, the figure of [Pierre] Arétin who, according to Burckhardt, could use his talents for the benefit of the greats, including Charles V, whose victories he celebrated, but drew most of his profit from indulging in outright blackmail of all Italian celebrities, who were forced to shower him with gifts and pensions to make sure he would stay silent and avoid being the targets of its lethal lampoons and satirical verses.[13]

Ambiguity is inscribed in the very structure of the relationship between the two powers, and it is directly reflected in the ambivalent relationship of each of them with the other. Thus, the holders of temporal power are structurally divided (among them, and likely internally) when it comes to allocating the costs for upholding order to open repression or to the soft violence of an enlightened conservatism that

[10] This is empirically verified in the fact that the effect of legitimation which adds its strictly symbolic force to the simple effect of force is all the greater when force (military, economic or other) is less exerted, at least in a visible manner, and does not have to denounce itself, remaining in a state of 'inert violence', to use Sartre's phrase, a structural violence, inscribed in mechanisms such as those that make capital flow to capital.

[11] The distance to the field concerned is also one of the factors of symbolic efficacy, which is inversely proportional to the recipients' knowledge of the interests in play, and therefore to their social – and spatial – proximity to the game and its stakes.

[12] Another exemplary form of this relation of dependence in and through independence is that established between the dominant fractions and the Church or the education system.

[13] Jacob Burckhardt (1958), *La Civilisation et la Renaissance en Italie*, pp. 123–128.

knows to concede to better conserve or even to waste to earn more. The opposition is particularly sharp in terms of ideological work: spurred by defiance towards 'intellectuals' and an eagerness to spare themselves the energy spent for dissimulation, the class rear-guard fundamentalists (for instance the 'shock fractions') produce a discourse with a high conservative information content but whose symbolic efficacy is very weak, at least outside of their universe; conversely, the modernist fraction adopts a discourse with a low informative content but with a high degree of dissimulation, and thus a high symbolic efficacy, and knows, crucially, how to step aside for spokespersons who are all the more effective as they do not appear to others, or themselves, as such, and even think they are applying a cost of symbolic protest to the profits of the symbolic dissimulation they provide to the conservative message.

The specific contradiction of the most highly differentiated modes of domination resides in the fact that the potentialities of subversive diversion of specific capital increase when the symbolic efficacy of dissimulation linked to the complexity of circuits of legitimation, which are objectively solidary but in practice compete with each other, is inseparable from a differentiation of positions and, correlatively, of interests. The generic interests associated with membership in the field of power do not necessarily coincide with the specific interests, or those linked to a category, associated with the occupation of a given position in the field, which often tend to conceal the former. This is why it occasionally happens that members of the dominant class act against their class interests (linked to their position in the field of power) when those contradict their fractional interests (linked to their position in a specific field); and why the effects of the struggles for domination within the dominant class can come to threaten the foundations of their domination over other classes. This is the case when, in their struggle for domination within a specific field, some agents call for the support of an external force. Among holders of cultural capital, for instance, those who hold a dominated position within the field of cultural production can thus forge permanent or occasional alliances with members of the dominated classes, thereby placing their cultural capital at the service of struggles that they identify more or less completely and durably with their own struggles within the field of power. But, as the effects that concern the field of power (and the dominant class) are only achieved through actions oriented by the interests linked with the occupation of a position in a particular field, the effect of homologies between fields favours a *double whammy effect* [*logique du coup double*], meaning that strategies resulting from the logic of a specific field, even when they are expressly steered against class domination, may ultimately help enforce its continued domination: these effects, which are often described in a naively finalistic language as the result of 'recuperation' strategies are the ordinary product of a domination whose 'subject' is neither an agent nor a group of agents but the complex structure of the field of power as a system of objective relations, remaining opaque to itself, between positions and interests that are both competing and converging.

The Organic Solidarity of Powers

As the field of power diversifies, with autonomous fields multiplying, it keeps moving ever further from a division of the labour of domination based on the *mechanic solidarity* between interchangeable leaders, like the elders of clan units or the 'notables' in village societies, and from the elementary forms of the division of the labour of domination into a small number of specialized functions, like warriors and priests, a simple system, dominated by one principle or the other, such as hierocracy, Caesaropapism or even hereditary monarchy based on divine right, bound to experience open conflict between temporal and spiritual authority. Ceasing to be embodied in specific persons or even institutions, power becomes coextensive to the structure of the field of power, meaning a set of fields that operate according to rigorous mechanisms, which, as they objectify principles of domination (in forms of social automation), allow to refrain from openly using force.[14] More precisely, it is only actualized and manifested through powers stemming from a genuine organic solidarity, and therefore both different and interdependent, i.e., through mechanisms (such as those that ensure the reproduction of economic and cultural capital) that steer the actions and reactions of a *network* of both competing and complementary agents and institutions, involved in increasingly long and complex legitimizing circuits of exchanges.[15] Class unity results, in this case, in the plurality of incomparable principles of domination (power or species of capital), which tends to limit competition between holders of power and facilitate partial and multiple alliances among them.

Each power (or species of capital) dominates a specific field where it tends to hold a monopoly over profits; it can also be present in other fields but with less weight (for instance, legal capital, a sub-species of cultural capital, is present in the economic field).

Within each field, agents may thus possess different species of capital, but the structure of the capital they possess varies between fields (employers have cultural capital, but less than intellectuals). Due to the plurality of competing principles of hierarchization within the field of power (as well as within each of the specialized fields), each agent answers to several competing principles of hierarchization and it is impossible for a single agent to possess all the properties that make domination possible; or, which boils down to the same thing, there is no such thing as a single

[14] On the process of objectivation (or institutionalization) in mechanisms of power and relations of domination, which is directly linked to the evolution of direct domination, from man to man, to indirect domination, 'mediated by things', see Pierre Bourdieu (1980), *Le Sens pratique*, pp. 209–244.

[15] A number of analyses have shown how a regime that can be called a technocratic democracy can durably justify the interests of dominants whilst officially refusing all forms of hereditary transmission, thanks to an unprecedented combination of highly concealed mechanisms of reproduction, such as the electoral system and the education system, each founded on a property qualification effect.

hierarchy ranking agents in all respects.[16] This has the effect of restricting competition between individuals (since, when push comes to shove, all individuals, as long as they have a high amount of one of the recognized properties, can be at the top of at least one hierarchy), but without the competition and tension between the different classes of individuals matching the different fields being alleviated. In other words, the irreducibility of value systems and worldviews, as a result of which the different fractions evoke societies with different cultural traditions, is a core principle of the collective struggles over the imposition of a dominant principle of domination (be it struggles between artists and bourgeois, or closer to us, struggles between the great state institutions over the imposition of their value(s) and the appropriation of positions of power); but this is also why the field of power and the different specialized fields offer partly non-substitutable satisfactions (at least subjectively): not only those associated with dominant positions in each of the fields and sub-fields, but also those expected to yield, at the cost of some bad faith, dominant positions according to a dominated principle in these fields and sub-fields, such as positions of temporal power, dean in the academic field or bishop in the religious field.[17]

This new form of division of the labour of domination is what gives their particular strength and importance to all the solidarities that transcend divisions related to the existence of a plurality of fields and principles of hierarchization, such as *family solidarities*, the basis for networks of exchanges and alliances that play a crucial role both in struggles for power within the field of power and in the perpetuation of the dominant class: the great families, which have men in a variety of dominant positions in a variety of fields, are better positioned, as has often been observed, to survive regime changes or political crises, which as Syme showed for Ancient Rome,[18] tend to replace one network of alliances (family or school) by another.[19]

Additionally, however, they are also one of the mechanisms through which the collective interests of the dominant tend to prevail over the fractional interests associated with each field. The same applies for all the mechanisms, institutional or otherwise, that contribute to facilitating exchanges between the different fractions, and by extension their integration, such as the fairs, clubs, commissions, committees and workshops where representatives of these fractions meet and where, under the effect of the neutral location, a shared ideology develops, contributing to the

[16] Nostalgia over the combination of all principles of domination is expressed among some in the dream of the philosopher king (which often takes the form of the Lenin syndrome) and among others in the fantasy of the prince writer (which makes the fortune of ghost-writers...)

[17] All these social, if not psychological effects of the trend towards an integration of the dominant class founded on organic solidarity have led pundits to periodically herald the decline of the dominant class and the rise of a class-free society (the redistribution of corporate leadership between *owners* and *managers*, which is often the basis of this new bourgeois millenarism, can be seen as one of the dimensions of this evolution towards organic solidarity among the dominant).

[18] Ronald Syme (1967), *La Révolution romaine* [publisher's note].

[19] See Daniel Dessert et Jean-Louis Journet (1975), « Le lobby Colbert. Un royaume ou une affaire de famille? » [The author here also adds the note: « also, Guy Chaussinant-Nogaret… »].

neutralization of conflicts between the fractions as well as to the mystification of the dominated.[20]

More broadly, if agents involved in the field of power are so reluctant to establish among themselves the instrumental and calculated relationships that they have established with the dominated, working, as in pre-capitalist societies, to transform exchanges of goods into exchanges of signs, and economic transactions into symbolic interactions,[21] it is because, here and elsewhere, their exchanges, which are ends in themselves, strengthen the group's unity by the mere fact of reaffirming it; it is also because the extra-ordinary forms of the act of exchange, where the denial of the calculating and instrumental nature of ordinary transactions is manifested, proclaim the irreplaceability of the goods and services exchanged, and therefore the incommensurability of the different species of capital. The mutual recognition manifested in the euphemization of exchanges, which might be exemplified by the choice of replacing the paying of a salary or fee by a gift, the perfect antithesis of everything implied by tips or bribes, is combined, without contradiction, with the affirmation of the radical diversity of its fractions and the complete incommensurability of their assets: by allowing to introduce a complex system of *two-way* obligation and debts, the exchange of irreplaceable goods and services entails that the very person who finds himself indebted to a member of another fraction for a favour he has received can always, simultaneously or at another time, obligate him and ensure his recognition by doing him a favour.

The organic solidarity that unites the different fractions, regardless of all conflicts is thus affirmed in the fact that the business bourgeoisie cannot altogether refuse to play the game of symbolic interaction with the artist without excluding what the artist *represents*: as they are the only ones to professionally produce goods that, in their social definition, can never be entirely reduced to their equivalent in currency, and as they find in a lifestyle based on the transfiguration of poverty into an ethical or aesthetic choice a means to assert that their products are incommensurable to any material equivalent, the artists are, in their very existence, a refutation to the belief in universal venality; and they also represent a refutation of the absolute and universal power of money, and therefore of the economic domination (in the

[20] Among these regulatory mechanisms, elite schools play a crucial role not only in that through regulated co-optation, they ensure the homogeneity and stability of habitus over time. The elite school system is a system of positions that mirrors, in its constitutive oppositions, the system of dominant positions. The institutions that are called to select and shape 'elites' reproduce both the unity and differences or even the unity in the differences at the core of organic solidarity: the school system, acting like Maxwell's demon, distributes teenagers into the different institutions, and consequently into the different careers to which these institutions lead, so as to minimize the loss of structural information, as each candidate has the greatest chance of finding himself directed to the institution leading to the fraction where he came from, and therefore to find people like him in that institution, with all the effects of reinforcement of likenesses and differences that this involves.

[21] These economic transactions transmuted into symbolic exchanges can only be understood if we move beyond the seemingly irreducible opposition between economism and 'symbolic interactionism'.

limited sense) that the business bourgeoisie (and more broadly, the dominant fraction of the dominant) cannot altogether reject without reducing this domination to its truth, i.e., its economic (or in another cases, military and police) dimension.[22]

The temporally dominant fraction cannot admit this truth to itself or others: this is a matter of morals and morale, i.e., its conviction of its own legitimacy, which is part of the conditions of its power, because it governs its capacity to impose the recognition of its domination on the dominated, i.e., the misrecognition of the arbitrariness of its power. And, if as soon as the field of cultural production has conquered a minimal degree of autonomy, the ties of dependence established between some intellectuals and the holders of temporal power only exceptionally take the form of a personal favour, it is because both parties have the same interest in projecting a transfigured image of their relation: unveiling their external function would be enough to devalue the goods and services exchanged by robbing them of everything that makes them valuable to both parties, namely the strictly intellectual or artistic legitimacy ascribed by the autonomous judgement of peers. Thus, the intellectuals who stand guard at the borders of the field of cultural production can only fulfil their function, which is to symbolically rearm the dominant fractions of the dominant class against the actual or false aesthetic, ethical or political aggressions or audacities of the intellectual avant-garde, by dressing up the uncertain platitudes and the haughty certainties of bourgeois common sense in an abundance of visible signs, liable to give those who do not belong the illusion that they are part of the world they criticize. Quite often, they only put so much conviction in this ambiguous role because their relationship with their adversaries within the intellectual field hides from their own eyes the very positive relation to the bourgeois that they enjoy as a result of their intellectual negation of the 'bourgeois'.

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[22] The relationship between the dominant fractions of the dominant class, especially when their power rests on economic capital, and the clergy, religious people in particular, can be understood in the same logic.

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Chapter 4
Constructing a Field of Power. Reflections Based on a Norwegian Case Study

Johs. Hjellbrekke and Olav Korsnes

In Pierre Bourdieu's general theory of the social space, the concept 'field of power' occupies a central position. Localized in the areas of the social space where the capital volumes are the highest, the field of power is the arena where agents in dominating field positions engage and are engaged in struggles over power relations internally in a field, as well as in struggles over power relations between hierarchically ordered fields. In this way, Bourdieu's field approach offers an alternative to what has been the dominating traditions in studies of elites, e.g. the Italian school, based on Mosca, Michels and Paretos positional approach, and Robert A. Dahl's decisional approach.

But while elites and fields may be universal phenomena, and while Bourdieu's *research program* may have universal relevance, this does not imply that the field of power anywhere must have the same structure, comprise the same set of positions, can be constructed on the basis of identical types of capital and capital indicators, or that the relations between the types of capital are the same[1]. Assuming the opposite entails a de-contextualization and a de-historization of the research object. Simply to replicate Bourdieu's empirical strategy, or to expect finding exactly the same oppositions as those Bourdieu found in France, would therefore be highly problematic. It would also entail the kind of pre-construction of the research object that Bourdieu warned so strongly against, and systematically tried to counteract through 'epistemological ruptures' (Bourdieu et al. 1973).

[1] See Bennett et al. (2009) for a thorough empirically based discussion of these issues.

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To analyse the structures in a field of power necessitates a twofold work of construction. While seeking to objectivize the relations and oppositions between the most important types of capital in the given social space, the relations and oppositions between the capital types *internally* in the field of power must also be visualized. At each step, a series of theoretical and methodological problems must be addressed. In this chapter[2], we'll discuss some of these challenges and how we addressed them in our attempt at constructing a Norwegian field of power (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007; Denord et al. 2011). Three issues will be raised:

- Challenges involved when doing a *comparative* field analysis
- Challenges involved when using register data and/or data collected for other purposes than doing a field analysis
- Challenges involved when having to construct proxies for specific capital types, *in casu* indicators on social capital.

The Social Space and the Field of Power

The strategy that underpinned Bourdieu's construction of the French social space is well known. Starting from two main principles of social differentiation, economic capital and cultural capital, three main dimensions are objectivized by way of multiple correspondence analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004; Hjellbrekke 2018); a volume dimension that separates between groupings with high and low capital volumes, a structure dimension that discriminates between the relative importance of respectively economic and cultural capital, and a historical dimension which depicts the development of the volume and composition of capital over time (Bourdieu 1979, 1994: 15–35).

The construction of the French field of power was done in multiple stages. "Le Patronat" dealt with the field of business leaders in private and state French enterprises (Bourdieu and St. Martin 1978) and revealed two main oppositions; one between leaders of state enterprises versus leaders of private enterprises, and one between newcomers versus inheritors. Later, in "La Noblesse d'État" (1989) the analysis was expanded to include the field of *les Grandes Écoles*. The multiple correspondence analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010, Hjellbrekke 2018) showed that two main principles of differentiation are at work in the field; the "Grande Porte"-institutions, i.e. the well-established national and most prestigious "Grande Écoles", are opposed to "Petite Porte"-institutions, i.e. less renowned, regional schools and educational institutions, and institutions with a high degree of autonomy are opposed to institutions with little autonomy.

[2] This article is to a large extent based on Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2005; Hjellbrekke, Le Roux, Korsnes, Lebaron, Rosenlund and Rouanet 2007, Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009, 2010, 2013 and Denord, Hjellbrekke, Korsnes, Lebaron and Le Roux 2011.

The institutional dividing lines are thus also clearly rooted in more general capital structures and oppositions. Furthermore, the oppositions in the global field of educational institutions are not only retrievable in the subfield of elite institutions, but also display clear similarities to oppositions between the same institutions in the field of power. In this way, a structural homology between the field of French elite educational institutions and the field of power is unveiled. Not only do agents with high volumes of inherited capital and parents with positions in the field of power exhibit a clear tendency to orient themselves in the direction of homologically placed institutions in the field of Grandes Écoles; they also orient themselves in the direction of final positions close to their positions of departure (i.e. their parents' positions) in the social space and in the field of power. Agents with high volumes of inherited cultural capital less often seek positions close to the economic pole of the field of power, whereas agents in the dominating sectors of this field give less priority to intellectual and cultural "temptations" (Bourdieu 1989: 234–235).

Comparing the Incomparable?

In Bourdieu's work the hierarchical relations internal to, but also between, different fields are often emphasized (e.g. Bourdieu 1991). The positions of the persons in the field of power can therefore be identified in three different and multidimensional capital hierarchies. Firstly, as already pointed at, they can be localized in the strongest capital areas of the social space. Secondly, the persons in the field of power take positions in the field by virtue of having dominating positions in their respective fields, e.g. dominating positions in the political, academic or the religious field. They therefore also belong to the strongest capital groupings in their respective fields. And thirdly, there is also a capital hierarchy internally in the field of power, with its own hierarchy between dominating positions.

Struggles in the field of power may also be about the power relations between different fields: E.g. to what extent should it be up to academic milieus themselves to decide their professional priorities, their own principles of government and organisational forms, and to what degree should this be decided by other actors, e.g. political and/or economic actors? And finally, mechanisms of selection and stratification will most certainly vary; some fields and some areas of the field of power will be more open to social mobility than others. The analysis must also search to unveil such patterns, oppositions and barriers. All field construction must therefore necessarily be historically founded.

Questions about what types of capital are relevant to the construction of this field, and what indicators should be chosen, again actualize the question of how such (more or less) implicit cross-national comparisons may be conducted. Pushed to its extreme, one may argue that realizing Bourdieu's theoretical program, one must open up for "comparing the incomparable" (Maurice 1989; Korsnes 1996); the phenomena one studies may be at different analytical levels, at different dimensions, scales etc. Even if the existence of elites is a universal phenomenon, certain

elite positions, as e.g. "senior civil servants", "members of parliament", "high court judges", do not necessarily refer to identical entities in different states. Their relations to and distances to other elite positions both can and will vary, as may typical "trajectories" leading to such positions, the structures of position specific habituses, the worth of particular types of capital and combinations of capitals.

In comparative studies where the concept of space is central, confusing the geographical space with the space one is studying represents a particular risk in this respect, and in more than one way. Contemporary popular, but fuzzy and unspecified concepts and terms like 'transnational space' and 'methodological nationalism' may serve as such examples. Both are based on an implicit critique of the nation state as a non-sufficient and unfortunate geographically restricted entity in analysis of phenomena in the late modern, globalized society. In both cases, one risks, however, to reproduce a nationalistic understanding of the nation state (see Chernilo 2006), and to confuse 'nation' as an explanatory *framework* with nation as an explanatory factor. National constellations do not represent an alternative factor of explanation, but on the contrary an analytical tool in searching for explanations that represent alternatives to universal, convergence-oriented explanations (Korsnes 1996). If the nation state is of analytical relevance, it is not because it constitutes a specified unit of space, or because it may be perceived as a basis of imaginary social communities (Taylor 2004), but because it is a suitable framework for studying how the interplay of, what Arndt Sorge calls, universal and societal-specific factors generates differences and similarities between two or more analytical units (Sorge 1995).

The risk of making the concept of space as an *analytical* entity synonymous with the concept of space as a *geographical* entity, or a *statistical* one for that matter, is also actualized in several other ways, e.g. in comparisons between two cities or regions. From a purely technical point of view it may be a sensible strategy to construct two different solutions and then compare them. But from an epistemological and analytical point of view one must be aware that what one then often compares is not two different spaces or fields, but rather regional (and statistical) variations over the same space or field.

Lastly, and perhaps particularly connecting to the foregoing point, one cannot infer that the lines of divisions and oppositions one has succeeded in identifying by constructing a statistically defined space of capital oppositions between positions are also *real* lines of division and oppositions. As repeatedly pointed out by Bourdieu, there is an important difference between theoretical classes, or classes on paper, and real classes (Bourdieu 1987). This is certainly also valid for studies of elites. Both Robert Michels (1949) and C. Wright Mills (1956) stressed that "the higher circles" may be well integrated, partly overlapping, deeply split up, divided in several groupings etc. The positions that are close to each other in the field of power must therefore be considered as probable groupings; groupings that in certain situations will more easily think of themselves as, and therefore may more easily mobilize and be mobilized as, a grouping in spite of internal lines of division.

Avoiding "Looking for France in Norway": The Centrality of Social Capital

To take for granted that the oppositions Bourdieu found in France also structure the Norwegian field of power would for all of the above reasons therefore be highly problematic. It would imply a preconstruction of the kind that Bourdieu relentlessly warned against, while at the same time ignoring the fundamental social-scientific separation between theoretical and empirical generalizations. It would also mean that historical-institutional patterns are disregarded. The educational domain, for instance, is clearly structured in different ways in the different states; Norway and the other Scandinavian countries do not have such a cultivated system of Grandes Écoles as France has. In the economic domain, there are also important differences between the Nordic countries. Whereas the industrial and financial bourgeoisie historically has played an important role in Sweden, these groupings have been much weaker in shaping Norwegian capitalist' history.

Related to this, one cannot take it for granted that economic and cultural capital will automatically constitute opposite poles in the Norwegian, Danish or Swedish field of power. In fact, Bourdieu was open to the possibility that other types of capital, for instance political capital, could both constitute important principles of differentiation and be part of systematic capital oppositions, as e.g. between political and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994: 31–35). And as shown by Michael Hartmann in his works on elites (Hartmann 2006, 2007), the extent of social mobility and circulation between sectors clearly differs between European states. Nevertheless, despite these challenges, and as emphasized by Loïc Waquant (1996: xv), Bourdieu's study offers a systematic research program of relevance to the analysis of any national field of power:

> Distinguishing the (specific) empirical findings from the (general) theoretical model contained in The State Nobility suggests an agenda for a comparative, genetic and structural sociology of national fields of power that would, for each society, catalogue efficient forms of capital, specify the social and historical determinants of their degree of differentiation, distance and antagonisms, and evaluate the part played by the system of elite schools (or functionally equivalent institutions) in regulating the relations they entertain.

In the Norwegian case, this is further complicated by the tripolar system of industrial relations; a national, coordinating system for wage negotiations and governmental policies which includes representatives from the trade unions, the managerial associations and also from governmental bodies. In the Norwegian field of power, this institutionalized system "occupies" a highly central position, and constitutes a kind of "field within the field". To have strong contacts to this system may therefore yield important "external" returns. But the value of these contacts will also depend on their capacity to affect outcomes and processes within the system itself. In terms of social capital, to be a member of, or to have strong connections to the

tripartite system is therefore also to belong to the field's "core of the core" (Denord et al. 2011).

For these reasons, and because of the lacking system of elite institutions of higher education, both the volume and the composition of *social capital* might be more important in the construction of the Norwegian case than they are in the analyses of others. Furthermore, it necessitates an analysis of social capital in its *institutionalised* state, i.e formalised and regular contact patterns and meetings between members in formal positions in politics, governmental bodies, public and private companies etc. This particular institutionalised system of coordination between positions in the field testifies to why one should avoid "looking for France in Norway" when constructing the Norwegian field of power.

Uncovering a Tri-Polar Field Structure: Challenges When Working with Positional Data

In elite studies three perspectives have dominated. Adherents of the *positional* method identify the elite on the basis of formal top positions in a selection of sectors. The demarcation criteria for including a person in the elite or not is whether the person holds a position in formal power structures. This procedure has been used both in Norwegian (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002), Danish (Christiansen et al. 2001), Swedish (SOU 1990) and German elite studies (Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997). When taking the *reputational* method as point of departure it is others' opinions that are used as mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, and a selection of people are asked who they *think* belong to the elite. Finally, the *decisional* method identifies the elite by first selecting a set of important issues, and thereafter finding out who had the power to decide or influence the outcome of the issues.

All these methods have their shortcomings and problems, and none of them can be combined with a field analysis in a straightforward way. The reputational method is based on an assumption that those who really have power are also those that have a reputation for having power, which we know is not always the case. If the decisional method is applied, one first has to distinguish which cases are best suited to identifying the real power holders, and thereafter find out who actually influences the outcome of the case. Using the positional method and institutional criteria when doing the selection, it is difficult to include "éminences grises" and "hidden players" who in many cases have much more real power than those who "rubber-stamp" decisions in formal positions. In addition, persons with substantial volumes of capital and who undoubtedly can exert power in their respective fields, are excluded as long as they do not also have formal assignments. The data we had access to stemmed from "The Leadership Survey 2000" of the Norwegian Report of Power and Democracy (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002), which comprises 1710 persons who in 2000/2001 all held formal assignments and were in leading positions in 10 different sectors, and will necessarily have some of the same shortcomings.

Ideally, in a field analysis, one should also include artists, authors, scientists, former politicians etc., who, even if they do not hold formal positions in political parties, universities, cultural organisations or publishing houses, are still powerful agents in their respective fields. These agents were, however, not included in our sample. There were also limitations when it comes to the exhaustiveness of the set of variables. Firstly, we did not have access to information about from where a respondent holds a higher or lower educational degree. Oppositions between higher educational institutions could therefore not be analysed. Furthermore, data on what Bourdieu (1994) coined 'political capital' were scarce. Nor did we have information about memberships in exclusive clubs and associations, or relational data which could have permitted a fine grained analysis of interpersonal networks in the field. In these cases, we had to rely on proxies, e.g. number of years in politics, and variables on regular and institutionalized contacts through formal meetings.

Even so, an MCA of 31 variables (see Le Roux and Rouanet 2010; Hjellbrekke 2018), grouped into five types of capital indicators – economic capital, personal and inherited cultural capital, personal social capital, inherited social capital and field trajectory – uncovered a distinct tripolar structure, with the first axis as a volume axis for economic capital, the second axis as a structure axis describing an opposition between high volumes of cultural and inherited social capital vs high volumes of political capital (an established vs newcomers-opposition) and the third axis as an opposition between high volumes of social capital vs. high volumes of educational or cultural capital. Summed up, in the Norwegian field of power, managerial positions stand in opposition to positions in politics, higher civil service, research, culture and the judicial positions along axis 1, political positions in opposition to positions in research and in the church along axis 2, and judicial positions in opposition to political positions along axis 3 (see Hjellbrekke et al. 2007 for further details).

While these results cannot be interpreted as being empirically identical to Bourdieu and de St.Martin's findings from France in the 1970s, even so we interpret then as supporting the homology thesis; that field oppositions are structured by a set of common fundamental principles, i.e. oppositions between the most important forms of capital in a given society, and according to the same social logic. The same principle applies to comparisons between the Norwegian field of power and its subfields. One cannot expect the oppositions to be identical, but the homology thesis implies that they display structural similarities, and that they are case specific variations of a common, hierarchizing field logic. In the Norwegian case, the opposition between "established" and "newcomers", i.e. the 2nd axis in the global field, is present in all the subfields in the field of power (see Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2019). Whereas "the established" are likely to have valuable family connections in, and also familiarity with, the field logic, "the newcomers" are not. Also for this reason, in the more detailed investigation of the field's subgroups, particular attention had to be given to inherited and personal social capital volumes and structures.

Investigating Social Capital Structures

In the wide literature on social capital, Ponthieux (2009) correctly identifies three dominating conceptualisations (see also Portes 1998):

- James Coleman's approach, with its focus on social integration, coordination and normative reciprocity (Coleman 1988, 1990), in part adopted by Robert Putnam in his communitarian approach (Putnam 1993, 1995)
- The social network approach, as exemplified in Nan Lin's (Lin 2001) and Ronald S. Burt's (1992) research, with its emphasis on network access to resources and assets,
- The Bourdiesian approach, which we favour, is in part network oriented, but with an explicit emphasis on how social capital is related to the other forms of capital, on its hierarchizing capacity, and on the capital type's historical and symbolic dimension. Like economic and cultural capital, social capital can be inherited, not least through institutionalized networks of recognition. (Bourdieu 1986: 248/249).

Unfortunately, the dataset had no variables on direct relations between the individuals in the sample, so in order to analyse social capital relations in the Norwegian field of power we had to rely on proxy indicators, and measure the volume and the structure of the agents' social capital assets through two sets of variables:

- Variables on the respondents' institutionalized and regular patterns of contacts with members of various sectors in the field.
- Variables on board memberships in the parental generation, on board memberships held by the respondent and by the respondent's partner

In this way, two forms of social capital segmentation could be studied;

- *Institutionalized* segmentation in the field itself,
- Intergenerational segmentation and segmentation through homogamy patterns, i.e. a mainly field external segmentation, but with a high degree of relevance for the oppositions in the field.

The analysis of the distribution of institutionalized social capital revealed a strong correlation between the number of sectors an individual had contacts to, and the degree of intermediarity of the same individual. To have formalized contacts to a large number of sectors thus increases the probability to act as a mediator or negotiator, not at least between well-connected individuals and more socially isolated individuals, understood as individuals with more restricted networks (see Denord et al. 2011 for further details). But within this seemingly unidimensional hierarchy, clear differences and subgroups could be found. Most importantly, a cluster a "tripartites", with strong contacts to CEOs, managerial associations, trade unions and organizations was identified. In the Norwegian field of power, this subgroup, which is centered around economic and industrial power, constitutes "the core of the core".

But given the recurring opposition between "inheritors" and "newcomers", an investigation of social capital structures also necessitates an analysis of degree of inheritance, and also of social closure through homogamy. In both cases, this can also be seen as indicators of dynasty formation; one inter-generational and the other intra-generational. A latent class analysis (McCutcheon 1987) of the relations between the respondents' board memberships and the parents' board memberships, and thereafter of the relations between respondents' and their partners' board memberships, identify two important subgroups (Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2005). In the first case, a group of 20% can be defined as "social capital inheritors". They have not only inherited their parents' networks, but in many cases also their positions in the field of power. Within this cluster, social closure is further strengthened through their partner structures. A small group (8% of the total sample) combines high levels of *personal* social capital with similarly high social capital volumes for their partners.

In this respect, they constitute a group of "dynastic insiders". Not only have valuable network resources been successfully transferred between the generations, but in the present generation, these dynastic networks have also been expanded and become more integrated through marriage and cohabitation structures.

Concluding Comments

To our knowledge, the study of the Norwegian field of power was the first where Bourdieu's theory of the field of power was applied to a case outside of France. But, as outlined above, the Bourdieusian approach is not one that mechanically and simplistically can be applied in a variable-by-variable comparison. Instead, it necessitates a detailed and careful construction of the two or more *spaces* that are to be compared. When constructing these spaces, indicators of the most important forms of capital in the respective societies must be included, and this will almost necessarily result in case specific structural variations. Constructing and comparing fields of power entailed a series of challenges, of which we have only addressed a few in this chapter.

As Amable (2005) has shown in his empirical analyses of varieties of capitalism, where five different types of capitalism are identified, there are strong, and even obvious reasons to believe that also the structures, oppositions and trajectories in fields of power will vary from one case to the next. For instance, whereas intersectorial circulation, or "pantouflage", in France is strongly connected to the "grandes écoles"-system, we have argued (Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009) that "pantouflage à la norvégienne" primarily depends on the agents' volume and composition of *political* capital. And even though the opposition between "established" and "newcomers" is found in both countries, it is not identical. Furthermore, internally in the Norwegian field of power, it is also an opposition that displays structural variations between the subfields.

But once again, these differences and variations do not imply a refutation of the more general theory of the field of power, as some authors seem to claim, but are rather a demonstration of the Bourdieusian framework's ability to analyse how the relations between universal and societal factors (Sorge 1995) play out between and within cases, temporalities and locations. In our opinion, this should be considered a major strength for *any* research program.

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Chapter 5
The *Craft* of Elite Prosopography

Jacob Aagaard Lunding, Christoph Houman Ellersgaard, and Anton Grau Larsen

> Elites are those who can impose upon others the duty of filling out questionnaires … those whose sociology no one dares to write (Schmitt 1991:181, authors' translation)

Introduction

For elite studies to be publically relevant they need to engage and convince. To convince, the definition and demarcation of the elite must be theoretically sound and methodologically transparent, and to engage, we need detail and depth in the descriptions. We should strive to depict elites in their relations to each other; describe the ties they form in their affiliations, and layout their careers and their characteristics. In this contribution, our ambition is to outline a quantitative research framework that meets this need for thick description: a comprehensive prosopographical approach, based on relational sociology.

By prosopography we refer to a particular approach to data collection and conceptualisation, with a long tradition in the field of historical research. Doing prosopography is the construction of "a collective biography, describing the external features of a population group that the researcher has determined has something in common (profession, social origins, geographic origins, etc.)" (de Ridder-Symoens, quoted in Verboven et al. 2007, p. 39). That is, "an inquiry into the common background characteristics of a group of [...] actors by means of a collective study of their lives", i.e. "to establish a universe to be studied, and then to ask a uniform set of questions - about birth and death, marriage and family, social origins and inherited economic position, place of residence, education, amount and sources of

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personal wealth, occupation, religion, experience of office and so on" (Stone 1971, p. 46).

In elite studies that follow the tradition of C. Wright Mills and Pierre Bourdieu , the combination of relational sociology and prosopography is common in the studies of fields, networks, and careers. Here we will briefly introduce three quantitative varieties of relational analysis that are well suited for prosopographical data; multiple correspondence analysis, social network analysis and sequence analysis. We argue that these three methods strengthen and corroborate each other and, when combined into a single research design, deliver an engaging and convincing description of the constellations of power and elites. First we discuss the problem of defining elites, and how data analysis can be introduced in that step. Then we introduce the three types of relational analysis, before finally introducing in detail the different data formats required by these analyses.

Defining the Population, an All but Trivial Question

When conducting elite prosopographies the recurring problem in all relational sociology, that of boundary specification (Emirbayer 1997), becomes particularly pertinent. Who are part of the elite, the field or the network? It is important to reflect thoroughly on what makes a group. What is the 'thing' they have in common? Those at the top of a field are often qualitatively different from those just a few steps down the ladder, and as a consequence any description relying on a too inclusive sample will miss how the top distinguish themselves from the riff-raff.

Within the methodological tradition of elite studies, population boundaries are often specified with either a positional, reputational or decisional approach (Hoffmann-Lange 2018). The positional approach, that remains the most widely used, identifies individuals at the top of formal hierarchies regarded by the researcher to have the resources meriting inclusion in elites. This could for instance be top managers in the largest corporations in a society. The key issue for the positional approach is how to select the organisations, and who and how many to select from each organisation. This may be particularly difficult when the hierarchy is not easily measured, for instance in culture or media. The reputational approach uses either the scholar, key insiders or general surveys to assess key players in a community. Thus, the primary challenge for the reputational approach is how to select those who select, and to ensure that their preconceptions of power do not hinder the identification of the power of those who work in more subtle or naturalized ways. The decisional approach relies on the scholars identifying those involved in a political process. With the decisional approach, the main obstacle is selecting - and to getting access to data on - the relevant decisions and struggles. The most central decisions in society are not always up to debate and might even have been settled ages ago. Similarly it is not always necessary for powerful agents to be highly active to have their interests taken into account by those active in the decision process.

Common for these three approaches is a relatively high vulnerability to more or less ad hoc decisions (Larsen and Ellersgaard 2017). Even the demarcation of a somewhat straightforward group, e.g. top business leaders, involves ad hoc decisions. Should we select the top 100 or 200 corporations? And by turnover, balance, equity or prestige? How many CEO's? Do we include chairmen? And what about owners or CFO's? First and foremost it is important not to rely naively on official categories and registers, since the fields and groups under investigation rarely - if ever - follow the same logic of demarcation. These questions require a reflexive movement back and forth between data and hypotheses, similar to a hermeneutic circle in which qualitative knowledge of the field informs and is informed by data (Bourdieu 2005, 99). We propose here that this process can be further guided and substantiated by systematic use of relational methods (Larsen and Ellersgaard 2017; see also Knoke 1993) using patterns of formal interaction to identify key players at the core of elite networks.

The increasing availability of large data sources creates the pitfall of defining the studied group too broadly. There are both analytical and practical reasons for limiting the sample to be studied and thus drawing boundaries at an exclusive level. Analytically, because elites, as Mills (1956, 11) puts it, are those who 'sit on the same terrace' and form a group of relative peers. Instead of giving into the lure of big data, i.e. using inclusive registers as an occasion for increasing sample sizes, we propose that the researcher uses the registers to create highly select groups. That is, by first extracting large datasets of, for instance, corporate boards, then using relational methods, like social network analysis, to identify the relevant group and then, with no hesitation, throw away the rest of the sample.

Relational Methods

We propose to use the wealth of data available to put *description* at center stage (see Savage and Burrows 2007). Simple descriptive tables of the gender, nationality, education or social background of an elite group is often telling in their own right, particularly if used in a longitudinal or comparative framework (see Hartmann 2007), as demonstrated by the impact of Thomas Piketty's (2014) work (see Savage 2014).

Let us demonstrate here, by using our analysis of the Danish elite network as an example, how these simple but compelling descriptions can be supplemented by more structural analyses of the elite group, e.g. of the system of relationships between their different social characteristics, of their social relations, their career trajectory. As mentioned, three specific methods are well suited for these purposes and supplement each other very well, i.e. multiple correspondence analysis, social network analysis and sequence analysis.

Multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) is, in short, a way to represent the relationships between a large number of variables in a multidimensional space. Both variable categories and the individuals, or any appropriate unit of analysis, can

then be projected onto this space (Hjellbrekke 2018). MCA is closely associated with the work of Pierre Bourdieu as a way to construct and analyse social spaces and fields (Lebaron 2009). Recently, MCA has been used to construct spaces on prosopographical populations such as central bank directors (Lebaron and Dogan 2012), French and Norwegian elites (Denord et al. 2018; Hjellbrekke et al. 2007) and top Swiss (Bühlmann et al. 2012), Indian (Naudet et al. 2018), and Danish CEO's (Ellersgaard et al. 2013).

MCA offers a range of analytical opportunities. Variables or cases *not* included in the construction of the space can be projected post hoc as *supplementary variables* (or cases) onto the constructed space. Studying how 'external' variables structure the space is a strong explorative, as well as corroborative, feature. Furthermore, the logic structuring the positions of particular subgroups within a space can be further explored in a *class-specific analysis* (Chiche and Le Roux 2010).

MCA is a strong technique for handling prosopographical data (Broady 2002). First of all because it lets us grasp a lot of information simultaneously, but also, and especially, since it has a robust way of handling incomplete or non-response data. As Stone (1971: 58) notes, prosopographical data will almost inevitably be incomplete. The issue of keeping variables with missing data in the analysis, but giving no weight to the missing-category, is handled well by specific MCA (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010). Another strength of MCA is that it allows the researcher to use the associations between imperfect indicators of a social phenomena, e.g. a form of capital, to tease out that information in the constructed space. In our analysis of the social space of the Danish power elite, 43 variables with 193 categories were used to construct the space. Combining different measures, levels of economic capital were clearly an important factor in the analysis although we could not gather income or wealth data (analysis forthcoming, see Lunding 2017 for an earlier version). As shown in Fig. 5.1, estate value, house type (including the size of the land), combined with positions in different types of corporations in the Danish corporate register (CVR), follow a logic closely associated with economic capital on the vertical axis.

Using prosopographical data for **Social Network Analysis** (SNA) requires the researcher to incorporate *relational data* already in the design and data collection steps. Rather than only gathering attribute data of individuals, data must tell how each member of the population is connected, or related, to each other. A relation may take multiple forms, spanning from sharing characteristics such as educational background, over kinship ties to interaction or shared affiliation networks (Borgatti et al. 2009).

Social Network Analysis allows for analysis of relations on many different levels within the elite population. From analysing the overall structure and level of connectivity in the population, to identifying the most central individuals, to finding subgroups based on community detection algorithms (Keller 2018), social network analysis allows the researcher to describe and explore relations within a defined population. For instance, social network analysis has been used to explain the particular role played by the Medici family in the multiplex Florence eliteworks in the renaissance (Padgett and Ansell 1993) and to explore the changing relationships in

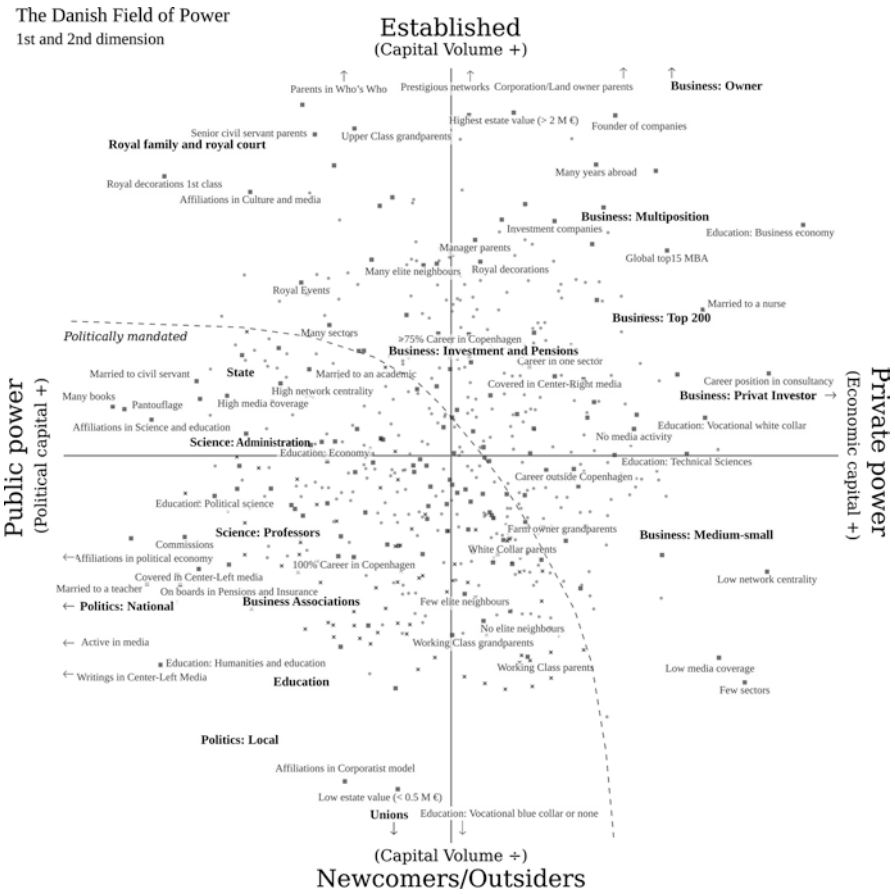

Fig. 5.1 The Danish Field of power. (Source: Lunding et al. 2020)

American corporate networks leading to a less cohesive and politically inept business elite in the US.

As stated earlier, network analysis may offer empirical guidance to the empirical definition of the population. In Fig. 5.2, we show how 423 people, the core of the Danish elite network containing 37,750 individuals holding 56,325 positions, are connected. Adding to this, the color denotes the sector of their primary organisational affiliation, showing us a cohesive elite core, which nonetheless cluster around the key sectors in the Danish power elite.

The career trajectories of elites are often of particular interest. Not only do these show 'how the elite got to the top', they also shed light on which types of organisational experiences are given high value in elite groups. For this purpose **Sequence Analysis** (SA) provides the opportunity to not only map out careers, but also take the particular *ordering* and *tempo* of careers into account (Jäckle and Kerby 2018). For instance the speed with which CEO's have climbed the corporate ladder. This,

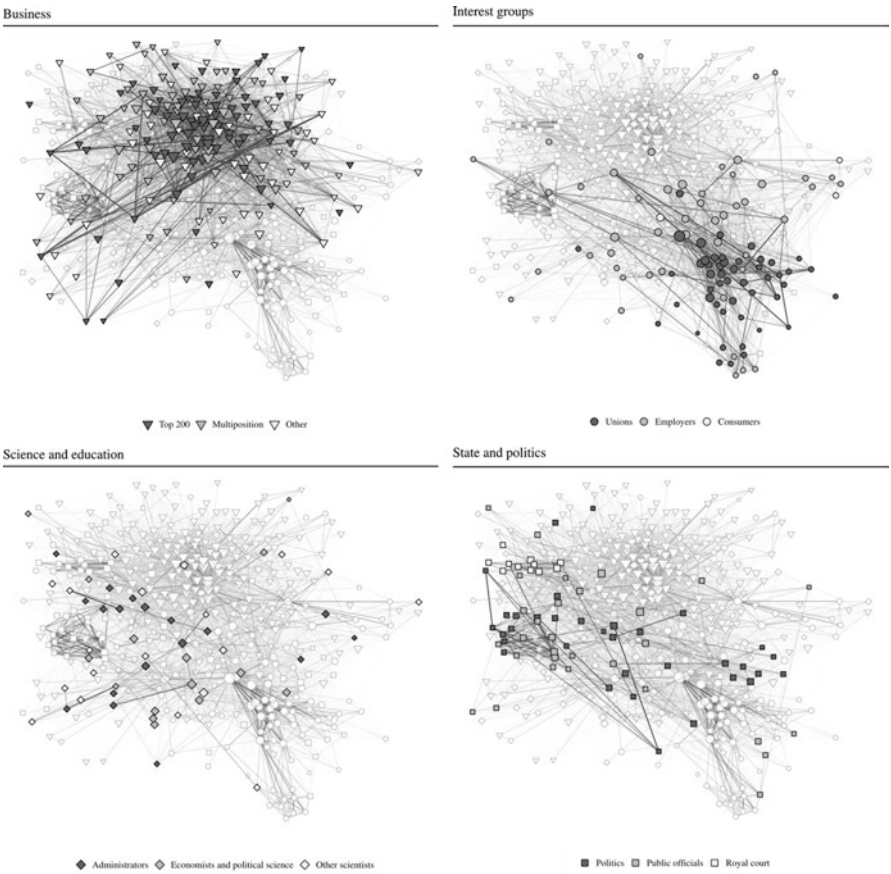

Fig. 5.2 The network of the core of the Danish power elite. (Source: Larsen and Ellersgaard 2018)

again, requires the researcher to prepare already in the design and data collection phases of the study, as the temporal ordering of all cases in states must be recorded.

Sequence analysis of a prosopographical elite population was pioneered by Abbott and Hrycak's (1990) study of eighteenth century German chamber musicians and Blair-Loy's (1999) study of executive women in finance. Recently, it has been used to map and describe careers of e.g. Bankers (Araujo 2017) federal judges (Jäckle 2016), members of parliament (Ohmura et al. 2018) and top CEO's (Koch et al. 2017). For the Danish power elite described above we constructed a multichannel data set covering the year-to-year main affiliation of each member in six different states: Sector, subsector, organisation size, organisational stability (time in current organisation), position in organisational hierarchy and geographical location. Based on optimal matching and Ward-clustering, this allowed us to identify 10 ideal typical pathways into the Danish power elite, as illustrated in Fig. 5.3.

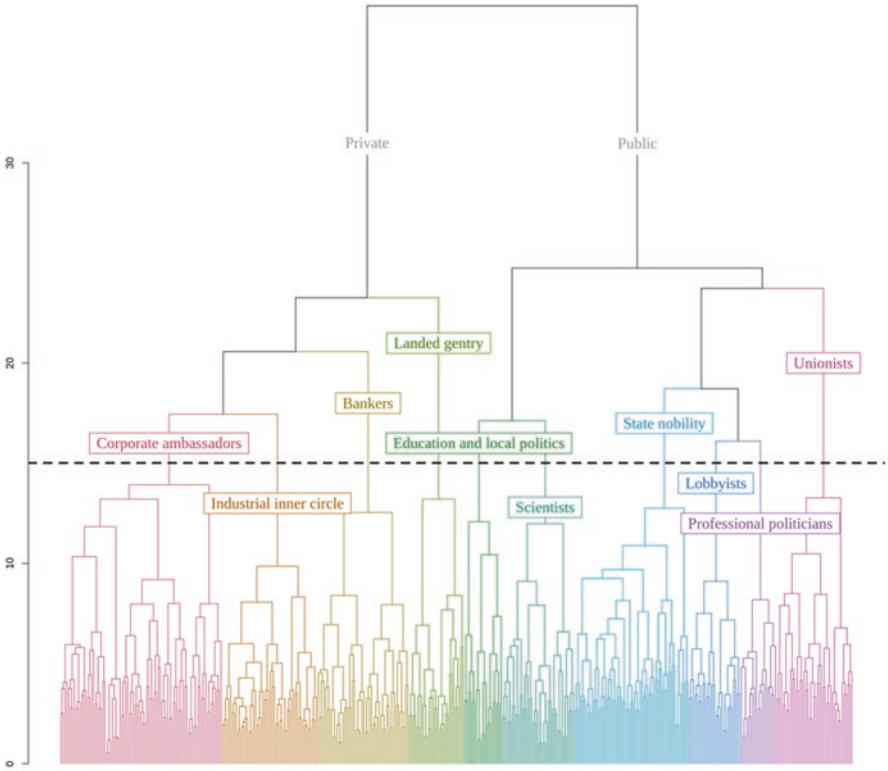

Fig. 5.3 The 10 pathways to the Danish power elite. (Source: Ellersgaard et al. 2019)

Relational Data

These relational methods require three different types of data. We will now demonstrate how they are found and collected.

Social Network Data

Data on social networks can take two forms - either a simple list of direct connections (like, Hans → Sofia) or a list of affiliation memberships (Sofia → Board of Unilever) from which the direct connections can be derived. If conceptually possible, it is often preferable to collect networks as affiliation networks. **Affiliation networks** can be constructed in various ways. It might sometimes be possible to rely on already gathered sets of 'big data', e.g. compositions of corporate boards. When relying on 'big data', it is of great importance to go through the laborious and informed process of ensuring data quality (Heemskerk et al. 2018). Data on

affiliation networks can also be gathered manually. A common approach is to create long lists of all organizations of interest, e.g. the largest corporations, the top state offices etc., before 'scraping' the web pages or archives of these organizations for all affiliations of relevance; boards, committees, advisory boards, etc. Another approach is the snowball sample. Here we start with a select set of agents. From their CV's all their affiliations and organizations are gathered, and the process is repeated for the new agents appearing in these affiliations. The snowball sample is much faster to collect because you do not need lists of organizations and you do not collect the isolated and disconnected affiliations. But you obviously lose the global structure of the network with a snowball sample, and it does not necessarily have a natural boundary.

Affiliation data can then be used to explore and create variables covering which sectors or types of affiliations individuals are engaging in. In turn, for each individual, the centrality (Freeman 1979), positions in core or peripheral groups in the network (Larsen and Ellersgaard 2017) or in certain clusters or communities (see e.g. Heemskerk et al. 2013; Palla et al. 2005), can be calculated. The network data can also be used to assess whether or not - and through what types of affiliations - individuals of the prosopography are connected. Furthermore, the sociometric distance between all individuals covered in the prosopography may be calculated.

Biographical Data

Biographical data is collected in the familiar format of 'one row one individual', with several columns of attributes; like age, position, gender, place of birth etc. When only non-systematic collections of biographical data are available data must be gathered row wise, one individual at a time. If more systematic sources are available, data can be collected column wise, i.e. you collect data on several people on the same variable. The feasible size of the data that can be collected is highly dependent on the number of variables that need to be collected by hand in a row wise fashion. Column wise data collection is often faster when ordered by magnitude-faster, but might require programming skills.

Biographical data sets have two sets of variables; raw and coded data. The raw data columns are long text strings that are then coded into several variables. The coded data are simple, single value columns with values ready or nearly ready for quantitative analysis. By keeping both the raw strings and coded variables, the basis of a given variable is transparent - in this way improving reproducibility - and it allows for subsequent recoding. The raw text strings are often imported from biographical databases like Who's Who (see Priest 1982) or scraped from websites such as LinkedIn or Wikipedia. These strings can be very long and contain many variables such as gender, age, first position etc. They are then separated either by hand or with the help of text string manipulation tools such as regular expressions.

Other important sources of biographical data are news and portrait articles. These can often be downloaded in full from newspaper databases. These articles are saved

in a corpus of searchable text files. Automatically extracting articles is not a straightforward process, though. The researcher needs to carefully craft individual search strings for each person. Simply searching for portraits of John Smith will give us a lot of irrelevant articles. Searching, however, for John Smith AND director AND Unilever in the period 1990 to 1997 might give us good results. If you save the individual search strings as a variable these can be fed into web scrapers and you might construct the strings by combining several variables like position, name and organization.

In the era of digitalization a lot of previously hard-to-get-to archival material becomes increasingly accessible online. This means that historical data can be gathered in a less, although still, time consuming way. Census lists, church books or parish registers may provide genealogical data and sometimes even historical attribute data on the social position of parents or grandparents etc.

In some cases online sources have free or commercialized APIs, making data collection easy. If not, building web scrapers can speed up the data collection. Remember though, that while web scrapers are efficient when they are successful, the researcher still might have to weed out irrelevant data by hand.

Even with CV's, biographies and portrait articles, the researcher will face a fair amount of missing information. The more famous a person is the easier it is to find information about them so, in biographical data, missing data is always skewed (Tables 5.1 and 5.2).

Sequence Data

Data on career sequences are collected in the spell format. A sequence consists of spells and they have three types of values: Identity, state and period. You could think of a spell as someone (*identity*), doing something (*state*) from one date to another (*period*). A spell can have multiple states at the same time. Sequences made up of spells with multiple states are termed multi-channel or multi-stream. A career sequence is often multi-channel and a single spell could look like this:

Name: John Smith (*identity*), **Position**: Head of Sales (*state*), **Organisation**: Coca-Cola (*identity*), **Organisation size**: Very Large (*state*), **Place**: Cape Town (*state*), **Start**: 01-10-1986 (*period*), **End**: 05-08-1996 (*period*).

The whole career then consists of several rows with spells, and individuals would not necessarily have the same amount of spells. From one channel it is possible to derive new channels like the rhythm of organizational change, the number of geographical locations or the level of the position. It is also possible to calculate the duration of a certain state. The same project could have several sequences for the same population, career, housing, network positions etc. While these sequences cannot be collected in the same matrix they can be compared in the later analysis.

The researcher should consider whether the individual spells are allowed to overlap, e.g. if a person can have two CEO positions at the same time. Similarly it is

Table 5.1 Data types and data sources

Data type	Provides	Key variables	Sources	MCA	SA	SNA
Biographical lexica	Attribute data on individuals[a]	Gender, age, education, parental background, spouse, in-laws, board (etc.) positions..	Who's who, biographies...	+	(+)	(+)
Census data	Genealogical data	Parents, grandparents, in-laws, etc.	e.g. birth registers	+	–	–
CV's	Attribute career data on individuals	Education, positions, titles, affiliations, memberships, etc.	Organisational webpages LinkedIn	+	+	+
Newspaper archives	Written material by and about individuals	Number of articles produced, count of appearance in articles, media profile (types of newspapers) count of portrait articles, portrayed where?	Article databases, e.g. Infomedia in Denmark	+	(+)	(+)
Public library databases	Public recognition and engagement	Count of books written, number of biographies	e.g. www.worldcat.org	+	–	–
Corporate registers	Attribute data on individuals economic engagement, and board interlock data	Board positions	National corporate registers, global providers, e.g. Orbis, BoardEx, etc.	+	+	+
Affiliation network databases	Affiliation data	Board positions, type of affiliation, sector ...	Public registers, organisation web pages	+	+	+
Property and tax registers	Attribute data on real estate, wealth, income	Income, wealth		+	–	–
Social media	Content and relational data	Tweets, likes, links etc.	Twitter, Facebook, etc.	+	–	(+)

[a]Individuals might also be cases in a broader sense, e.g. firms or organisations

important whether a gap - a set of years where we have no registration - is missing, inactivity or an independent state; like "unemployed". What counts as missing is important when you count the number of distinct states in a sequence and when calculating the distances between two sequences.

When collecting sequences the researcher will often collect several channels at the same time but one person at a time often on the basis of a CV. For elite populations it is often possible to find relatively complete CV's. However, elite members might omit low status positions in their CV and as with biographical data it is considerably easier to find data on the famous.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have argued that prosopographical data collection, combined with relational quantitative methods, offers a unique possibility to understand the social structure of elites. We stress, however, that the quality of an analysis based on prosopographical data rests upon a well-defined, theoretically relevant population, and on access to credible and multifaceted sources and a data collection done with the particular data formats needed, for e.g. social network analysis or sequence analysis, in mind.

In order to move beyond the derogatory or celebratory images of elites from spontaneous sociology, doing prosopography offers an empirical approach to address the particular role of elites played in a societal context. Based on a combination of the craftsman's knowledgeable care of data and the creativity to use this data in novel ways to not only describe, but also map the relationship between elite groups, prosopographical data and relational methods allow the researcher to highlight relations that matter among the people that matter. Lastly, by naming the powerful and allowing the reader to follow the powerful in the visual representations possible, through multiple correspondence analysis, social network analysis and sequence analysis, the prosopographical researcher not only produces results that are more intuitive to interpret but also aesthetically pleasing. Using names and plotting these allows readers to engage more, and more critically, with results, allowing elite studies to become public sociology. Putting names on power, and gathering and analysing prosopographical data is a way of indirectly imposing on elites the duty of filling out questionnaires and writing their sociology.

Names and Identities: Tying It All Together

For all relational types of data you should expect to spend a considerable amount of time on identity resolution (Keats-Rohan 2007, p. 151). Is the Sofia at Unilever the same as Sofia at Barclays? The severity of this problem differs dramatically between contexts. English working class names like John Smith are notoriously difficult, while Danish upper class names are fairly unique. Similarly, people do not use the same name or the same spelling across data sources and affiliations. Often the official name will be longer e.g. Dick Cheney is short for Richard Bruce Cheney. In order to resolve the name matching problem the researcher needs to collect as much extra - even otherwise redundant data - for each entry as possible. For affiliations, like boards, make sure to collect the small biographical descriptions that often accompany the list of board members. But even with this data the researcher is often forced to what amounts to qualified guesses. Furthermore, you should not expect persons and organizations to have the same name across different sources: as a result each person and organization needs a unique identifier across all datasets and a list of aliases, otherwise you will not be able to merge and cross reference between affiliation networks, sequence data and biographical data.

Identity resolution, or name matching, is best done by hand and while it may seem tempting to use algorithms for fuzzy name matching - the quality is often low. At best, algorithms may help in the hand coded process. For larger datasets it is often impossible to solve identity problems completely. For sequence and biographical data the problem will rarely affect the substantial arguments of the analysis. This is not the case for network analysis and considerable care should be given to the most central agents. Be wary if John Smith is a central agent. But on the other hand the risk of erring on the side of caution is equally problematic. Having split Richard Cheney from Dick Cheney will not just affect the centrality of Dick Cheney, but of all those he is connected to, and if it is a central agent it could impact the global structure of the network. One approach is to ensure a higher data quality for central agents. Here, analysis, data collection and data quality control is a back and forth process.

Appendix

Table 5.2 Open Source Software packages in R

Webscraping	rvest – for scraping data directly from html web pages
	RSelenium – for automated web browsing, if you need to interact with the web page; see http://rpubs.com/johndharrison/RSelenium-Basics
Sequence analysis	TraMineR
	cluster
Social Network Analysis	Igraph
	Ggraph
Multiple Correspondence Analysis and Related Methods	FactoMineR
	soc.ca
	GDAtools

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Chapter 6
Legitimacies in Peril: Towards a Comparative History of Elites and State in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century France and Western Europe

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Since the French Revolution, the country's elites,[1] especially those connected to the state, have seen their legitimacy challenged on a regular basis. From a historiographical standpoint, the study of elites has been characterized by two main approaches. The first has emphasized the political dimension and measured the effects on an individual level, of the many regime changes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instead of only examining leading players, historians have sought to establish from which social groups the new ruling teams came, to account for the struggles over power between competing fractions. The second, more rewarding approach has drawn on the sociology of state elites to identify the mechanisms of reproduction and transformation of the dominant classes, of which political elites only form the most visible fraction. This approach comes closer to a social history of the state, as these elites serve as models to legitimize successive regimes. However, both approaches neglect collective social traits which would be useful to consider to take better stock of the changes and continuities they seek to evidence. The comparative social study of state elites in these two centuries must no longer only address the two questions: 'who governs?' and 'how did they get to the top?',

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[1] The term "elites" comes with certain limitations, due to the Paretian legacy and its vague empirical usage in some studies. Yet it also has two benefits: first, the word is a practical, abstract encompassing of the variety of ruling or dominant groups that have succeeded each other in France for two centuries, and whose historically dated names have changed with the regimes; second, the plural form reflects two marked features of French dominant groups that I seek to illuminate in this chapter – namely, the plurality of competing groups in the field of power and their constantly challenged legitimacy.

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but also, and crucially, investigate what, in the sociology of power elites, explains the characteristics of specific regimes, their relations with the dominant society and the blocking mechanisms that resurface periodically and deepen political crises in France, more so than in other European countries, even in the absence of outside historical accidents. Why do these elites, who are meant to embody the state's supreme legitimacy, keep being rejected by significant, if not majority, fractions of opinion, forcing changes in the rules of the game?

The most frequently proposed explanations for this are based on tautologies revolving around catchwords such as "sick man of Europe", "crisis of elites", "oligarchic drift", "microcosm", etc. To avoid these pitfalls, we need to link the two ends of the chain. The behaviours and choices of successive elites indeed depend equally on their social characteristics and on the extent of their flexibility regarding the demands, or resistances, of their supposed or actual mandataries, and the senior civil servants that ensure continuity in politics.

The Napoleonic Model and the Prussian Model

Since Taine, it has been commonplace practice in the study of elites to pinpoint the Napoleonian regime as the founding moment of what Pierre Bourdieu later called "state nobility". However, this bird's eye view actually condenses the chronology by antedating a system of selection of administrative elites that was gradually formalized over the course of the nineteenth century (Charle 1980). Until the late nineteenth century, most *corps* were spared open competition. Land ownership and the family's social capital were just as crucial in accessing administrative or political state functions as the pyramid of *concours* [competitive exams], which was developed little by little up to and including the prestigious national school of administration (ENA). To understand the largely unfulfilled impetus of the Napoleonic system, the paradoxical phrase employed by Gert Schubring in reference to the Humboldtian reform of universities, "modernization against modernity" (Schubring 1991), comes in handy. In Prussia, the Napoleonic system managed to survive just barely until 1918, whereas in France it endured only between 1802 and 1814 and from 1852 to 1870. The comparison of the two systems sheds light on the failure of the first model. Prussia's reformist leaders sought to combine modernizing reforms, inspired by revolutionary principles, with the strengthening of a state structure resting on the traditional elites. The latter went on partially providing the new executives needed by this *Obrigkeitstaat* (the state steered from above; Koselleck 1981). Conversely, in the Bonapartist regimes, the old and new elites and the two types of state elites did not merge as durably as in the Prussian nobility – not for lack of political perseverance. How are we to explain this recurring failure? Highlighting the ruler's isolation and the strength of the military would be treating the effect as the cause. In fact, the Napoleonic system did enjoy fairly broad support in French opinion both in 1814–1815 and in 1870, even in the working classes; however, it was left to its own devices by its own elites.

The Napoleonic state sought to reconcile the classes but ended up doing so mainly to the benefit of the state elite, who were favoured in the process of sharing the spoils – both Bonapartist states generously distributed advantages and honours. This effort was in fact strictly impossible outside of periods of exceptional prosperity (most of the Second Empire) or failing the artificial assistance of the continental blockade and the pillaging of the territories conquered under the First Empire. Hence, the crises of the regimes that emulated this model in France and elsewhere regularly coincided with the end of this prosperity consensus, following an economic and/or social crisis. In 1814 and in 1870, the military and political crises that led to these regimes being toppled were accelerated by underlying conflicts resulting from the downturn. Likewise, the inability of the German Reich, which was dominated by Prussia, to ensure the civilian population's food supply during the 1914 war, and to balance the interests of the different groups within the wartime economy, triggered the collapse of the Prussian monarchy in 1918, even before the military defeat came (Winter 1989; Bessel 1993; Vincent 2006). The credibility of the state elites who were connected to this state model was deeply damaged, and the abuses that characterized their management of state affairs were not as well tolerated as previously by the groups who were denied access to state privileges.

This succession of events, observed in other regime changes, does not fully account for the paradoxical frailty of these "strong" regimes with enlightened elites, who wound up helpless in the face of historical contingency. There was, indeed, a second weakness in the state elites of the Napoleonic regimes, which was specific to France: it lay in their inability to establish a lasting balance between central and local power. The complete subordination of local power to central power emerged during the Consulate period out of the fight against civil war in the provinces and the anarchy of the Directory; during the Second Empire, it was also legitimized by the unexpected provincial resistance to the *coup d'état* of 2 December 1851 (Agulhon 2002).

This initial imbalance between central and local power entailed two shortcomings: first, the relative ineffectiveness of the centre/periphery relays who reported on the rapid loss of trust in the regime (as evidenced by the early embrace of the monarchy restored in 1814 in peripheral regions and the fairly smooth replacement of Napoleon III's prefects by Gambetta's in September 1870). Secondly, the subordination of the province indirectly favoured the emergence of a counter-elite with a local base, who drew on anti-centralism to rally the dissatisfied populations and denounce the official state elite. Instead of dividing and distributing political legitimacy, the Napoleonic state not only concentrated it in the hands of a select few (a group that tended to dwindle rather than expand, since nepotism increases as leading teams grow older), but also and most importantly, it gave the ultimate authority to those who had the fewest connections with the population they were meant to govern. The rare elected representatives were in a subordinate position and themselves rather handpicked than elected under the system of the "lists of notables" in the First Empire and the official candidacies of the Second Empire. The deputies in the 1852 legislature and the Bonapartist parliamentarians of the Third Republic came from the same privileged circles, even as their political movement claimed to

represent the nation at large.[2] This principle of political and administrative exclusion tended to swell the ranks of the categories who rejected this top-down consensus. The most helpless social groups were ultimately those who remained the most faithful or nostalgic of the formal security that State afforded them (such as the peasants and the military men), whereas their opponents tended to come from professional groups that enjoyed some social autonomy and had social networks that a less centralized regime would enable them to convert into social and political capital (as in the "capacities" of censitary regimes and Gambetta's "new social strata") (Nord 1995).

Conversely, it appears that the Prussian model was able to last thanks to three factors that were preserved throughout the nineteenth century. First, unlike the Napoleonic nobility, the Prussian nobility retained its political unity in the face of all the crises that threatened its privileges: it succeeded, for instance, in blocking the several land law reforms that attempted to remove the trusts who ensured that noble estates would be passed on from generation to generation. Economically, it also made the most of the agrarian reforms, by buying back feudal rights and in the process increasing its share of land ownership. By the late 1870s, the nobility still owned 31.9% of the Prussian territory, i.e., 5.7 million hectares; thanks to the trusts, it had insured between a quarter and a third of its estates against the risk of alienation. This unity also related to a persistent social exclusivism that contrasted with the diversity of alliances forged by the Napoleonic nobility as well as the old nobility (Grange 1995, 2016; Bravard 2013). Lastly, for the noble cadets who had been denied land inheritance by a trust or for the aristocratic families who had been impoverished by recurrent agricultural crises, preferential access to central and local administrative functions and to the officers' corps ensured their survival in symbiosis with the state and made them a lasting political counterweight to the liberal and bourgeois groups, among whom some had been incorporated into the dominant group through a selective ennoblement policy. This lingering hegemony has been extensively debated among German historians. The simplistic schemes of the "betrayal" or "feudalization" of the bourgeoisie are now widely rejected (Kaelble 1996, pp. 251–253 and 258–259). In fact, recent studies evidence an enduring differentiation between the noble world and the bourgeois world; snobbery, on the other hand, was typical in French and English elites, where social connections between the aristocracy and the *grande bourgeoisie* were far more common. Acceptance of the noble Prussian hegemony in the new Reich might also have been partly the result of the spatial multipolarity of the German space. Decentralization and the federal system allowed local bourgeoisies, especially in the bigger cities, to yield a political influence that was equivalent, if not greater than, that held by their French counterparts in the municipal regime, which in their centralized state remained under prefectural supervision. Insofar as the federal state reconciled the

[2] See Eric Anceau (2000), especially the table on p. 298: the best represented professional group was that of businessmen and wealthy landowners (between 59% and 51% depending on the term), followed by senior civil servants (between 23.5% and 15%); the middle class and liberal professions made up the rest of the membership (between 28% and 23%).

interests of the different groups through the choice of protectionism, which protected both the nascent industries and the increasingly less profitable agricultural productions in the East from competition, why would the German bourgeoisies have laid claim to the symbolic appropriation of central power, which did not bring the same benefits as in France? It would in fact be at the level of municipal power in big cities that the crisis and the contradictions of this state and its elites, suited to an agrarian society and small towns, ignited between 1900 and 1918.

An Ill-Fated Effort to Emulate the English Model

While Prussia was influenced by the Napoleonic model, French state elites sought to draw on the English model. The system of French notability was roughly similar to the domination of the gentry over the English state. Eighteenth century French liberals were genuinely fascinated with that class of landowners, because it fulfilled a large part of the country's administrative and political functions independent of the central state, which was reduced to a bare minimum (Taine 1872). The French notables were also impressed by the fact that the gentry's power was, for the most part, acknowledged in the dominated groups and by the new bourgeois classes of industry and trade (Hobsbawm 1996). The attraction was palpable among the theoreticians of French parliamentarism (including Guizot) and also transpired in the social behaviour of the nobility and of the notables, recorded in monographs on regions where the latter had the most power (Denis 1977; Guillemin 1982; Vigreux 1987; Pourcher 1987; Brelot 1992). The ideal notable drew on local networks to access various levels of power; his chance of accessing the upper level was proportionate to the volume and diversity of accumulated capital. The social pyramid and the political pyramid were thus virtually one and the same, with the exception of a few social climbers and individuals whose intellectual capital, despite the system's general philosophy, served as the foundation of their political success.

However, to establish their social and political legitimacy, the English titled aristocracy and gentry drew on a property capital that was far more considerable than that of French notables, as there had been no revolution in their country. By 1873, 38,000 families owned 27 million out of a total of 34 million acres of land in England and Wales, and the 2000 richest families alone held a third of all agricultural land (Whetham 1978, p. 52). These huge amounts of property capital allowed them to retain economic and social control of far bigger chunks of the country, and the lasting specificities of the electoral system and the geographical distribution of seats at the House of Commons made their political positions unassailable.

Meanwhile, the country's administrative apparatus remained modest. The French liberals' denunciation of the excessive size of the civil service actually drew on comparison with the English case (Thuillier 1980, 1983). English notables fulfilled a number of functions in an unpaid, voluntary capacity, which in France would usually have been entrusted to civil servants without capitals of their own or strong local connections. The existence of a system of devolution of property and the

education of this class, which was exempted from common law (with primogeniture and public schools), ensured the lasting identity and the economic and cultural reproduction of this group and its role within the state.

In French, neither the old nobility, nor, with all the more reason, the notables (big or small) ever enjoyed the same perks as their English counterparts. Not only did they have less property capital, but the dividing up of land threatened them at each generation; meanwhile, profound religious and cultural divides, reflected by the dualistic (Catholic and state) education system, hindered the transmission of their social ideal and reproduced the division of political options. The notables also came up against competition from professional elites in connection with the far more anonymous and deterritorialized state, derived from the Napoleonic system, a fraction of which did not come from their own ranks, whereas in Great Britain higher education was almost exclusively in their hands, as there was no modernization or extension of secondary and university teaching before the late nineteenth century. The increasing frailty of the notables' power each time that state model sought to restore its bases (in the 1830s, after 1849 and after 1871) resulted from the ongoing, accelerating collapse of the objective foundations needed for this system to be politically viable. With each crisis, urban workers' uprisings, the growing political autonomy of peasants (owing to their increasingly early awareness of universal suffrage), the decreasing social influence of landowners and the worsening ideological divisions between fractions of the notability, as well as the rise of "capacities" and of the middle classes, made restoring the former political order a more and more problematic prospect. To recreate suitable conditions, which were far better met in England, the notables' political representatives transposed, without great success, foreign traditions or artificial mechanisms of protection against social and political decline: *majorats*, ennoblement of *grands bourgeois*, electoral tweaks (including the "double vote" during the Restoration, and a law that restricted universal suffrage in 1850), the *émigrés*' billions law to re-establish the wealth of the nobility, an attempt to restore the Church's power, the political use of the administration, paternalism towards workers in some mining (Massif central) or textile (Nord, Alsace) regions, agronomic innovation, a form of agrarianism that purported to defend the peasant classes, the indirect control of legislative power by a high chamber or irremovable senators, etc. All these remedies to decline failed, whereas the English ruling class managed to monitor the extension of suffrage to new strata at little cost until the turn of the twentieth century.

The regional example of Franche-Comté, which Claude-Isabelle Brelot described in detail, sheds light on how the phenomena I describe very broadly here worked in practice. In that predominantly rural and conservative region, the nobles attempted an *aggiornamento* that is somewhat comparable to what the Prussian and English nobles did: they tried to recover land that had been taken away during the revolutionary period, farmed out to increase their land income by taking advantage of rural demographic pressure; some, albeit a minority, experimented with rational agromanagement when they farmed their own land, and even ventured into industrial investments (in mines, metalwork). Despite this acceptance of the modern world, at odds with the frequent caricatures of a nobility that refused the new century, these

remedies to decline turned out to be insufficient. Lacking sufficient land, a large part of the *petite noblesse* had to resort to seeking out public posts or local elected offices to safeguard their social influence or combine sources of income to make up for their diminishing land and rent incomes. However, this introduction in the state entailed a costly investment in education (children had to be enrolled in boarding schools in the cities or in Paris), if not regional uprooting, which partly ran counter to the goal initially pursued. As Brelot put it: "In a paradox, the nobility [of Franche-Comté] had to work hard to live nobly." (Brelot, Book 1 p. 409).

This example also shows that the erosion of the notables' regime and the political decline of the nobility cannot be mechanically attributed to the emergence of cities and the entry into the industrial age. In fact, while England was clearly much more advanced in the nineteenth century's movement towards urbanization and industrialization, the gentry and the aristocracy's power remained unchallenged until the late nineteenth century. The problem was actually far older than the emancipatory momentum of the people commonly assumed to be inherent in "modernity". It lay in the contradiction between this form of designation of the notables liable to reach the top of the state pyramid and the organizational principles of the new Napoleonic state, which operated from the top and the centre. As it happened, despite tentative steps, the regimes that relied on the notables and on a far more decentralized power ultimately did not venture to challenge either centralization or the deterritorialized character of the administrative elites belonging to the *grands corps* or the central administration. In England, on the contrary, the ruling class fought to avoid state intervention and only extended its influence in the event of a serious deficiency or when the corporations in charge of dealing with a public problem faltered, as evidenced by the protracted process of the adoption of the reform of municipal organization at a time when urban growth revealed the archaism of structures inherited from the Middle Ages. In France, governments introduced increasing numbers of appointed civil servants at all political levels, both to ensure that senior officials remained faithful to them and to retain control over the electorate using the prestige of functions – not that of names and social seniority (as in England). In the process, they contradicted the very principle of property-based devolution of power that legitimized this political model. Thus, they combined the drawbacks of their system (where lobbies and local interests weighed excessively in the balance) with those of the system they sought to replace (in which the influence of the central state at local levels resulted in political servility and clientelism).[3]

In centralized states like France, the reproduction of state elites remained a key question for the future of each regime. To some extent, early nineteenth century France was a pioneering nation, with its special schools, its *corps* and the first *concours*. Yet, this institutional framework was partly a smokescreen. The prestige of the Napoleonic state and the existence of these paths created aspirations to hold higher public offices within a broad circle of bourgeois and middle-class

[3] On the weight of civil servants in the Chamber of Deputies during the July Monarchy, see Tudesq (1967), and Girard et al. (1976), p. 14–17, and, among the *conseillers généraux* [departmental councellors], Tudesq (1967) and Girard et al. p. 48 (1967).

individuals, whereas in practice these offices were earmarked for a small group with ties to the ruling teams. Insofar as access to elite state positions yielded multiple benefits and allowed to control power chains, step by step down to the local level, administrative competition became a crucial process (hence the brutal purges accompanying regime changes), and the resentment of those who found themselves excluded sparked major political tensions.

The hyperconcentration of university and high school students in the capital made the problem worse. It worked as an incentive for some of them, once they had graduated, to not return to their region of origin, but instead attempt to enter one of the Parisian professional markets – the main two for graduates being administration and legal professions (the latter often acting as a springboard for access to the former) (Caron 1991; Royer et al. (1982). This resulted in congestion at the base, which could only be resolved using access to the networks of protection and social and political patronage that made arbitrary picks between applicants with equivalent levels. Rejected aspirants then faced the prospect of getting back to where they had begun and starting over, even though equivalent positions were not available regionally due to centralization. They could also attempt to pursue an alternative, political strategy consisting of the accelerated accumulation of another form of social capital (such as being introduced into networks of opponents), assuming that in the short or medium term, considering the country's political instability, the existing chains of patronage would be dismantled.

As Heinrich Best showed, the political personnel in 1848 was thus largely drawn from this counter-elite of "capacities", who had been temporarily – but also, with each generation, structurally – barred from holding administrative and political power positions. Tellingly, one of the first measures taken under the Second Republic was the foundation of a school of administration to regulate access to the state's higher offices fairly Thuillier (1983). Minister of Public Instruction Hippolyte Carnot was thereby responding to the aspirations of fractions of the population who embraced reproduction through education but lacked sufficient social capital to access administrative positions and were as a result forced to fall back on low-level legal work, teaching, military careers or local civil service (Wright 1976).

In England, due to the delayed modernization of universities, neither liberal professionals (who were grouped into elitist corporations whose members were trained on the job, not in universities) nor senior civil servants (who were very few and virtually all came from the same circles as the gentry in power) could form a genuine counter-elite. Only at the tail end of the nineteenth century did such a fraction emerge, made up of Fabian intellectuals with connections to the workers' movement, who felt excluded from the establishment to such an extent that they were eager to reform the state. It was also at that time that the members of the commercial bourgeoisie, who had first conquered local power, managed to access governmental positions.

The Classic Republican Compromise: Merging with Civil Society?

The last form of organization of the relations between elites and state is that of the "classic" Republican model that prevailed during most of the Third and Fourth Republic. It was defined by its opposition to the other two models: against centralism, against the merging of administrative and political power, and against the domination of notables. To what extent, however, did the processes of selection of state elites actually depart from previous models? Did they bring civil society closer and facilitate relations between the centre and the periphery? These three objectives had been stated in the initial Republican programmes, but the previous elites had fallen short of achieving them. Despite the opportunism of its rulers and its slow implementation of social reforms, Republican France rose up to these challenges far more than other comparable European nations did at the time. Available statistics show that deputies and ministers became socially closer to civil society, albeit with a bias in favour of liberal and intellectual professions. Political careers remained somewhat inaccessible to working-class individuals, as for a long time there were no democratic parties liable to make up for the hidden *cens* or "political illegitimacy". They became, however, a new channel of promotion for members of the middle class, whose most spectacular cases were used by the regime as illustrations. Although, as in the time of the notables, money remained a significant factor in the political selection system, it was no longer an insurmountable obstacle, especially when parties organized after 1900. Educational capital, which can be measured based on the numbers of deputies and ministers with higher education, did on the other hand remain a key factor. The Republic replaced Guizot's call to whoever aspired to govern France or wield some sort of social power, to "enrich" themselves with Ferry and his followers' call to "instruct" themselves.

The politicians who dominated under the Third Republic generally received secondary education, and sometimes went on to study at the law faculty. They had mostly provincial backgrounds, which made it easier for them to secure lasting political strongholds. The influence of these groups, whose members were recruited in liberal professions or in mid-level civil service in the political field and in provincial senior civil service, reflected the philosophy of this type of regime: they ensured a convenient liaison between centre and periphery and the representation of multiple interest groups.

This was a French political specificity, especially compared to Germany or England.[4] In Germany, the share of liberal professions in the political personnel only increased with the Weimar Republic, even as the big organized parties offered an alternative channel of promotion (Zapf 1965; Charle 2018). In France, the seniority of their intervention and the slow evolution of society at large (with rural voting districts and mid-size towns predominating, and weak organized centrist and

[4] Mayeur et al. (2003), in particular my contribution pp. 45-63, and Estèbe (1982).

right-wing parties) allowed the lawyers to retain the role they had fought so hard for in the 1870s until the interwar period.

This historical and functional explanation is however insufficient; global morphological data also came into play. The number of lawyers registered at the bar remained remarkably stable for a century, since the high tally of 1840 (5594) was only surpassed in 1957 (5725) despite the considerable increase in the number of aspiring lawyers.[5] Thanks to all sorts of mechanisms of co-optation, discouragement or indirect selection, holders of high-level legal professions steered most graduates towards other professional markets (private sector, civil service, other liberal professions), which allowed them to maintain their scarcity over the long term and to retain control over the ethical standards promulgated by the *conseils des ordres*, whose member were bar elites. Over that entire period, this group of under 6000 individuals also had preferential access to a wide range of political and administrative careers: 500 to 600 seats at the Chamber, 300 at the Senate, 300 to 400 sub-prefectures, 90 prefectures, 3000 magistrate positions, not to mention the thousands of local mandates that served as springboards for these positions. In other words, for these individuals, who by definition were endowed with the requisite educational capital, and whose training put them in touch with the individuals who already held these positions, there was, during the Third Republic and part of the Fourth Republic, an optimal balance between the population of bar-registered lawyers (under 5000 individuals) and political and administrative career opportunities (4500 to 5000 positions).

Territorial and judicial postings were attributed at the discretion of the dominant political fraction, whose members were mainly nobles of the robe themselves. The constant exchanges of favours between lawyers who aspired to pursue political careers, deputies, ministers, prefects and magistrates – supported by their colleagues in inferior ranks: general councillors, mayors, sub-prefects, justices of the peace – ensured the control of areas of sovereign state power, whereas technical or new areas, on the other hand, were entrusted mainly to members of the *corps* who recruited through closed competition processes. This model would endure until the Liberation.

Despite mutual borrowings, the German, British and French political models owed much to national idiosyncrasies. The relations between centre and periphery, the weight of the aristocracy and its degree of endogamy, the extent of the openness of the higher education system and the career paths it led to contributed to legitimating or thwarting the social reproduction of elites and the political regimes associated with them.

[5] Weisz 1983, p. 236.

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Part II
Economic Power

Chapter 7
Researching National and International Top Managers: An Interview with Michael Hartmann

Mikael Palme

What were the main reasons behind deciding to carry out research on elites?

There were three main factors influencing the direction that my research took. The first one can be found in my family origin; the second is related to my political orientation that was formed during the time of the leftist student movement in Germany in the 60s and 70s; and the last one is what you can call chance, circumstances that very well could have turned out differently from what they did.

Starting with chance, my early career went very fast. At the age of 30, I got my habilitation, the *dozentur*; at 32, I had my first university position as a guest professor. You can be fortunate, even if you have no bonds to an academic network that protects you and even if you, being a leftist as myself, are an outsider. However, my luck ended. So, I suddenly found myself unemployed for almost one year, without having any plan B. Then the employment office suddenly offered me a position at the Law Faculty in Bochum, which I accepted. I had two small children to take care of and made a deal with the faculty: since I lived 130 kilometres from Bochum, I could work from home two or three days a week on two conditions. I had to lecture about the sociology of law, and I had to raise research funding by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

At that time, two big databases had newly been created comprising court cases, Juris and Solis. There was an interest in knowing to what extent they were actually consulted by lawyers in their practice. I made a research project funded by the DFG that showed that no lawyers outside the insurance branch ever used them. I did interviews, about 100, all in very big corporations. I had to do a sample, so in the major branches of the German economy, I selected two of the three leading companies; for example, BMW in the auto industry, Bayer in the chemical industry, the

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Deutsche Bank in the financial sector and the Allianz in the insurance industry. In each sector, I wanted the leading companies.

Coming myself from a bourgeois family, I recognised these people. My father had a high position as a financial director in a large Catholic institution with a yearly economic overturn equal to that of rather big corporations. He was one of its four top decision makers with the cardinal at the top. I was familiar with how they spoke, dressed and acted. This became clear to me when the project was already underway. It was not planned to address such issues, so I had to return to many of the interviewees afterwards to ask for information on their origin. And it was true: nearly all of them were children of the bourgeoisie.[1]

I belong to the 1968 generation. Already in secondary school, we revolted against our school principal who was a reactionary, authoritarian deputy mayor for the CDU party. For years, he tried in vain to get me expelled for my leftist orientation.

How did you proceed?

I was not at this moment sufficiently established for getting further funding for my research from the German Research Foundation. I decided to compare the recruitment and careers of computer scientists in large corporations to that of lawyers. Computer scientists belonged to a new profession established in the 70s. On the contrary, lawyers have historically always been close to power. For both professions, social origin turned out to be important. While lawyers, in their majority, traditionally came from the upper or upper middle class, computer scientists often had their origins in the middle classes and, to some extent, also the working classes. Part of my research interest was to study top managers. Among the computer scientists, those who reached management positions had the same bourgeois origin, and they were all male.[2]

In 1996, your book on top managers in German corporation appears.[3] How did you get access to people in such high positions?

I continued to target managers, but only members of the boards of large German corporations. I applied various criteria for selection in order to cover the main branches in the German economy. I used my growing network of contacts, and I also added a new group: the leading head hunters. My belief was that they would reveal mechanisms that operate in the selection and recruitment to elite positions.

At this time, I could still make interviews with top managers without them connecting me to any particular position. Later, I couldn't. I became well-known because of the media. But, at this time, I could make use of my personal network of contacts. I knew who was the head of particular sections in the leading corporations.

[1] The results of this research were published in Michael Hartnmann, *Juristen in der Wirtschaft – Eine Elite im Wandel*, 1990.

[2] Michael Hartmann, *Informatiker in der Wirtschaft*, 1995.

[3] Michael Hartmann, *Topmanager – Die Rekrutierung einer Elite*, Frankfurt a. M.: Campus 1996.

I also knew how to find ways to get in contact with them, even when access was denied through normal channels. For example, if I had called the secretary many times only to get the answer that the board director was busy or not present, I had learned that secretaries go home from work sometimes after 5 p.m., so if I called at half past 5, with a bit of luck, the director would answer the phone personally. It is much more difficult to say no when you speak to someone directly. When I could, I made use of contacts since members of the elite much more easily open doors. For the head hunters, for example, I knew that one of them was regarded as the most experienced and effective one in the whole country, so I called him and said that I was well-aware that he normally gave no interviews, but that all his colleagues said that he was the best one and that I simply had to interview him to get things right. He was flattered, and then he helped me.

Did you have an interview guide and how did you handle all the data you collected?

I had a very extensive interview guide. During the course of field work, you discover new angles and topics, but with so many interviews, you come to a point where you need to keep to the structure of the interview guide so that information is not missing for some of the interviewees. Many questions were very precise. I also collected as much information as I could from other sources on the interviewed top managers. Moreover, I read existing studies on the various corporations and professions the top managers came from. Again, data needed to be systematically collected for the whole population. I like mathematics, so it is not accidental that my studies comprise much exact data. However, my analysis also puts forward qualitative aspects. As you can see in my publications, this is the time when I start making reference to Bourdieu's 'habitus' concept. The head hunters' stories reveal the importance of origin connected to manners, language, educational diplomas and general knowledge. Note that this was not a small sample of merely qualitative interviews, but a fairly representative population of elite positions in major corporations.

To what existing research traditions did you relate?

I think I am very much an outsider. In fact, I have never belonged to any particular school or research network. When I started, research on elites was dormant in Germany. Since the early 1960s and the work of Dahrendorf and Zapf, only political scientists were focussing on the importance of networks, inspired by Inglehart's idea of the shift from materialistic to post-materialistic values. It had virtually no impact on sociological research. My own position was totally different, in two respects. I opposed the functionalist perspective and instead put power in the foreground. Moreover, I focussed empirically on the recruitment to various elite positions and how it is connected to class structures. From my early times as a student, I was well familiar with both Marx's and Weber's theories of class. The next inspiration came from Bourdieu, whom I learned to know through his first German translator Beate Krais. She introduced me to several articles in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* and, later, to *The State Nobility* (Bourdieu 1996). I have never seen myself as a theoretician of elites. My position has rather been that I have to be

familiar with all contributions, theoretical and empirical, to the sociology of elites, and then I empirically address issues that I find challenging. Take the German sociological heritage as regards elite research at the time when I started my research: I never liked Dahrendorfs' functionalism. Nevertheless, I found his discussion interesting about the reasons for the selective character of recruitment to the dominating class. I wanted to analyse what importance social origin had – independently of the education system – for attaining elite positions.

I stand close to my Marxist origin. I basically see elites as part of the class structure of society. For example, I have never really taken over Bourdieu's 'capital' concept, which is much used for analysing elites. In my understanding, capital is based on the commodity-form of the labour-power and its exploitation. With the exception of economic capital, I would prefer the term 'resources' instead of capital. From my critical point of view, I have problems with the idea of a field of power. Bourdieu defines this field as the space in which the various owners of capital struggle for power over the statist capital that grants power over the different species of capital, their relative currencies with respect to one another and their reproduction (above all, by the education system). I think this definition is strongly influenced by the traditional position of the state in France and overestimates the power of the state.

Bourdieu first used the term 'field of power' in his book *La Noblesse d'État*. In chapters that have been taken over completely from older essays in *Actes de la Recherches en sciences sociales*, he simply replaces the term ' dominant class'. To replace the term 'dominant class' with 'field of power' has advantages but also disadvantages. The main advantage is that the 'field' concept makes it clear that it is a battlefield whose players have to constantly fight for their positions. The main disadvantage I see is that Bourdieu, with his term the 'dominant class', made a clear distinction between the dominant faction of this class, which has mainly economic capital, and the dominated faction, which has mainly cultural capital. Many of the scientists who work with this term in elite research produce extensive correspondence analyses, in which on the one hand, the elites with a lot of economic capital, and on the other hand, those with a lot of cultural capital are listed. The fact that the former have significantly more power is usually lost. There is no clear yardstick for the valuation of the various actors in the field of power. For me, in Bourdieu's work, first of all the 'habitus' concept is decisive for the research on elites and classes because it connects structure and acting. The class specific habitus is the critical factor of the recruiting process for elite positions, especially in large corporations.

With Mills' concept of the power elite, I have problems too. Firstly, the relations between the 'power elite' and the 'ruling class' remain somewhat unclear. Secondly, Mills gives too much weight to the intentional practices of the elites. Thirdly, he tends to idealise the old middle classes as the last bastion against the victory of the power elite and overestimates the power of the military and the mass media. In fact, I have as much been inspired by historians for understanding how particular professions, social groups and classes have developed historically. The Bielefeld School, especially Hans-Ulrich Wehler himself, has been important to me. First and foremost, they analyse the historical development of classes in German society since the

nineteenth century, especially the specific type of the German 'Bildungsbürgertum'. Like Bourdieu, they understand classes not only as a statistical category but as a historically grown reality with specific manifestations in different national contexts.

After the study on top corporate managers, your research turned more quantitative?

Yes, for two reasons. Firstly, I could no longer make interviews for the already mentioned reasons. Secondly, in spite of my studies being based on rather big samples and using much data, I was constantly criticised for being too qualitative. Often I got the commentary that this was all interesting, but what did it really prove? So, when I set out to investigate the importance of social origin in relation to educational attainment, I deliberately went entirely quantitative. I selected all people having done a doctorate in the disciplinary areas of law, economics and engineering for the years 1955, 1965, 1975 and 1985, a total number of almost 6500 persons, and I analysed their educational and professional careers. I chose these three disciplinary areas because they have historically been by far the most important ones for careers into positions of power. The analysis shows that, in spite of earning exactly the same academic title within the same years of study and with the same characteristics, like study semesters abroad for example, there were huge differences between the careers of PhD diploma holders depending on their social origin. In fact, there is a myth that the professional top elite in Germany, the *Leistungselite*, have reached their positions purely by virtue of their professional skills.[4]

After this study, no one complained that my work was too qualitative. In order to cope with the huge amount of data, I had to specify the classification of social origin I created for the former projects. The categories you often find in sociology, like socio-professional group, are totally unhistorical and do not take into account the history of specific professions and groups and how they have developed within a national context. If you want to understand hierarchical positions in society, you need to take historical development into account. For example, you have a lot of data from the EU. But the categories that are employed hide the *leitender Angestellter* in Germany, *cadres supérieurs* in France and *senior civil servants* in England; they are not the same thing. Or, take the example of *Bildungsbürgertum* in Germany, a fraction of the upper class and upper middle class in Germany that has no exact equivalent in France[5] or England, simply because it developed in a particular historical context.

I also always consider the statistics for the period from the end of the nineteenth century until today. What demographic changes have a particular group undergone in relation to other groups? For example, in the 1950s and 1960s, senior officials in the higher administration generally came from the upper class or upper middle class,

[4] *Der Mythos von den Leistungseliten*, Frankfurt a. M.: Campus 2002. A short English version of the main results has been published 2010 in a review article called "Achievement or Origin: Social Background and Ascent to Top Management", *Talent Development & Excellence*, 2 (1), 105–117.

[5] See for example Christophe Charle, « La bourgeoisie de robe en France au XIXe siècle » from 1997.

but nowadays a significant part of them has middle class origins, something that signals a significant historical shift. When you scrutinise how social groups and class fractions change, then you can say, ok, that is the top of society. So, I attempted to give justice to the history of professions, social classes and class fractions in Germany. I created a classification system comprising 12 categories. These categories were in a sense compromises. Then, I aggregated them at a higher level to just four: upper class, upper middle class, middle classes and working classes. I differentiated the upper classes more than the rest of the population because, for me, it's most important to see which proportion of the elites originate from these classes. I could always go back to the less aggregated level. But, you should not forget history. The upper and upper middle classes, in my classification, are roughly the same as the bourgeoisie, but there are changes in the composition of the bourgeoisie. For example, until the 1960s, most members of the medical and law professions were part of the bourgeoisie. Today, this is true only for perhaps at most two-thirds of them.

This is also the time when you started making international comparisons and, in a second step, discussed the emergence of global or transnational elites?

I started carrying out international comparative studies in the second half of the 1990s, initially for the CEOs of the 100 largest companies in Germany, France and Great Britain.[6] To my knowledge, this is the first international study of that kind. International comparisons have since been dominating my research. I was tired of hearing the justification for the soaring salaries of top CEOs that they were just a consequence of the global competition for these individuals. I could demonstrate that German corporations hardly gave any top positions at all to foreigners and that practically no Germans were to be found as CEO of large foreign companies.

In the research that I later summarised in my book *Eliten und Macht in Europa* (2007), I studied most European countries, focussing not only on economic elites, but also on administrative, political and juridical ones. I found similarities and dissimilarities. First, the more homogenous the elites are and the more socially exclusive, the stronger are general social differences in society. In this respect, there were great differences between the Scandinavian countries, on the one hand, and France, Spain and the UK, on the other. Taking the most relevant observed differences between countries into account, I also developed a typology. The first type was most clearly represented by France: very homogeneous elites, passing through the same type of exclusive elite institutions, but also changing from one sector to the other. The second type was the British: homogeneous, attendance at the same elite institutions, but no change of sector. And a third type could be found in the Scandinavian countries and, to some extent, in Germany and most other countries: no elite institutions and no change of sector.

I later expanded this research to other countries, among others the USA, Japan and China. When you study, in detail, the top business elite all over the world, you

[6] These studies have been published in several articles between 1997 and 2000. The most important ones are "Auf dem Weg zur transnationalen Bourgeoisie?" from 1999 and "Class-specific habitus and the social reproduction of the business elite in France and Germany" from 2000.

find that it is seldom global or transnational (Hartmann 2016). Only in three countries – Australia, Great Britain and, most of all, Switzerland – may we speak of a real internationalisation of the CEOs heading the top enterprises, and for three more – the Netherlands, Canada and Germany – we may speak of a clear trend in this direction. But, in all other countries more than 90 percent *of the CEOs as well as the chairmen* are national. This is because so much of the recruitment to these top positions is nationally embedded. They share the same habitus, the same culture and the same language. And they do not want to live abroad permanently, even if they have the money to keep an expensive flat in London or New York. The same is true for the 1000 richest billionaires.

How did you do this research?

I use a variety of sources. First of all, I try to read the most relevant research studies I can find on elites in these various countries. This varies a lot. For example, when I prepared my book on elites and power in Europe, there was very little research to be found for Spain or Italy, whereas for the Scandinavian countries, you could find quite a lot. In the beginning of these international studies, I also relied very much on sources such as *Who's Who?* I nowadays get most of my information from the Internet. With patience, you can collect much precise information about individual trajectories as well as on institutions. You will find them in large databases but also in newspapers or reports about the awarding of honorary titles by universities or organisations. Moreover, you often get access to useful data on corporations or on the demographic transformations in particular countries. This is all very time-consuming, and I end up having meter-high pillars of printed information in my study room. But, it is doable.

My data do not include interviews. There are several reasons for this. As a foreigner, you need to live in a country for a long time in order to really benefit from qualitative methods. You need to speak the language and do it well, so that you understand the nuances. You have to have contacts that take time to build up. You have to understand the cultural context, which is also a historical context. You can say that these are genuine challenges for the study of global or transnational elites. I hope that other researchers can be able to cope with them, but for me it is difficult. I could, of course, do it in Germany, but as I said before, the elites all know me too well.

Have you used or been inspired by network analysis approaches?

Network analysis has played only a minor role in my research. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, I have almost always dealt with the CEOs and the chairmen, and not with board members as a whole. Secondly, I'm a little bit sceptical towards pure network approaches. Take the example of the internationalisation of the business elite. In my last research, I have used data on the board members of the leading companies in many countries. I have found that the percentage of foreign board members is almost twice as high as that of foreign CEOs or chairmen. However, if you take a closer look at the facts, you can see the reason for this. In most cases, foreigners on the boards are non-executive. They don't live in the

country where the company headquarter is located. They come to the headquarters only for six to twelve meetings per year. Therefore, the relatively high percentage of foreigners is not an indicator of a real internationalisation of the business elite. I think the network approach is helpful to find connections between board members connected to several companies and to several countries, but it can't say much about the key issue here, the intensity and the importance of these connections.

If you look back on these 30 years, what do you consider to be the main discoveries in your research?

There is an internal consistency in what I have done, one study leading to another, so it is difficult to point to particular discoveries. But, if I should do exactly that, I would first mention the large study of almost 6500 doctorates from four decades that showed that social origin, contrary to the opinion of Dahrendorf and others, not only operates through the education system that regulates access to elite positions. Social origin has a very direct impact on the recruitment to elites and on post-educational careers, to a large extent through habitus and everything else that comes with high social origin, such as contacts and insights. This plays a direct role in the selection of candidates for elite positions, not the least in the economic sector. The principle of social similarity ensures that top managers are vastly recruited from the upper and upper middle classes. Second, I would point to my international comparative studies that I just mentioned and that put in question the idea of an emerging transnational elite. Only in very few countries, the top management of large corporations is actually internationalised. Corporations go global, but the business elite, the top managers, who handle these corporations do not. Again, the force of social similarity governs selection mechanisms. Third, I would mention my study of the German core elite, the holders of the 1000 most important positions of power. I show that the homogeneous social origin of most members of the elite also implies very similar views on issues related to social justice, taxes and public spending. Members of the top elite who come from working class families tend to have very different views on the same issues, views that are far closer to those of the population in general.

And if you think of your methodological choices?

I have used many different kinds of methods. This has been important for me in my development as a researcher. I have conducted several hundred in-depth interviews. I have used archive studies, especially for the big study on the cohorts with PhD diplomas. I have systematically collected information on elites in the domains of business, politics, the judicial system and academia using many types of sources, indicators on such things as social origin, educational trajectory and even periods of residence abroad. I have sometimes tested hypotheses in my research with multivariate methods, although I then depended on collaboration with others. In the study on the core German elite, I collaborated with the Social Science Research Center in Berlin, using, for the first time, a survey carried out by experienced interviewers, professional pollsters. However, for the members of the targeted elite population who did not want to participate in the survey, I had to collect data myself about their

origin and their educational and professional career. I needed the same type of precise information for all to get reliable results about the main characteristics of the elites.

In recent years, my research on international comparisons has, to a high extent, become more reliant on Internet resources. This allows me to go back to doing much of the data collection on my own. I use help when needed, for example, a Chinese assistant for accessing detailed information on the Chinese elite. The Internet is a powerful research tool, if used with care, since so much information is available that previously was difficult to find. There is one weakness that I should point to. Through concentrating on official positions, sometimes you may overlook people without such positions but still with much influence, especially in the business world. You may miss them if you make the selection of the top elite through formal criteria such as being a member of the board of a multinational corporation. But this is not a big issue. Most billionaires lead their companies themselves, or at least they sit at the head of the supervisory board.

The major methodological difficulty facing the elites is getting access to them. They keep their distance. They don't want to be interviewed, and if they sometimes do, they don't give their secrets away. As I said, it has become increasingly difficult for me to make interviews in Germany. However, the fact that I am well-known has also, to a little extent, been beneficial. Since the late 1990s, I am so often invited to give lectures in all kinds of contexts, large companies, associations, foundations and universities, much more often than at scientific conferences. For more than ten years, I gave approximately 70 lectures around the country per year, nowadays less. Among them are the *Baden-Badener Unternehmergespräche*, one of the most exclusive meetings of the German business elite. Furthermore, due to my reputation as the expert on elites for several years, I was a member of the advisory board of a foundation together with many very powerful members like CEOs of large corporations, cabinet members of the Merkel administration and presidents of the leading science organisations. So, I am often given the opportunity to discuss with people in power, so at least I know how they explain the positions of power that they hold, and I get some information about their real attitudes towards major problems, such as the financial crisis, for example.

Has the reception of your work changed over time?

Initially, my research on elites did not give much echo. However, from the mid-1990s, the interest in elites resurged, and media gave the topic more attention. My research on the careers of people with a PhD exam was a sort of a breakthrough for me as a well-known researcher. As for German social sciences, competition has been weak as regards elite research. I think I have benefited from my position as an outsider. When the elites became a popular topic again in the late 1990s, it was temporary. Some renowned researchers, such as the Berlin political scientist Herfried Münkler, showed interest, but then allowed the topic to fall again. I think he and others felt that the effort needed for doing systematic research in this field was very big. I also regularly came up with new empirical studies to which others had to respond. Part of this discontinuity in elite research has to do with the fact that

sometimes researchers change sides. For example, in political science, the leader of a major elite study made in Potsdam in the mid-1990s left academia once the project was finished for a position in the Federal Association of German Banks. The research project I carried out jointly with the Social Science Research Center in Berlin on the German top elite faced a similar discontinuity. In spite of the director and three research-directors at the Center being involved in the research, the results have, to a very little extent, been published. There has been a high overturn of staff, but my interpretation is that there is also simply a lack of interest. So, for years, I am the only one who has continuously researched elites in Germany. Although the conservative media don't particularly like to leave an area that they consider to be their own to an old leftist like me, they have so far not had much choice.

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Chapter 8
Central Bankers as a Sociological Object: Stakes, Problems and Possible Solutions

Frédéric Lebaron and Aykiz Dogan

Central bankers can be defined as agents in charge of the decisions that are studied, developed and implemented within the central banks. These financial institutions have been both products and agents of nation-building and state formation (Cohen 1998; Feiertag and Margairaz 2016; Helleiner 1998), as well as that of the international diffusion of norms and structures (Krampf 2013; Marcussen 2005; Polillo and Guillén 2005). They are inserted and act in national and historical contexts, but they also share common functions (control of credit and money supply, banking and payment system supervision, reserve management, monetisation of budget deficit, collection and publication of data, etc.), objectives (price stability, macroeconomic and financial consistency), instruments (interest rates, open market operations, cash reserve ratio or other requirements and tools) and norms. Equipped with monopoly privileges such as issuing notes and acting as the final authority on monetary policy decisions, these institutions coordinate, in varying degrees, with governments. They also cooperate with each other as well as with regional, international and supranational decision-makers, some of which - such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) - monitor and engage in policy coordination (Borio et al. 2008; Eichengreen et al. 2018; Toniolo 2005). In fact, in addition to being national policy-makers, central bankers have acquired a major role in the contemporary world economy and a central position in global governance (Baker 2006; Hall 2008).

In comparison with other sectors of public policy, monetary decisions are, in general, clearly identified and highly formalised. Furthermore, they are characterised by a very high degree of centralisation of decision power in the hands of a few

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people. This centralisation manifests itself even by the generalised use of the adjective 'central' to designate these institutions and by the small number of actors authorised to participate in official discussions and voting for policy formulation.

In a sense, it is easy to identify the individual actors in charge of the main monetary and financial decisions inside the central banks. They are officially appointed, most of the time by governments, as leaders of monetary policy councils. As their decisions have a direct impact on the economy, central bankers are situated in a structurally determining position which makes them both very visible and 'influential'. This is probably a central reason why a large set of professional actors (especially journalists, investors, traders and bankers) and a variety of 'experts' (including financial analysts and the so-called CB-watchers) consider individual central bankers as relevant 'objects' of interest, at least as much as government members or CEOs, although with rather specific features.

Central bankers are scrutinised, at the moment of their appointment in particular, by financial actors who try to gather information about their personal trajectories, previous position-takings and orientations in order to forecast their future behaviour as central bankers. They are present in the daily coverage of monetary policies, especially through the media image of the central bank 'governors' or 'chairmen'[1], who are often described as *powerful actors,* sometimes even *heroic* in various ways. As a matter of fact, the press usually gives a nuanced and adjusted - though not entirely factitious –account of their work and achievements.

They have, furthermore, acquired prominence in a particular domain of scientific literature emanating from economists, who have begun to take seriously into consideration the variations in behaviours and discourses which relate to the variety of complex individual profiles that central bankers display. This paves the way for a more consistent sociological investigation of the group of central bankers, its internal differentiation and specificity.

In this contribution, we will focus on the construction of central bankers as an object of research and how this object can be methodologically approached. We will first (1) discuss the empirical sources that can be used for this purpose, then (2) make a descriptive analysis of the data on which our empirical study builds. We then proceed to (3) analyse central bankers as a social space and, further, (4) their position-takings as revelatory of their positions of power in this space.

[1] Designations of the heads of central banks vary across countries. The US 'chairman' corresponds to the 'gouverneur' of French-speaking countries or 'governor' at the Bank of England and banks in many English-speaking countries. The ECB has a 'president', who must be distinguished from the national 'governors' and the other members of the executive board. We will here use the word 'governor' in order to simplify.

Empirical Sources Currently Used in Research on Central Bankers

Central banks are usually investigated on the basis of macroeconomic data, in particular using monetary and financial indicators (inflation, GDP growth, interest rates, exchange rates etc.). Most of the scientific work carried out on them is actually produced *inside central banks* or in academic economics departments particularly devoted to monetary macroeconomics and therefore close to central banks themselves. This tendency towards monopolisation highly contributes to their symbolic power as the sources of legitimate representations of the world. This knowledge production constitutes a semi-scientific field aiming at developing theoretical models and statistical testing of various aspects of central banking, which are part of the way modern economies function and contribute to *defining* economic realities.

Aside from socio-historical research on central banking (Feiertag and Margairaz 2010; Feiertag 2005), a growing number of studies call into question what we call the 'social process of neutralisation' in these institutions (Lebaron 2000a, b). Archival research as well as analyses on laws, jurisdictions, or other legal documents regulating this area have been important in investigating how central banks' specific powers are redefined (Mehra 2010; Smits 2015) and what effects they have on the 'financialisation' of economies (Krippner 2011). These powers have been at stake particularly in the debates about the 'independence' of these institutions from governments and about their growing 'regulatory' role, especially after the 2008 financial crisis (Canova 2015; Tognato 2013). An increasing number of case studies examine the monetary committees and decision-making processes, especially after the 'closed doors' to their secret meetings were slightly opened to researchers when certain central banks decided to publish transcripts and other documents from meetings (Bell-Kelton 2006). Central banks' claims for transparency also made ethnographic studies possible that were previously reserved to insiders (Smart 1999).

In parallel, we also observe a stronger interest for central bankers' discourses (Abolafia 2010; Holmes 2009; Rosenhek 2013) and their reinterpretation by the media (Velthuis 2015), in particular after the 'communicational turn' in central banking (Clévenot et al. 2015). Furthermore, on-site interviews complementing document analysis have been helpful in understanding some of the dynamics of the social space of central bankers, as well as certain 'field effects' (Mudge and Vauchez 2016). The personal trajectories and orientations of leading central bankers have also received growing attention, for instance from scholars who study trends in recruitment/appointment processes and their policy implications (Carré and Demange 2017; Chang 2003; Ennser-Jedenastik 2014; Marcussen 2006). By highlighting that the personal trajectories and characteristics of executive staff and directors influence the policy choices of central banks, these studies contribute to the deconstruction of the 'neutrality myth' (Adolph 2016).

Only recently have central bankers' biographical data also been more directly introduced into econometric analysis as *explanatory factors* and been recognised as a major scientific stake (Bordo and Istrefi 2018; Farvaque et al. 2009, 2011;

Göhlmann and Vaubel 2007; Smales and Apergis 2016). In highly quantitative terms and sometimes with contradicting findings, these studies support that a central banker's biographical background, such as gender and educational or professional background, has an impact on monetary policy.

A Descriptive Analysis of Central Bankers' Trajectories

We now turn to a descriptive analysis of the data collected for our empirical study using a variety of sources (see also Lebaron 2008, 2010, 2012a, b, 2014, 2018a, b; Lebaron and Dogan 2016).

First, central bank governance is almost entirely reserved to male candidates. We have previously outlined a significant gender gap in monetary governance in our studies on the directors of central banks (Lebaron and Dogan 2018a; Lebaron 2016), as well as international monetary organisations, the IMF and the BIS (Lebaron and Dogan 2018b). Compared to 338 men (93%), only 26 women (7%) participated in monetary policy and decision-making as central bank governors in the period from 2000 to 2017. Among these 26 chairwomen, 24 were appointed after 2005 and 22 after 2008, indicating still very small and insufficient progress since the crisis. There are so far very few studies on the long-neglected question of gender diversity in central bank governance and of the factors relating to women's (under-)representation, their policy implications and macroeconomic outcomes (Diouf and Pépin 2017; Farvaque et al. 2011; Masciandaro et al. 2015). Furthermore, these quantitative studies, based on sample populations of chairwomen too small to produce generalisable findings, don't allow us to perceive the complex mechanisms of exclusion and their consequences regarding gender inequality. Further qualitative research, in particular ethnographic, is required to better perceive the dynamics of 'masculine domination' in monetary governance, especially considering wide-ranging negative consequences, not limited to symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2002). In fact, Braunstein and Heintz have shown that monetary regimes and central bank policy have gender specific implications. Notably, they affect men's and women's employment differently, hence aggravating income gaps (Braunstein and Heintz 2008; Heintz 2006).

Secondly, most central bank governors are economists, and this is increasingly so. Among the 335 central bank governors in focus in our empirical study and for whom the information is available, only 55 do not have a degree in economics, while 84% have studied economics at the bachelor, master or PhD level. This is an increase in comparison with an earlier study from 1997 based on *Who's who in central banking* (Lebaron 2000b) that focused on central bank leaders of the 1990s. However, it should be noted that 29% of the central bank governors have a multidisciplinary profile. They might, for instance, have a bachelor degree in engineering, and an MBA and a PhD in economics. In order to cover such cases, the table we depart from and that comprises our empirical data (Table 8.1) counts three different fields for the disciplinary background of an individual. Management sciences are the second most prevalent discipline among the 334 central bank governors, and 71 have a degree in management, business administration, finance, commerce,

Table 8.1 Fields of study (multiple responses were accepted); N = 228

Field of study	Frequencies	Percentages based on number of responses	Percentages based on number of individuals
Economics	280	64.81%	83.83%
Management	71	16.44%	21.26%
MEP	26	6.02%	7.78%
Law	26	6.02%	7.78%
Political science	23	5.32%	6.89%
Sociology	4	0.93%	1.20%
Other	2	0.46%	0.60%
Total	432	100.00%	

MEP Mathematics, engineering and physics

Table 8.2 Academic qualifications; N = 327

	Frequencies	Percentages
Postdoc	1	0.31%
PhD	153	46.79%
Master	121	37.00%
Bachelor	53	16.21%
No degree	1	0.31%
Total	327	100.00%

accounting or banking. The economists not only constitute an overwhelming majority, but they are more qualified too. Half of them have a PhD, while this ratio is only 24% among those who studied other disciplines.

Table 8.2 gives a more general view of central bankers' academic backgrounds, providing frequencies and percentages for the highest academic qualifications of 327 central bank governors in the world during the period 2000 to 2017. Considering the technocratic institutional discourse in the world of central banking, it might be surprising to see that not more than 47% have a PhD. Additionally, according to the data we have collected, 228 out of 336 governors of the world's central banks, which is a significant majority at 68%, have studied in a foreign university. Those who studied abroad preferred US universities (54). The most frequented universities included, in decreasing order, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Oxford, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of Pennsylvania (and its Wharton School of Business), Columbia University and London School of Economics.

Our findings also shed light on particular dimensions of this imbalance as regards in what regions of the world central bankers have done their studies abroad (Table 8.3). The American Federal Reserve (FED) chairmen, for example, all studied in the USA, hence none abroad; whereas the governors of the Bank of England all studied abroad (as well as in the UK). As for the European Central Bank (ECB)

Table 8.3 Location of studies abroad in terms of regions (multiple responses were accepted); N = 228

Location of studies abroad	Frequencies	Percentages based on number of responses	Percentages based on number of individuals
USA	122	45.69%	53.51%
UK	55	20.60%	24.12%
Europe	46	17.23%	20.18%
Canada	10	3.75%	4.39%
Oceania	10	3.75%	4.39%
Asia	7	2.62%	3.07%
Middle-East	7	2.62%	3.07%
Africa	5	1.87%	2.19%
Latin America	5	1.87%	2.19%
Total	267	100.00%	

governors, 59% didn't study abroad. For those who did, the first destination was again the USA (46%), second the UK (39%) and third Europe (19%).

The over-representation of US universities in particular, and the universities of the Global North in general, underscores the asymmetric power relations in global monetary governance. We observe that candidates with a diploma from these universities have a better chance of reaching the top of the central bank hierarchy. In consequence, a considerable number of leading monetary policy makers in the world are formed in the Global North, hence importing and re-appropriating a certain epistemic perspective favoured in the educational institutions they attended. Even if there is a degree of diversity with regard to their political and scientific traditions, these universities produce the hegemonic knowledge that circulates in monetary authorities across the world, at least through their governors.

Central bank governors are mostly insiders in the institution where they uphold their positions and, more generally, in the field of finance; 130 out of 353 governors (37%) have made their career in the central bank before becoming its governor. This percentage is much higher (58%) for women, indicating that those who make a reputation inside the institution and pave their way up in the administrative hierarchy have a much higher chance than female outsiders to be considered as candidates for governance.

What goes for the central bankers is also valid for other actors in the finance field; 27.5% of the governors' main occupations have been in public financial administration. These institutions included the Treasury, Economy and Finance Ministries, financial supervisory bodies, public funds and so on. Moreover, 19% of the governors are private bankers, traders, investors, CEOs or employees of financial companies, etc. Academics constitute 7% of the whole group, those with administrative careers 5% and politicians 3%. The domination of economics-trained professionals of central banks is a recent feature, and it seems to have increased the link between the world of Anglo-Saxon finance and monetary decision-making, as foreseen in earlier studies (Lebaron 2000b).

A Social Space Approach

A distinguishing feature of our analysis of the world of central bankers is that it departs from the idea that they constitute a particular *social space*. Pierre Bourdieu conceptualised this notion in the 1960s and onwards by emphasising the relationships between agents and groups in terms of the relative positions they occupy in the social world based on their volume and composition of different types of capital - economic, cultural, symbolic, etc. (Bourdieu 1985, 1989). In our view, this is a general approach that can be applied to a very large variety of autonomous universes (Lebaron and Le Roux 2018).

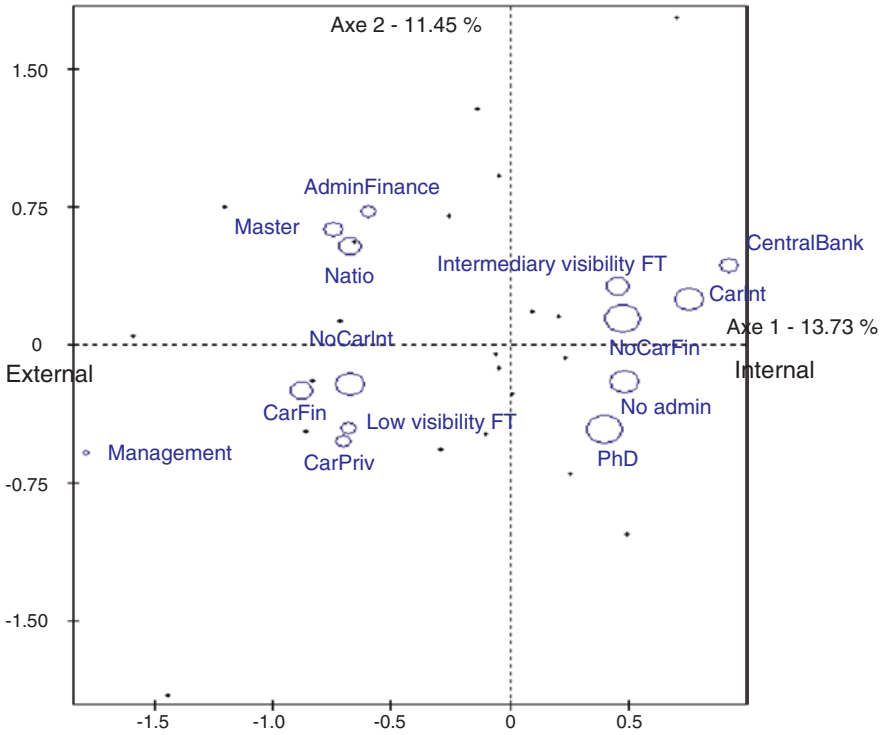
To construct the space of the ECB Governing Council members, we applied a specific Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) as explained by Le Roux and Rouanet (2010). This analysis was based on 62 individuals, 12 active questions and 32 active categories that we constructed from the answers to these questions with a view to produce a geometric modelling of the social space of the Governing Council during the period between 1999 and 2016. The questions and categories included sex, public visibility as measured by appearance in the Financial Times, educational level, educational field, main career, academic career, political career, career in the central bank, career in private finance, other private career, career in the administration and number of sectors during the career. We will only comment on the first two axes, as shown in the charts below. They represent a raw rate of variance of around 25% which is very high in MCA.[2]

Graph 8.1 shows the cloud of the most contributing active categories on the first axis. On the left side, we observe 'main career in administration' along with 'master's degree' and, below, 'financial career'. On the right, we see 'internal career' and 'central bank'. Hence, the first axis opposes internal versus financial and national administrative careers.

Graph 8.2 illustrates the categories building up the second opposition in the data, thus enabling us to complete the analysis. This second (vertical) axis opposes categories like 'financial administration', 'no academic career' and 'woman' at the top, versus 'research and university' and 'PhD' at the bottom. Whereas Axis 1 is a classical axis found in the space of central bankers, Axis 2 shows the growing importance of academic capital in this field, illustrated by the polarisation it creates in the case of Eurozone central bankers.

On one side, we find profiles strongly related to the academic world, whereas on the other side, we find 'practitioners' related to the politico-bureaucratic field, especially treasuries and ministries of finance. This opposition is particularly strong in countries where high civil servants have long since dominated the space of economic policy, as is the case in France and Germany, where the rise of academic Anglo-Saxon economics is more recent.

[2] Using other criteria such as Benzécri's modified rate lead to a maximum of three axes to interpret, with two clearly stronger first axes. We focus here on the first two axes, which are by far the most important and meaningful from both a statistical and sociological point of view.

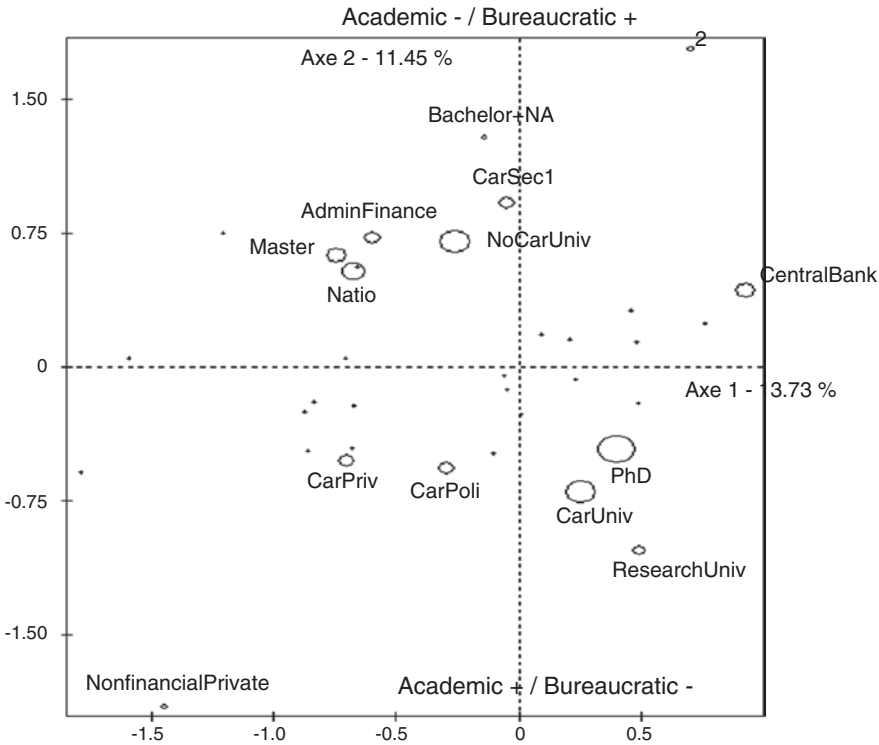


Graph 8.1 Cloud of the most contributing active categories – Axis 1

Power in Process: A Sociology of Position-Takings

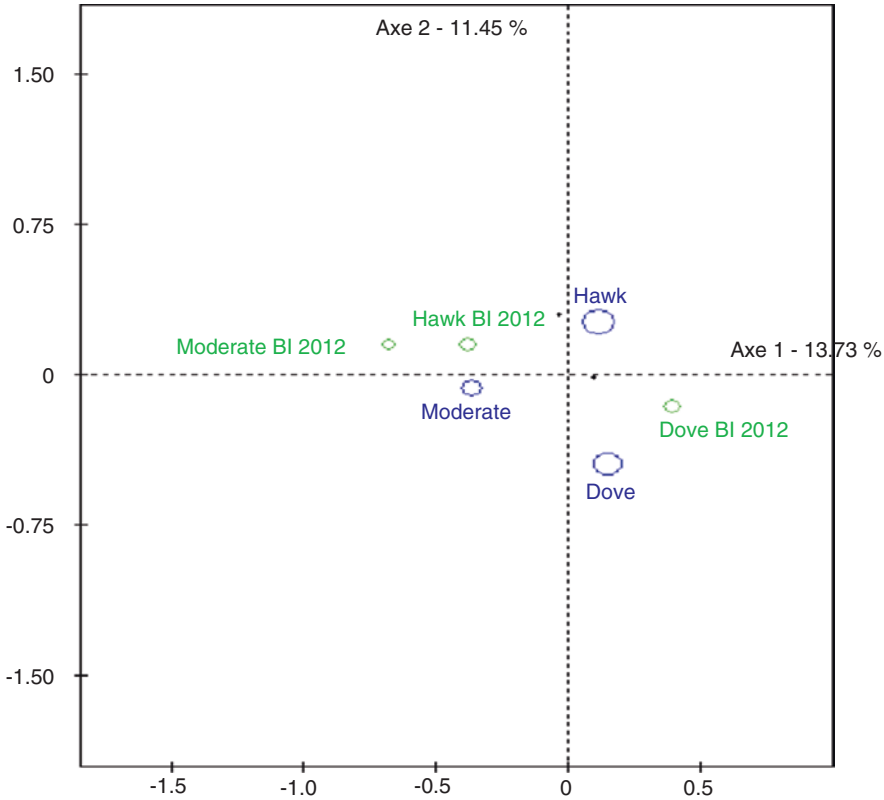
At this point, our approach might seem as a purely descriptive, comparative account of the socio-demographics of the professional group of central bankers. While this is interesting in itself, at least in order to understand the objective basis of their centrality and powers, it does not enlighten us on how their relative positions relate to the policies they favour. We need to remember that 'powerful' actors are also agents whose position-takings or 'behaviours' have concrete effects on economic reality, for example through the influence over interest rates. More generally, monetary decisions are clearly connected to the effective powers that go along with having a position in this social space. We thus need to explore the link between positions in the field and what we refer to as 'position-taking'.

The categorisation of position-takings is embodied in the field itself, as we have previously observed in our studies on the field of economists (Lebaron 2000a, b) where a lot of lexical imagination is deployed to categorise its own members. Here, the opposition between 'doves' and 'hawks', which has a long history, is largely integrated in daily commentaries, especially at the Federal Reserve Bank. It is also common within the Eurozone. Before 2008, being a "hawk" means being



Graph 8.2 Cloud of the most contributing categories – Axis 2

particularly reluctant to a loosening of the monetary policy by fear of a rise of inflation. After 2008, being a "hawk," very consistently, means to oppose a radical adaptative strategy which uses a range of non-conventional measure in order to avoid a deepening of the financial crisis, which may give birth to later inflation. By opposition, the "doves" are the members of the committee which favor a certain degree of flexibility and loosening of the monetary policy, after 2008 in the context of the management of the global financial crisis, and before that in the context of low growth and high level of unemployment in the Eurozone. The MCA permits us to project categories representing position-takings as supplementary, i.e. not active, elements into the space of central bankers that we have created. As Graph 8.3 demonstrates, the second axis described above relates to an opposition between 'hawks' and 'doves', which are very well separated (more than 0.5 standard deviation) on this axis. In fact, it indicates that an academic background and the lack of political and bureaucratic capital is globally associated in this case with a more dovish orientation. Furthermore, position-taking categories indicating 'innovations' and 'change' suggest that such policy stands are connected to a more apparent support or commitment to innovation. In contrast to Axis 2 in the space, the first axis seems

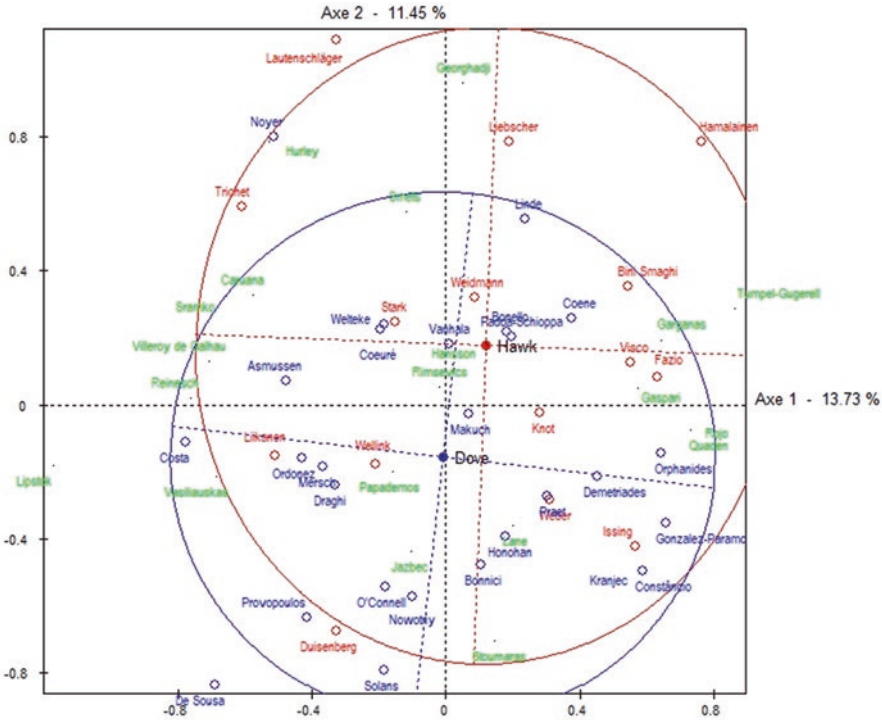


Graph 8.3 Supplementary categories of 'hawks' and 'doves'

to be rather weakly related to position-takings, with hawks slightly on the side of insider capital.

The MCA analysis permits us to also study the cloud of individuals whose properties and position-takings make up the space. Graph 8.4 shows that there is a high dispersion among the two groups of doves and hawks. Notice that the divisions are stronger in the group with higher levels of political and bureaucratic capital.

Our analysis of the cloud of individuals reveals how the internal political division of the Governing Council, which is confirmed by the publication of its minutes, relates to the professional and, more generally, the social characteristics of its members. On the 'resistance to innovation' side, one finds the German members (not all though, since Jörg Asmüssen typically represents a pragmatic stance), and also people like Yves Mersch and Erkki Liikanen, who could be seen as members of a 'German coalition' or 'German group' inside the Council. At the opposite side, there is the group supporting Mario Draghi by their declarations and votes, led by a very small number of actors with a high level of bureaucratic and political capital. This group is also supported by the (more silent) majority of national governors, more often coming from the universities.



Graph 8.4 Cloud of individuals

To substantiate these results, we take the perspective of *inductive data analysis* (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004, 2010). Firstly, we assess the atypicality of 'hawks' on the second axis of the analysis. Are the characteristics of the hawks group similar to those of the reference population, or is the group atypical? In our Geometric Data Analysis framework, this question leads to permutation tests. We first compare the mean point of the sub-cloud of hawks with the corresponding reference point. By doing this, we cannot conclude, from an inductive point of view, that the hawks are atypical on the second axis. We found a similar result for the group of 'doves'. It is the deviation between both groups which is the most relevant here, first descriptively.

Hence, we secondly compare the mean points of two sub-clouds of 'hawks' and 'doves', assessing the *homogeneity* of the two groups for the second axis. It means that the deviation between the two mean-points is not due to chance. This leads to homogeneity tests. We can conclude from an inductive point of view that both groups are *heterogeneous*. The results are conclusive, even considering the number of individuals for whom we couldn't obtain the relevant information. The opposition between hawks and doves, then, is clearly connected to the second axis that opposes an academic pole to a more financial and bureaucratic pole. This finding is

interesting, since this opposition has become a central pattern of differentiation inside monetary and financial elite, and more largely in the European field of power.[3]

Finally, position-takings can also be considered as discourses and analysed as such. Discourses are clearly at the heart of the symbolic power of central bankers, and numerous studies have insisted on their performative force (Callon 1998; MacKenzie et al. 2007). In the example illustrated below, we analyse 20 texts in French published as 'speeches' on the ECB's official website (Guilbert and Lebaron 2017). A first, more qualitative, part of the analysis aims at understanding the conditions of performativity of central bankers' discourses. The study of the space of words and texts, analysed with a simple correspondence analysis (511 words x 21 texts), reveals interesting patterns.

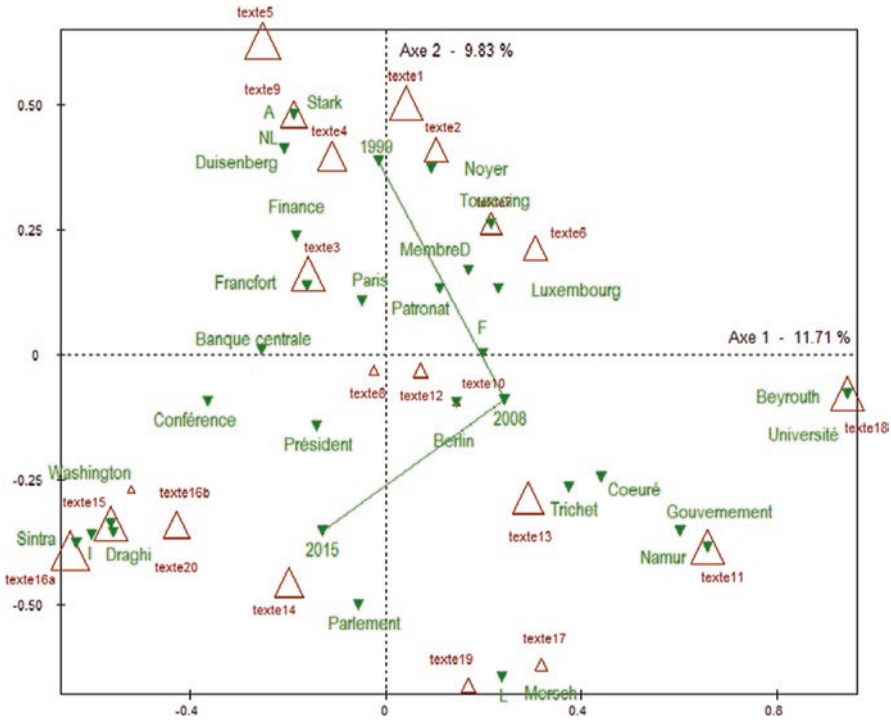
The example of metaphors shows how discourses serve to construct a certain representation of the world. Central bankers' discourses use numerous metaphors and often refer to the natural world or to daily-life activities such as driving a car. Their discourses share a set of properties, such as an objective of action or the use of semi-auxiliaries (such as 'should take action'). This intends at limiting potential misunderstandings or side-effects of discourses.

We show here the first two dimensions of the constructed space (21.5% of the overall variance, which is very high in CA). The corpus comprises 20 texts, from which one large text has been cut in two, leading to 21 observations. For each text, we have gathered external information such as the date of production, the type of discursive situation, the place, the author, the nationality of the author, the status of the author, etc. This allows for a sociological analysis of the conditions of enunciation. Even if this lexicometric study does not offer a direct path to an analysis of position-takings properly speaking, it allows us to understand the semantic and social universes in which decision-makings are produced, hence to better grasp the logics of position-takings.

We see here in Graph 8.5 that the first axis relates to an opposition between contexts of enunciation, with more official international financial institutions on the left and more peripheral institutions on the right. The second opposition, however, on Axis 2 is clearly related to time, the 'self-referential' discourse being typical for the first period of the central bank and for economic audiences, whereas the most general political economy semantic world has gained in momentum after the crisis and is related to more external communication, especially directed towards political actors.

In Graph 8.6, which represents expressions used in the texts, the first axis opposes expressions like 'réforme structurelle', 'réformes' and 'reprise' on the left to words like 'devises', 'avoirs', 'monnaies' on the right, pointing to an opposition between economic policy and conjuncture analysis on the left and monetary-financial issues on the right. The second axis opposes expressions such as 'critique', 'stratégie', 'stabilité_des_prix' and 'conseil_des_gouverneurs' on the top to ' PME ',

[3] These results have been verified and enhanced by a use of combinatorial inference on the axes and on planes.

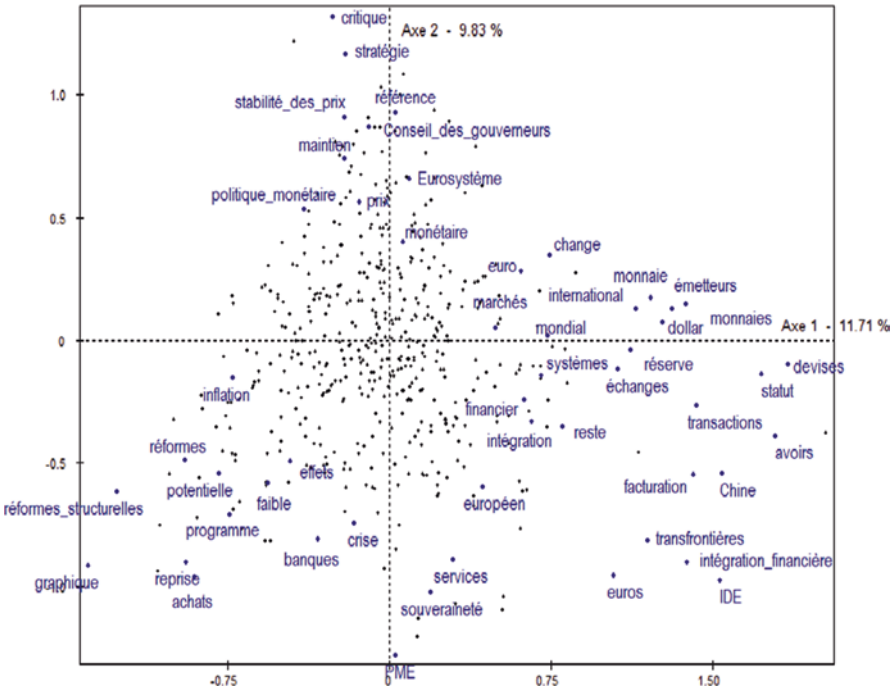


Graph 8.5 Cloud of texts

'souveraineté', and 'IDE' at the bottom. This represents and opposition between the general self-referential discourse of the central bank to more classical economic and political international and national issues.

Conclusion

Sociological investigations on central bankers make only a limited contribution to a more general sociology of finance, public policy, sociology of science and the study of transnational fields of governance. But it is of particular interest, since it is highly multidimensional as a research object and related to the three major spheres of activity in our society, namely science, economy and politics. The literature would benefit from studies that compare central bank leaders, directors of international financial organisations, ministers of finance and more influential government officials and various other subgroups of the 'public' pole of dominant classes. The major sociological stake is to understand the way governments and public authorities have become very close allies of economic and financially dominant groups, such as large company leaders and financiers, while maintaining a reference to scientific objectivity and universal goals such as the economic well-being of the people.



Graph 8.6 Cloud of expressions

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Chapter 9
Firms' Political Connections and Winning Public Procurements in Canada

Saidatou Dicko

Introduction

The relationships between business and politics are a classic theme for social scientists. They usually document the prerequisites for and the magnitude and effects of corporate ascendency on elected officials, who vote on the rules that regulate economic activities, as well as on the authorities that implement those rules.[1] In management, most research is devoted to the effects on business performance of political connections (Goldman et al. 2009, 2013; Houston et al. 2014). These connections usually refer to campaign contributions, external lobbying expenses or the executives' prior positions.

Research conducted in Canada has shown that political connections positively influence the financial performance of firms (Dicko and Khemakhem 2015), although little is known about how political connections help firms that operate in Canada gain access to external resources, such as credits or contracts. The current study examines to what extent political connections help Canadian firms obtain government contracts.

The federal, provincial and municipal governments are rich, and they contribute much to the domestic economy (general government spending accounts for more than 40% of the GDP). In sectors like construction or professional, scientific and technical services, public entities are the biggest clients. Moreover, public contracts are public information in Canada, which makes it possible to construct datasets and run statistical tests.

[1] For a review, see Walker and Rea 2014.

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Business and Government Interdependence

It is a truth universally acknowledged that organisations depend on their environment (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). Drawing from the resource-dependence theory and informed by the sociological literature on social capital (Lenoir 2016), we consider board members' multiple affiliations (past and present) as channels through which firms tend to access the resources they need and to influence the competitive and regulatory environment in which they operate.

From this perspective, political connections are crucial. Firms always depend on decisions and policies, which are made by elected officials, bureaucrats and judges. These public actions affect the costs of the factors of production, as well as the characteristics and prices of the goods and services the companies buy or sell, in addition to their uses of accumulated profits.

Such a dependence does not imply that politics trumps business. Politics is neither strictly autonomous from business influence nor absolutely subordinated to corporate power. Public authorities enact the rules of capital accumulation that institutionalise private enrichment. On the other hand, public authorities depend on corporations for resources, especially for financial means (but also jobs), which are essential to the perpetuation of the form of government on which the positions of elected and public officials depend (Benquet et al. 2019).

Consequently, business and government are interdependent, but the relationship between corporate executives and public officials may not necessarily be symmetrical. They vary according to the institutional settings that define different varieties of capitalism (Amable 2004) and according to the rules and values that determine legitimate, acceptable, improper or illegal *quid pro quo* between public officials and representatives of private interests.[2]

The morphology of national 'elites', i.e. the social characteristics and trajectories of those who occupy positions of power, matters too. For instance, in France, there is a powerful minority of high civil servants who opt for even more lucrative careers in corporations (Denord et al. 2018). Yet, the full revolving-door phenomenon tends to be less common than in the US, where individuals can switch back and forth between the public and private sectors. *A contrario*, in Norway, it seems that the judiciary and its people remain quite distinct from other domains of activity (politics, business, administration, etc.) that constitute the Norwegian field of power (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007).

The *Parliament of Canada Ac*t contains no provision about switching from politics to business or vice versa. It simply stipulates that a person cannot accumulate business activities and political functions. In the province of Quebec, a person can cross over from business to politics without restriction. However, the situation differs when it comes to moving from politics to business. Under the Quebec *Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Members of the National Assembly*, no cabinet minister may hold the position of director or officer of a legal person, partnership or

[2] For example, see the Corruption Perceptions Index, published by Transparency International.

association. Moreover, cabinet ministers, who are all elected officials, may not within 2 years after leaving office accept any appointment to a board of directors or as a member of any body, agency, enterprise or other entity that is not a State entity. However, both at the federal and the provincial levels, a member of Parliament, member of the Provincial Parliament, member of the National Assembly or member of the Legislative Assembly may be a shareholder of a company. As well, in these jurisdictions, switching from politics to business and vice versa remains relatively easy.

Research Hypotheses

Scant research exists on the relationship between political connections and winning government contracts, and most studies focus on the US case. Agrawal and Knoeber (2001) found that firms that had a higher proportion of sales to the government also had more politically connected directors on their boards. The study was based on a sample of 264 manufacturing firms on the Forbes 800 list in 1987. Wang (2014) concluded that a fifth of the total revenue of politically connected firms was generated by Department of Defence contracts, whereas such contracts accounted for less than 10% of the total revenue of non-connected firms. This result was based on a sample of 112 public companies out of the top 500 recipients of US Department of Defence contracts in 2008. For the European Union, Laurens (2015, p. 127–166) documents the same positive relation between lobbying expenditures and European subsidies.

In the Canadian context, Dicko and Khemakhem (2015) showed that politically connected listed companies tend to perform better (measured by return on assets and return on equity) than non-politically connected firms. However, despite frequent scandals that indicate corruption and collusion in sectors like construction, there is no systematic study of the effect of firms' political connections on public-procurement contracts.[3] We put forward the following main research hypothesis:

1: There is a positive relationship between political connections and winning government contracts in the Canadian context.

This hypothesis leads to two sub-hypotheses:

1a: Politically connected firms win more government contracts than non-politically connected firms.

1b: Politically connected firms win higher-value government contracts than non-politically connected firms.

[3] In November 2011, the Quebec Government created an inquiry on the 'Awarding and Management of Public Contracts in the Construction Industry'. Its report and annexes were made public in the fall of 2015; see https://www.ceic.gouv.qc.ca/

Sample, Data and Model of Analysis

Our study examined the largest listed companies that constitute the main Canadian stock-index (S&P/TSX). After eliminating financial and insurance companies, mainly because of the particular structure of their financial statements, our final list contained 220 firms. The list of these companies was downloaded from the Compustat commercial database (accessible through the Wharton Research Data Service) for the period from 2010 to 2014 inclusively. Financial data were retrieved from the same source, while data on firms' political connections were hand-collected from the commercial BoardEx database. Information about government contracts was derived from the Government of Canada's Public Works and Government Services website.[4]

We used the following model to test our hypotheses:

$$GC = a + b1PC + b2FS + b3FP + b4Debt + b5I + b6U.S. + \varepsilon \tag{9.1}$$

Where:

GC = government contracts	a = constant
PC = political connections	FS = firm size
FP = financial performance	Debt = indebtedness
I = industry	US = US listing
ε = error term	

In this model, all our explanatory variables could be endogenous, i.e. determined by other explanatory variables or with the error term. For example, studies, including ours (Dicko and Khemakhem 2015), have shown that political connections have an impact on firms' financial performance. To deal with this endogeneity problem, we decided to perform a two-stage least squares estimation. Our second model is the following:

$$FP = a + b1PC + b2GC + b3FS + b4Debt + b5I + b6U.S. + \varepsilon \tag{9.2}$$

Study Variables

The model contains one dependent variable (government contracts) and one independent variable (political connections). We have also included several control variables that could potentially influence the firms' revenues. In fact, a government contract secured by a firm constitutes part of its revenues. Financial literature

[4] https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/

recognises certain variables, such as firm size, financial capacities (equity and debt) and past financial performance, as having an influence on a firm's revenues.

Dependent Variable: Government Contracts In this study, government contracts consist of purchases of goods and services made by the federal government. A dummy variable (winning government contracts) is used to measure whether the firm received a government contract between 2009 and 2014 ('1' if the firm had a government contract and '0' otherwise). Another numeric variable (value of contracts) is used to measure the value of the government contracts obtained.

Independent Variable: Political Connections In this study, a firm is politically connected when at least one of the members of the board of directors, the executive director or the majority shareholder, is currently serving or has served in politics as a minister, cabinet member or Member of Parliament, in federal or provincial governments. The dummy variable, political connections, is assigned the value '1' if the firm is politically connected and '0' otherwise.

Control Variables

1. ***Financial performance.*** Past studies have shown that three measures of financial performance could be influenced by political connections: return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE) and market-to-book value (MTB). In this study, these three variables are used to represent financial performance. ROA is the result of earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) divided by total assets. ROE is EBIT divided by shareholders' equity.
2. ***Firm size.*** To measure the firm size, we compute the natural logarithm of its total revenue, to remove the magnitude statistical effect.
3. ***Industry.*** This factor is measured by a dummy variable based on the North American Industry Classification System and having the following values:

1. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting;	2 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
3 Utilities	4. Construction
5 Manufacturing	6 Wholesale trade
7 Retail trade	8 Transportation and warehousing
9 Information and cultural industries	10 Finance and insurance
11 Real estate and rental and leasing	12 Professional, scientific and technical services
13 Management of companies and enterprises	14 Administration and support, waste management and remediation services
15 Educational services;	16 Health care and social assistance
17 Arts, entertainment and recreation	18 Accommodation and food services
19 Other services.	

This industry classification is all but obvious.[5] For instance, companies that specialise in construction and engineering, such as the Canadian giant SNC-Lavalin, are classified in the category 'professional, scientific and technical services' rather than 'construction'.

4. ***Indebtedness.*** Capital structure is an extremely important factor that can influence corporate strategies and operations. In this study, this variable is measured by the ratio of long-term debt to shareholders' equity.
5. ***US listing.*** Owing to Canada's close business ties with the United States, many Canadian companies are also listed on US financial markets. Since certain regulations in the US (e.g. on corporate governance) are more stringent than in Canada, Canadian companies behave differently when listed on US financial markets (Khemakhem and Dicko 2013; Dicko and Khemakhem 2015). We therefore decided to include this variable in our study, using a dummy variable with the value '1' if the company was listed on US markets and '0' otherwise.

Analyses

Descriptive Statistics and ANOVA Results

In the following, we describe our results referring to the tables at the end of the texts presenting the outcomes of the ANOVA statistical procedure, which consists of testing whether the differences between the means of variables in two datasets are significant.

Table 9.1 presents information about all the S&P/TSX firms analysed in this study, including financial and insurance companies, showing that this industry accounts for 11.6%. After eliminating them, the final list of firms examined is mainly comprised of extractive and manufacturing companies.

Table 9.2 presents descriptive statistics. They indicate that the mean of firm size tends to be higher for politically connected firms than for non-connected firms. We note the same pattern for economic and financial performance indicators (ROA and ROE) and indebtedness. The mean value of contracts of politically connected firms is also *a lot* higher than the mean value of contracts of non-connected firms. In addition, politically connected firms are listed on the US market more often than non-connected firms (96 vs 79). Conversely, the mean of market-to-book value of non-politically connected firms is higher than that of politically connected firms (2.183. 1.978). This could be explained by the fact that the book values of non-connected firms are smaller; which confirms that politically connected firms tend to be bigger.

Table 9.3 illustrates that 48.8% of S&P/TSX companies are politically connected. Only 11.3% of all companies received government contracts. Of those

[5] For a review on the sociology of quantification, see Mennicken and Espeland (2019).

companies that received government contracts, 7% are politically connected and 4.3% are not. While 14.4% of the politically connected firms received government contracts, only 8.8% of the non-politically connected ones did. Thus, the number of politically connected firms that won government contracts is greater than the number of non-politically connected firms that won such contracts (77 vs 47 over the five-year of study. This equal to 15 vs 9 in terms of number of companies).

Table 9.4 shows a very significant difference between politically connected and non-connected firms in terms of firm size (p value = 0.000), US listing (p value = 0.012), industry (p value = 0.000) and winning government contracts (p value = 0.002), as well as a slightly significant difference in the value of these contracts (p value = 0.066). However, no significant difference was noted between politically connected and non-connected firms in terms of performances, market-to-book value or indebtedness.

All these results tend to confirm our sub-hypotheses (H1a and H1b), as well as the significance of size in most of the quantitative characterisations of capitalist firms.

Correlation Analyses and Endogeneity Test Results

In our model (Eq. 9.1), all explanatory variables could be correlated between themselves or correlated with the error term. To determine the extent of collinearity and endogeneity problems, we decided to perform tests using correlation analyses. These analyses identify the variables that are correlated between themselves, particularly independent variables. A correlation coefficient of 50% or more is generally considered a critical level that could lead to collinearity problems.

Table 9.5 shows a positive and very significant correlation between political connections and winning government contracts (0.095**). In addition, winning government contracts is very significantly correlated to firm size (0.270**), ROA (0.128**), ROE (0.107**), market-to-book value (0.083**), indebtedness (0.080**) and industry (0.230**).

Of the independent and control variables, political connections are positively and very significantly correlated to firm size (0.278**) and to industry (0.211**). Industry is significantly correlated to firm size (0.127**) and ROA (0.138**). Firm size is significantly correlated to ROA (0.219**), to ROE (0.099**), to indebtedness (0.062*) and to the value of contracts (0.107**). ROA is also significantly correlated to ROE (0.137**), while industry is significantly correlated to the value of contracts (0.113**). However, since they are below 50%, these correlation coefficients are not critical enough to create collinearity problems.

Results of the Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) Estimation

As previously indicated, we resorted to a two-stage least squares estimation. Two sets of analyses were performed: one with the dummy variable, winning government contracts, and the other with the value of contracts, each as the dependent variable.

Table 9.6 shows the results of the 2SLS analyses with winning government contracts as the dependent variable. It indicates that political connections are positively and significantly associated with winning government contracts (p value = 0.034). This confirms Hypothesis 1. A similar result is obtained for firm size (p value = 0.001) and ROE (p value = 0.000). Indebtedness (p value = 0.005) and ROA (p value = 0.003) are negatively and very significantly associated with winning government contracts, whereas no significant association is noted in terms of US financial market listing (p value = 0.945), industry (p value = 0.848), or market-to-book value (p value = 0.229). The model is very significant (model p value = 0.000), with an adjusted R2 of 27%.

Table 9.7 presents the results of the 2SLS analyses with the value of contracts as the dependent variable. It shows that political connections do not significantly influence the value of contracts awarded to companies (p value = 0.189). Of the control variables, firm size (p value = 0.038) and ROE (p value = 0.000) positively and significantly influence the value of contracts awarded, while this influence is negative for ROA (p value = 0.000). Market-to-book value (p value = 0.791), US listing (p value = 0.354) and industry (p value = 0.393) have no significant influence on the value of contracts. The model is very significant (model p value = 0.000), with an adjusted R2 of 33.6%.

Discussion and Conclusion

The statistical results and estimations confirm that there is a positive relationship between political connections and winning government contracts among Canadian listed firms. Political connections positively and significantly influence the receipt of government contracts.

According to Hypothesis 1a, politically connected firms win more government contracts than non-politically connected firms. Hypothesis 1b posited that politically connected firms win higher-value government contracts than non-politically connected firms. The two-stage least squares estimation indicates that political connections do not significantly influence the value of contracts awarded. Political connections tend to have more influence on the securing of government contracts rather than on the value of contracts.

Our study is the first to demonstrate a direct relationship between firms' political connections and government contracts in the Canadian context. Methodologically, it is based on the statistical treatment of data that comes from public sources of information. From listed companies' financial documents and public-contract registries, we elaborated crude indicators (political connections as well as the number

and value of public contracts) to assess the capacity of economic actors (large, publicly listed and politically connected firms) to influence public decisions (public contracts). The fact that almost one out of two large, publicly listed, companies in Canada have government officials on their board, among their executives or as main shareholders is a reminder that doing big business is always political. The results of this study provide empirical support to the structural theorisation of economic power. The results also confirm that political connections are not only about lobbying on the rules of the game, but also on securing resources, like public contract procurements. Some former officials tend to act like business providers. The resources they mobilise and the conditions for their efficient brokerage remain unclear and deserve further investigation. Doing so pursues the goal of the 'sociology of elites' (Khan 2012): making explicit under what conditions one type of resource can be converted into other forms of capital (Desan 2013).

Appendix: Tables

Table 9.1 Sample statistics by industry

Industry		Number of firms	Frequency over an average of five years	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
2	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	85	427	34.4	34.4
3	Utilities	12	60	4.8	39.2
4	Construction	6	29	2.3	41.5
5	Manufacturing	37	183	14.7	56.2
6	Wholesale trade	7	36	2.9	59.1
7	Retail trade	12	59	4.7	63.9
8	Transportation and warehousing	11	55	4.4	68.3
9	Information and cultural industries	16	78	6.3	74.6
10	Finance and insurance	29	144	11.6	86.2
11	Real estate and rental and leasing	21	104	8.4	94.5
12	Professional, scientific and technical services	6	29	2.3	96.9
14	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	3	15	1.2	98.1
16	Health care and social assistance	1	5	0.4	98.5
17	Arts, entertainment and recreation	2	10	0.8	99.3
18	Accommodation and food services	2	9	0.7	100.0
		250	1243	100.0	

Table 9.2 Descriptive statistics

		No.	Mean of the variable	St. deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Firm size	Firm is not politically connected	540	6.635880	1.4503672	−0.9138	10.6355
	Firm is politically connected	529	7.520136	1.6018933	0.8953	10.6901
	Total	1069	7.073459	1.5893033	−0.9138	10.6901
ROA	Firm is not politically connected	560	0.058383	0.0985232	−1.0895	0.5196
	Firm is politically connected	535	0.066070	0.0673285	−0.4613	0.3602
	Total	1095	0.062139	0.0847783	−1.0895	0.5196
ROE	Firm is not politically connected	560	0.132165	0.1717760	−0.8338	0.8353
	Firm is politically connected	535	0.182449	1.2990083	−20.2963	18.9524
	Total	1095	0.156733	0.9161709	−20.2963	18.9524
Market-to-book value	Firm is not politically connected	560	2.183107	2.3873649	−6.5711	24.2861
	Firm is politically connected	535	1.978237	12.0803299	−229.0280	148.4757
	Total	1095	2.083011	8.6113772	−229.0280	148.4757
Indebtedness	Firm is not politically connected	560	0.548579	0.7030918	−1.7279	7.3859
	Firm is politically connected	535	0.833888	11.3932389	−180.9904	181.5952
	Total	1095	0.687977	7.9770554	−180.9904	181.5952
US listing	Firm is not politically connected	79	0.94	0.245	0	1
	Firm is politically connected	96	1.00	0.000	1	1
	Total	175	0.97	0.167	0	1

(continued)

Table 9.2 (continued)

		No.	Mean of the variable	St. deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Industry	Firm is not politically connected	563	4.63	3.550	2	18
	Firm is politically connected	536	6.24	3.890	2	17
	Total	1099	5.41	3.804	2	18
Winning government contracts	Firm is not politically connected	563	0.08	0.277	0	1
	Firm is politically connected	536	0.14	0.351	0	1
	Total	1099	0.11	0.317	0	1
Value of contracts	Firm is not politically connected	563	1796126.45	16511554.36	0.0000	2.4680E+8
	Firm is politically connected	536	6984672.01	64758659.63	0.0000	1.1099E+9
	Total	1099	4326663.69	46793659.01	0.0000	1.1099E+9

Table 9.3 Descriptive statistics. Political connections and winning government contracts

Cross tabulation: Political connections ∗ Winning government contracts				
		Winning government contracts		
		Firm has not won government contracts	Firm has won government contracts	Total
Political connections	Firm is not politically connected	516	47	563
	Firm is politically connected	459	77	536
Total		975	124	1099

Khi-square test results					
	Value	ddl	Asymptotic P value (two sides)	Exact P value (two sides)	Exact P value (one side)
Pearson Khi-square	9.933[a]	1	0.002		
Correction for continuity[b]	9.341	1	0.002		
Likelihood ratio	10.001	1	0.002		
Fisher exact test				0.002	0.001
Linear by linear association	9.924	1	0.002		
Valid number of observations	1099				

[a]0 cellules (0.0%) with theoretical number less than 5. The minimum theoretical number is 60.48
[b]Calculated only for 2 × 2 table

Table 9.4 Results of ANOVA. Factor: Political connections

		Sum of square	ddl	Mean square	F	P value
Firm size	Inter-groups	208.943	1	208.943	89.582	0.000
	Intragroup	2488.702	1067	2.332		
	Total	2697.645	1068			
ROA	Inter-groups	0.016	1	0.016	2.252	0.134
	Intragroup	7.847	1093	0.007		
	Total	7.863	1094			
ROE	Inter-groups	0.692	1	0.692	0.824	0.364
	Intragroup	917.578	1093	0.840		
	Total	918.270	1094			
Market-to-book value	Inter-groups	11.484	1	11.484	0.155	0.694
	Intragroup	81114.980	1093	74.213		
	Total	81126.464	1094			
Indebtedness	Inter-groups	22.272	1	22.272	0.350	0.554
	Intragroup	69592.681	1093	63.671		
	Total	69614.953	1094			
US listing	Inter-groups	0.174	1	0.174	6.412	0.012
	Intragroup	4.684	173	0.027		
	Total	4.857	174			
Industry	Inter-groups	705.352	1	705.352	50.976	0.000
	Intragroup	15179.272	1097	13.837		
	Total	15884.624	1098			

Winning government contracts	Inter-groups	0.994	1	0.994	10.005	0.002
	Intragroup	109.015	1097	0.099		
	Total	110.009	1098			
Value of contracts	Inter-groups	7392081753041844.000	1	7392081753041844.000	3.383	0.066
	Intragroup	2396839801172452400.000	1097	2184904103165407.800		
	Total	2,404,231,882,925,494,300,000	1098			

Table 9.5 Results of Pearson correlation analysis

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Firm size	1									
2	ROA	0.219**	1								
3	ROE	0.099**	0.137**	1							
4	Market-to-book value	0.023	0.045	0.893**	1						
5	Indebtedness	0.062*	0.002	0.963**	0.935**	1					
6	US listing	−0.001	0.007	0.010	0.023	0.000	1				
7	Industry	0.127**	0.138**	0.035	−0.036	0.000	−0.,311**	1			
8	Political connections	0.278**	0.045	0.027	−0.012	0.018	0.189*	0.211**	1		
9	Winning government contracts	0.270**	0.128**	0.107**	0.083**	0.080**	0.051	0.230**	0.095**	1	
10	Value of contracts	0.107**	0.025	0.017	0.018	0.009	0.031	0.113**	0.055	0.259**	1

**Correlation is significant at p=0.01 (two-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at p = 0.05 (two-tailed)

Table 9.6 Results of 2SLS. Dependent variable: Winning government contracts

	Non-standardised coefficients				
	B	Standard error	Beta	t	P value
(constant)	−0.175	0.146		−1.197	0.233
Political connections	0.094	0.044	0.172	2.138	0.034
US listing	−0.008	0.121	−0.005	−0.070	0.945
Industry	−0.001	0.006	−0.016	−0.192	0.848
Indebtedness	−0.055	0.019	−2.769	−2.832	0.005
Firm size	0.037	0.010	0.242	3.522	0.001
ROA	−1.152	0.376	−0.346	−3.066	0.003
ROE	0.681	0.161	3.626	4.239	0.000
Market-to-book value	−0.014	0.012	−0.598	−1.207	0.229
R2	0.305				
Adjusted R2	0.271				
F	8.985				
Equation P value	0.000				

Table 9.7 Results of 2SLS. Dependent variable: Value of contracts

	Non-standardised coefficients				
	B	Standard error	Beta	T	P value
(constant)	383368.071	1148086.365		0.334	0.739
Political connections	458052.635	347364.327	0.101	1.319	0.189
Firm size	172133.211	82493.628	0.137	2.087	0.038
ROA	−19034227.466	2957285.257	−0.693	−6.436	0.000
ROE	9844064.247	1264507.832	6.354	7.785	0.000
Market-to-book value	24801.880	93590.473	0.125	0.265	0.791
Indebtedness	−1010821.688	151715.754	−6.217	−6.663	0.000
US listing	−887569.647	954417.607	−0.066	−0.930	0.354
Industry	−43501.951	50802.627	−0.067	−0.856	0.393
R2	0.367				
Adjusted R2	0.336				
F	11.885				
Equation P value	0.000				

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Chapter 10
Consultants and Economic Power

Sylvain Thine

Economic power has two main dimensions (Aron 1961).[1] First, economic power refers to the domination exercised by large corporations over their workforce and over other companies. The influence of dominant firms and high-net-worth individuals upon other domains of human activities that have their own logics – especially politics – constitutes the second main dimension of economic power. In regard to the asymmetrical interdependencies within firms, among them and between big business and government, power consists of three capacities (Lukes 2005): the capacity to make decisions on contested issues, the capacity to control the agenda, and the capacity to make legitimate decisions because of the "belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige" (Weber 1964: 382). This power can be directly exercised by those who occupy preeminent positions in the firms' hierarchy or mediated through actors that are external to their clients' organizations, while prescribing them strategies, implementing methods of work and deploying management devices. Drawing on ethnographic and quantitative materials, this chapter analyses the sociological roots of the consultants' domination: what are the characteristics upon which they establish their ascendency? After a concise review of the sociological and management literature on consulting, the chapter sketches a morphology of the occupational group and second, it positions it within the field of power.

Translation from French by Jean-Yves Bart

[1] This chapter draws on developments previously published in a paper: 'Entreprendre et dominer. Le cas des consultants', *Sociétés contemporaines*, n° 89, 2013, pp. 73–100 (with F. Denord, P. Lagneau-Ymonet and R. Caveng); and in a book: *Innover pour s'imposer. Conseil et consultants en nouvelles technologies*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014, 202 p.

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Brief Review of the Literature on Consulting and Consultants

The consulting industry has become a vast and profitable business: 2019 estimates for its annual turnover approximated $ 500 billon,[2] which comes from private and for-profit corporations, and to a lesser extent, from nationalized companies, public authorities and even NGOs (Saint-Martin 2001; MacDonald 2006). Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the largest consulting firm worldwide – Accenture – has multiplied its staff by almost 7 (477,000 people in 2019). The industry is as fragmented as it is booming. Several global firms – including the 'Big Three' (Bain, BCG and McKinsey) – serve the top management of multinationals; auditing firms (Deloitte, E&Y, KPMG, PWC), later followed by data-processing companies (*i.a.* Capgemini, IBM Global Services), have morphed into consulting supermarkets that provide their clients with management, as well as HR and IT, 'solutions'. On the other hand, outsourcing strategies have multiplied the numbers of smaller consultancies and independent consultants, which either address smaller clients' needs or operate on niche markets (we can even find a consulting firm (*DeVenir*) which specializes in the consulting sector).

Three main perspectives on management consulting co-exist in the literature: the normative, the evaluative and the critical one. Normative researches insist on what consultants and managers should do in order to increase organizational efficiency and to strengthen profitability. The *Harvard Business Review* disseminates digests of this business-school literature that has produced influential bestsellers like *In Search of Excellence* (Peters and Waterman 1982). A second perspective is more evaluative: researchers tend to assess the impacts of consultants on organizations and their workers (Faust 2012). Quantitative assessments are rare because of the lack of systematic and reliable data on the industry and difficulties in identifying the net impacts of consultants on organizations (Aspers 2006: 431). Instead, social scientists investigate either how the consultants convince their clients that the services they sell are worth their costs (Clark and Salaman 1998; Kieser 2002) or how they harvest knowledge and experience, mission after mission, and hence consolidate their expertise (Fincham 1995; Suddaby and Greenwood 2001; Collins 2003; Clarck et al. 2013).

The third perspective, which may be more critical (Clark and Fincham 2002) – *i.e.* that questions the consultants' legitimacy –, documents the role of consultants in the diffusion of ideologies and managerial practices that contribute to the perpetuation of capitalism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983: 152; Fligstein 2001; Abrahamson 2011). As Clark and Kipping put it, "this sense of influence and power, combined with concerns in relation to their accountability, that has heightened the profile of management consulting in the academic literature and made it a thriving area of research" (2012: 1).[3] More specifically, consulting displays a paradoxical

[2] This estimation is based on different sources, mainly: the FEACO and the Kennedy Consulting Research. This value could rafly change regarding the consultant field definition.

[3] We do not discuss here the professionalization literature on consulting (see McKenna 2006; Kirkpatrick et al. 2012), since it does not specifically address the research question of this volume: how to empirically study organizations and actors that occupy positions of power?

type of business relations; the clients pay to be told what to do and how to do it, by virtue of the consultants' expertise, experience and prestige. When these 'knowledge workers' (Drucker 1959; Alvesson 2012) advise executives and managers, domination operates in a reversal of traditional business relationships: here, the service provider has discretionary power and prescribes economic policies to her clients by virtue of the competence ascribed her (Kipping and Clark 2012: part 5; Thine 2014).

Exploring the social conditions for consultants to become 'institutionally-approved agents' (Ruel 2002) requires going beyond the analysis of the consultant-client interaction and/or the diffusion logics between organizations, and, instead, to position consultants within the system of relations that structures the field of power in which these agents operate. This is the main objective of this case study on consulting and consultants in contemporary France.

The Morphology of Consultancy: The Classical Attributes of Domination

Consultants are not a homogenous professional group. The classifications of consulting developed by public statisticians, professional unions and consultants themselves only partially overlap (Thine 2014). While the public statistician level provides a general map of the national economy – which befits its original macroeconomic mission – the classification of the main federation of consulting firms (the SYNTEC in France) primarily reflects the national history of the profession. On the other hand, ethnographic research shows that consultants use three main criteria to classify themselves and hierarchize firms and activities in the sector. The first criteria refers to size: number of employees, revenue, scope of action. Secondly, consultants also distinguish their employers based on their origins: while the 'big' ones were the offshoots of Anglo-Saxon auditing firms (Ramirez 2003), in France, information systems consulting emerged with the development of large-scale computerization projects during the second half of the twentieth century. The third criterion used by consultants is the characterization of their clients, which includes hierarchical position and function. Strategic consulting primarily targets corporate general directorates as well as the central administrations of ministries. Management consultants, like HR, IT and PR specialists work for the managers of business.

Based upon these three classifications, five main categories of consultancy can be identified: management, information technology, human resources, public relations, marketing and research. Even though it is not easy to circumscribe them through public statistics, management and IT consultants make up 9 out of 10 workers that are coded by public statisticians as managers or executives ('*cadres et dirigeants d'entreprise*').

Methodological Box

On the basis of the definitions of public statisticians, occupational trade unions and consultants themselves, the morphology of the group as a whole was first compared to that of French executives. Part 1 draws on data from the 2008, 2009 and 2010 surveys on employment (Enquête Emploi) conducted by the French national institute of statistics and economic studies (INSEE). The aggregation of the responses given at the time of the first interrogation for these years takes into account the revision of the French nomenclature of activities (NAF) and increases the number of individuals counted, but no individual is counted more than once (Bernard 2012). These data, as well the classification criteria used for their construction, are contrasted with indigenous categories of differentiation and the findings of the ethnographic study to shed light on the roots of the domination of consultants.

Otherwise, empirical works on 'elites' take a decision-making, reputational, or positional approach to defining the relevant population (Hoffmann-Lange 1987). Whether individuals are chosen for their direct participation in decision-making or whether informants are relied upon to draw up lists of names, the population is usually of limited size and the research is based on interviews (e.g., Kadushin 1995; Frank and Yasumoto 1998). Our conceptual framework leans toward a mixed approach that is predominately positional and, to a lesser extent, reputational. Without assuming any objective selection criterion to adjudicate between competing definitions, the study focuses instead on the legitimate reflection of power and prestige in the studied society. In other words, what well-established institutions label 'elites,' provide them with self-confirmation, and demonstrate their mutual recognition? The honors lists and rankings published by French newspapers and magazines have disputable authority and maintain a sectorial dimension. The Bottin Mondain lists members of the upper-class, which mingles noble lineages and old money. It delineates an 'elite by birth': by seeking mention for themselves and their offspring in this French equivalent to the Social Register, individuals assert their elitist claim and extend such recognition to other registered families, whatever the institutional position and personal achievement of their members (Grange 1996).

On the other hand, the Who's Who in France is more suitable for constructing a population that captures the legitimate representation of those who occupy prominent positions in contemporary France. Containing around 22,000 biographies (with an annual turnover approximating 5% due to retirement, death, and replacements by newcomers), the Who's Who combines positional and reputational logics. Featured individuals owe their selection either to their position in official organization charts or to their prominence in the media. The biographies include information (gender, place of birth, parents' occupation, marital status, number of children, education, diploma, career, honors, and hobbies) that is checked by the editors.

That's why the prosopographical component of this research (Part 2) draws from the leading occupational directories (especially the Guide du conseil en management) and the Who's Who en France: to identify an 'elite of function' (Arrondel and Grange 1993) and in the process position the consulting elite within the 'field of power' (Denord et al. 2018: 283–287). The point here is not to assess the distinctive characteristics of consultants in general vis-a-vis their clients (executives, management and staff), but to situate the elite of consultants among the agents who occupy homologous positions of power. In other words, we are not interested in individuals as singular persons but as the holders of social characteristics whose properties depend on the structural positions to which they are attached. Consequently, direct access to powerful agents is not necessary, and profusion rather than scarcity of heterogeneous publicly available information is the issue.

This involves looking at the role of consulting as an aid in individual strategies to secure, retain or bolster positions that authorize the legitimate exercise of power over companies or administrations.

In this context, we use Geometric Data Analysis (GDA) which is a set of statistical methods that summarize and geometrically represent large datasets as clouds of points (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004).[4]

Gender, Class and Education

There is a very pronounced gendered division of labor among consultants. While 24% of consultants in information technology are women, there are 39.6% of them in firms specialized in management. Women are less present in those two main types of consulting than in consultancies specialized in communication, human resources and marketing and research. Overall, women are largely under-represented among the consultants compared both to the entire working population and to managers and executives. Despite prominent figures in the fields of communication and human resources, female consultants are rare and consulting remains a predominantly male activity, which is very often performed for male clients.

While the consulting sector conveys a virile representation of authority, it recruits and entitles relatively young high-skilled workers. The gap between the age of the service providers, their clients and the individuals working for the organization, whose management and supervisory staff hire consultants, is a common source of tension, especially during the early stages of consultants' careers. To cope with these tensions, the strained young professionals tend to fall back on the resources on

[4] For more details on GDA, see the chapter by Lunding et al. in this book.

which their contested legitimacy is based: loyalty to their direct hierarchy (i.e., the manager and the partner in charge of the mission rather than the clients); the employer's prestige and working methods (as opposed to those of the clients, whose dysfunctional aspects are more acutely felt during missions); the academic certification of their competences (as opposed to job experience) (Gill 2009).

Another distinctive characteristic of consultants is their social background. The fathers of consultants have indeed often pursued careers in the private sector, in managerial or supervisory positions (45% vs. 22% of people in employment and 39.6% of all managers and executives).[5] In the same way that teachers' children tend to inherit affinities towards academia, this familiarity with the logics of corporate management and the values of the economic bourgeoisie gives consultants a 'practical sense' of the economic order and its principles (Singly and Thélot 1988): private property, corporate profit, individual success. Consultants tend to do well at school. They are more frequently holders of higher education degrees (86%) than the general working population (30.5%), and among managers and executives (76%). Consultancy is in effect the first or second most frequent career path pursued by graduates of France's top schools, especially business schools (in 2018, 28% at HEC, 29% at ESSEC, 22% at Sciences-Po).

As 'deserving' inheritors', consultants are quickly rewarded with higher average earnings than other managers and executives. More precisely, if we cross-examine age and pay, we notice that the earnings of consultants are higher, especially at early stages in their careers (Table 10.1).

Gender, class and education also affect the hierarchy among consultants. Whereas consultants in management are often graduates of business schools or holders of master's degrees in management, which up to the early 2000s required 5 years of higher education, IT consultants have more frequently 2 or 5 years of higher education behind them. In the former case, the high demand for IT consulting in the 1990s gave new career opportunities to technology degree graduates (DUT) in computer science and electronics. In the latter case, these are graduates of engineering schools. This difference translates into gaps in terms of social backgrounds and earnings: consultants in

Table 10.1 Distribution of monthly earnings according to the age of consultants and corporate executives, 2008–2010

	Under 29		30–39		40–49		50 and over		Total	
	Cons	Exec	Cons	Exec	Cons	Exec	Cons	Exec	Cons	Exec
< 2000€	26.6	47.5	12.4	23.4	10.6	13.7	15.4	12.8	16.4	20.6
2000–2500€	38.2	29.2	22.5	25.5	20.6	19.8	11.5	14.6	25.3	21.1
2500–3000€	19.1	14.2	24.9	19.3	21.2	19.2	9.0	18.4	20.5	18.4
3000–5000€	15.6	8.2	32.5	26.8	32.9	35.8	46.2	39.7	29.3	30.8
> 5000€	0.5	1.0	7.6	4.9	14.7	11.5	17.9	14.5	8.5	9.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Enquêtes Emploi (Employment surveys) 2008–2010, first interrogations

[5] This breakdown also includes craftsmen and retailers.

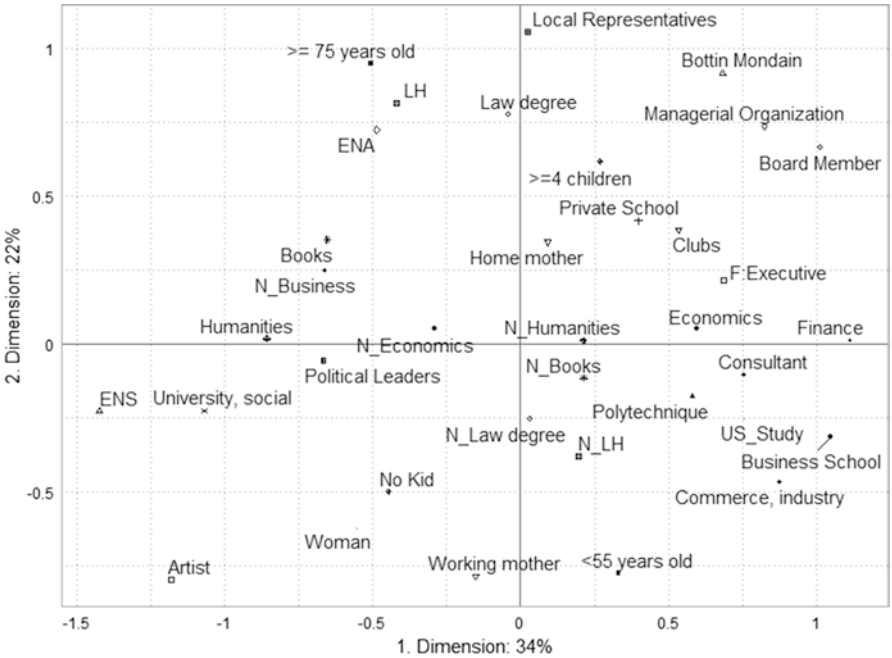
Table 10.2 Distribution of types of consulting, corporate executives and the general working population according to social background (based on the father's socio-occupational category), training and earnings. Percent

Father's socio-occupational category	Information systems consulting	Management consulting	Total consulting	Executives	Whole working pop.
Farmer	3.6	3.3	3.4	5.3	10.9
Professionals	14.4	15.3	14.9	14.6	12.8
Manager	31.2	37.5	33.9	28.6	10.9
Intermediate professions	22.6	21.4	22.1	21.3	13.3
Employee	10.1	10.7	10.5	11.1	11.7
Worker	18.1	11.8	15.2	19	12.1
Total	100	100	100	100	
Training					
Two-year higher ed. degree (DUT, BTS, DEUG...)	16.2	8.4	13.4	14.3	9.5
Bachelor's, master's	12.8	18.9	15.5	22.1	6.6
Five-year higher ed. degree and over	60.4	52.3	56.9	39.5	5.6
Other	10.6	20.4	14.2	24.1	
Total	100	100	100	100	
Earnings					
> 2000€	14.3	18.5	16.4	20.5	73.6
2000–2500€	27.9	20.4	25.3	21.1	12.5
2500–3000€	21.7	20.4	20.5	18.4	5.9
3000–5000€	29.3	28.8	29.3	30.8	6.4
> 5000	6.9	11.9	8.5	9.1	1.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

management appear to be much higher in the social hierarchy (Table 10.2). The more the service consists of advising executives on the organization of their company or administration (which is what management consulting is about), as opposed to missions that are geared toward implementing a 'solution' or using a 'tool' (which is what IT consulting is mostly about), the more the consultants display the trivial attributes of domination: they are male, have a bourgeois background and have studied in the more (educationally and socially) selective higher education curricula.

The Position of Consultants Among French "Elites"

When compared to the overall working population (even if we only consider corporate executives), consultants display the characteristics of socially dominant agents. Can the same be said if we look only at 'elites'? This requires positioning



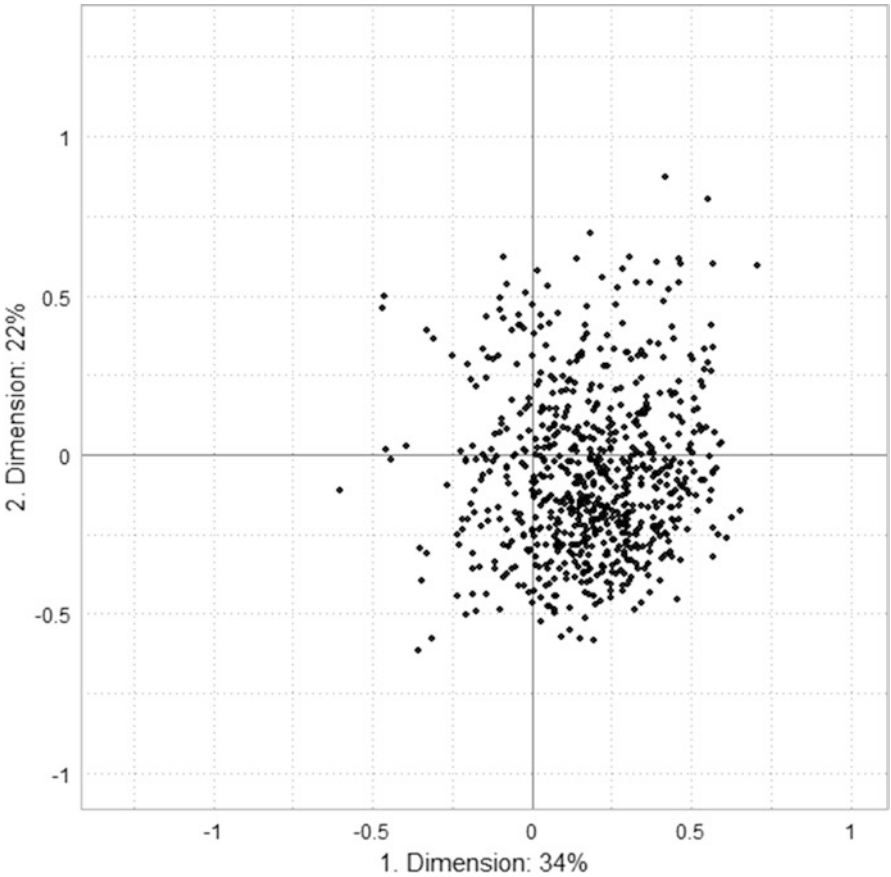
Graph 10.1 The field of power. Cloud of modalities in plane 1–2

consultants among holders of positions of power over the country's main economic, political and administrative, as well as non-governmental or cultural, institutions.

Based on a sample of 6999 individuals drawn from the *Who's Who*,[6] Denord et al. (2018: 283–287) established that two main dimensions structure the French field of power: integration in the economic order and seniority within the dominant class. Consultants constitute circa 10% of the sample population. Contrasting them to the other agents populating the field of power in contemporary France, the former appears to make up a rather diverse sub-group, one that tends to be *less* exclusive than other 'elite' groups, such as high-civil servants or executives of large corporations (Graph 10.1).

Regardless of their activity, the executives of the consultancy firms listed in the *Who's Who* are clearly situated among the individuals who are well integrated in the

[6] From the 2009 edition, the sample is large enough to reduce the margin of error, and small enough to manually add information. For instance, we compiled the yearbooks of the most prestigious French higher education institutions ("grandes écoles"). We double-checked with the Guide des états-majors– a register of corporations and directors. We also consulted the directories of exclusive clubs (Jockey Club de France, Cercle de l'Union Interalliée, Automobile club de France, Racing Club de France). And the archives of the National Audiovisual Institute (INAthèque) and of three national newspapers (Le Figaro, Le Monde, Les Echos) were systematically searched for each of the 6999 individuals.



Graph 10.2 Consultants in the field of power. Cloud of individuals (n = 715) in the plane 1–2

economic order[7] of the field of power (on the right-hand side in Graph 10.2). This strong integration in the economic order draws on several common characteristics: having an executive father, having been educated in part in private schools, and graduated from business-friendly programs (in prominent business schools or Sciences-Po Paris). Only consultants in communication and public relations, as well as independent consultants, appear to be more distant to the exercise of economic power: along the first axis, the former (who are more often women) are in an intermediate position between consulting and publishing and the press; the latter are halfway between independent professionals and commerce and industry.

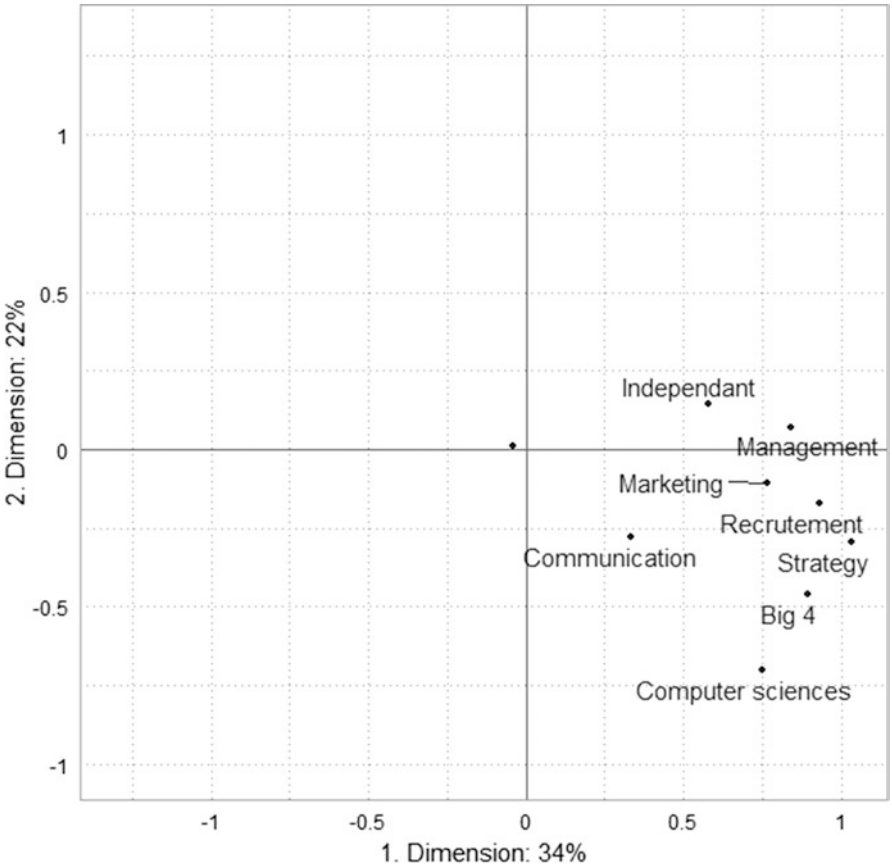
[7] 'From left to right, the first axis of the cloud of modalities sets the public sector against the private sector, cultural activities and professions against economic occupations, disinterestedness and public interest against private interests. The positions occupied on this continuum range from the most gratuitous activities to the core of a financialized economy: from arts and humanities to investment banking' (Denord et al. 2018: 287).

Along axis 2, the average point of the sub-cloud of consultants is very close to the intercept. In terms of class seniority, this central position of their barycenter indicates that the consultants appear rather diverse. Such diversity is not contradictory with the high social backgrounds that make consultants stand out from executives as a whole. Among 'elites', consultants tend to be normal: they are representative of the population that constitutes the field of power, and especially its economic fraction. More precisely, the consulting sector brings together individuals who owe their place and their career to the organization that pays them, and other highly-socially-endowed individuals, who are self-sufficient enough to consider a career as independent consultants. The former derive their credibility from the companies that hire them and from their degrees; the latter are entrusted by their clients, with whom they share social proximity and/or professional experience.

Consulting may not be an 'elite profession', but it is clearly a crucial occupation for people who aspire to positions of power. For youngsters, prior experiences in consulting may boost their careers; for soon-to-be-retired executives and high-civil servants, consulting helps them transitioning. The proportion of consultants that began their career in a different sector is very high (82%), as is the share of the individuals who have left consulting to work in another sector (79.4%) during the course of their career (Graph 10.3).

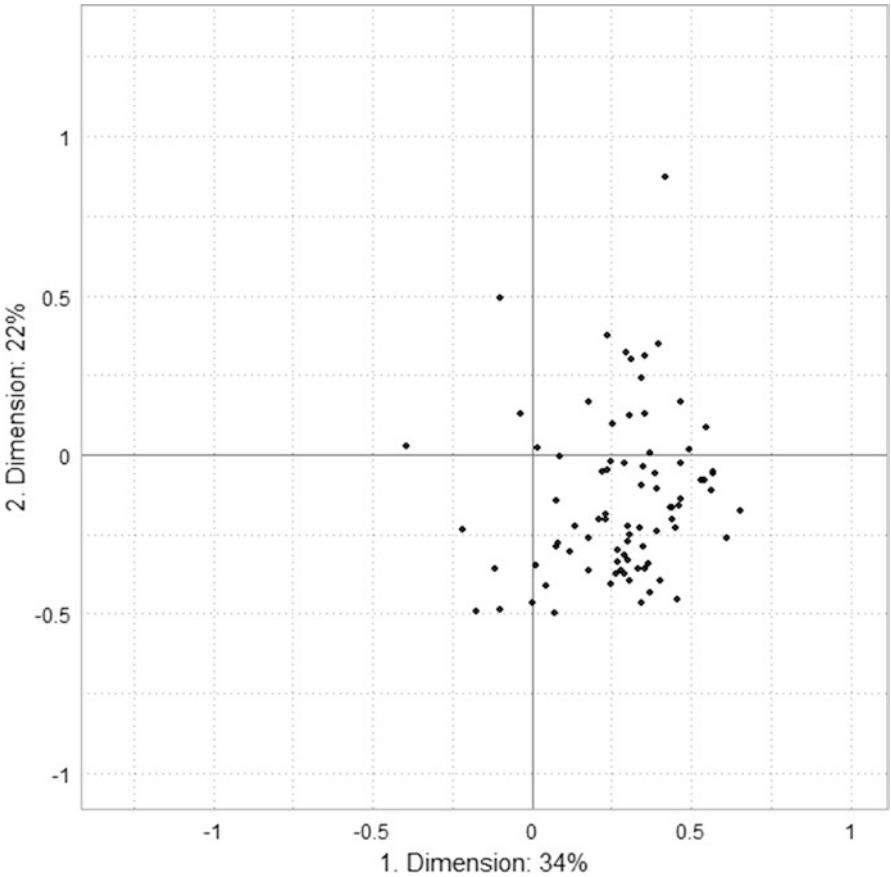
Used as an 'incubation' period, consulting offers the opportunity for 'fast-track' careers in former clients' organizations (Henry and Sauviat 1993). For senior managers and executives as well as high-civil servants, consulting offers them soft 'exit-strategy', before retirement, or after an M&A or a political shift that has sidelined them. In France, these 'soft exits' are especially frequent in strategic consulting. That is why consultants in strategy appear so dispersed along the second axis (Graph 10.4).

Their social characteristics (belonging to the economic bourgeoisie, and to a lesser extent to the cultural bourgeoisie) and academic properties (higher education degrees, especially those awarded by top schools) make consultants a 'deserving elite'. On the one hand, everything predisposes them to be familiar with the corporate world and with handling money. They are bourgeois in the strong sense of the term, endowed with the most traditional attributes. On the other hand, their academic qualifications and their competitive careers tend to confirm that they deserve to be where they are. Applied to the economic world, this belief in meritocracy is a cornerstone of the legitimacy of the power they exert for the benefit of the clients who pay them. However, it is the relative diversity of their backgrounds and



Graph 10.3 Sub-sectors of consulting in the field of power. Cloud of modalities in plane 1-2

trajectories that make them appear more open than other bureaucratic and economic 'elites'. Thus, consultants contribute to extending the legitimation of managerial power. Under the cloak of meritocracy, they actually help in concealing the fact that social background, subsequently legitimated by the education system, remains a driving force in the devolution of economic power.



Graph 10.4 Strategy consultants in the field of power. Cloud of individuals (n = 83) in the plane 1-2

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Chapter 11
Fête in the Factory. Solemnity and Power Among Porto's Industrialists (1945–1974)

Bruno Monteiro and Virgílio Borges Pereira

This chapter attempts to forge a link between the phenomenological analysis of social interactions and the historical study of the structures of the social space (Bourdieu 1972). We combine a socio-historical analysis (Noiriel 2006) of the processes of class formation among industrialists in the Porto and North Region of Portugal with an ethnographically inspired historical reconstruction of the universe of encounters (Horowitz and Haney 2008, pp. 254–258; see also Lüdtke 2016, pp. 13–34; Schmitt 2001). We chose to analyse 155 news articles published by the magazine A Indústria do Norte ('The Industry of the North', AIN) between 1945 and 1974. The magazine belongs to the most important Portuguese industrialist class association of the time – Associação Industrial Portuense (AIP) – and the period of the analysis corresponds to a significant conjuncture of change in the social and economic fabric of the country, spanning the period between the end of the Second World War and the end of the 'New State' regime in 1974.

The multiple manifestations of the meetings and celebrations between industrialists, industrial workers, State officials and personalities from other institutions are depicted in this magazine and encompass a large variety of events: project presentations, breaking ground on construction sites, inaugurations of new factory installations, company anniversaries, as well as social and celebratory lunches. Formal and informal meetings, workplace gatherings, field trips and awards ceremonies were also covered. Using this inventory, we sought to understand the means by which employers (in)vested – in the full sense of the words – in the cognitive, verbal and corporal schemes that expressed and renewed their prerogatives of authority and, therefore, their situation of relative exceptionalness (Bourdieu 1998, p. 112, 1982). We then confronted these solemn acts with an analysis of the composition of the dominant classes of Porto in 1965. For this purpose, we accessed the data collected

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during the 1960's by the North-American researcher Harry Makler (1969)[1] and, in particular, a survey applied to 171 industrialists belonging to the contiguous districts of Porto, Braga and Aveiro – at the time, three of the most relevant industrial districts in the country. The statistical exploration of the database reveals a specific configuration of relations between economics and politics.

The Order of the Interactions and Its Context

Solemn occasions are opportune moments for actualising practical and verbal responses from industrialists regarding the challenges presented by the imposition and stabilisation of an appropriate and pertinent social order within their companies. Erving Goffman reminds us that the distinctive feature of ceremonial rules of conduct are precisely that they incessantly recreate, through these trivial interactions, the distances and hierarchies between the members of a given society (1974, pp. 48–49). Pierre Bourdieu emphasises the rites of institution that produce distinctive social groups (Bourdieu 1998, p. 110). During these solemnities, the industrialists elicit performances that are variations within a stylistic scale (Burke 2005, p. 41).

These rites of institution do not arise in a social vacuum (Elias 1987). Therefore, besides understanding the socio-historical context of the country during the 'New State' regime, it is important to recognise the specific imposition of these historical dynamics on the structuration of Porto's industrialists. Following the institutional consolidation of the 'New State', in Portugal, if a single feature could describe the State's initiatives, which were more or less inconsistent, more or less planned, it would be 'the increase of State intervention' (Nunes and Brito 1990, p. 306). Signs of economic *modernity* in the country emerged decisively after the end of World War II, a period that coincided with the proposals and projects leading to the *Development Programs* (idem: 339), beginning with the initiatives subsequent to interventions motivated by the Marshall Plan (Rollo 2007). Although it was a period of high economic growth (Rosas 2000, pp. 335–336), the specialisation of the Portuguese economy still appeared to be marked by inertias (Costa et al. 2010, p. 206). Viewed simply, the mode of industrialisation adopted by the 'New State' was subordinate – although influenced by the circumstantial variations in internal balances of bureaucratic power (Garrido 2010; Pereira 2012) – to the conservative design of the socio-political order: 'a "know how to endure" commanded the economy' (Rosas 2000, p. 56; Ingerson 1984; Patriarca 1995).

Among companies, this economic growth did not have equal consequences, tending to concentrate on a restricted set of businesses, 'which clearly shows that only a small industrial elite retained exclusive control over the economic system,

[1] The authors want to thank Harry Makler for the consultation of his original survey materials, located at the University of Toronto, and for our contact with Berenica Vejvoda, research data librarian in that institution, whom helped with the access to those archives. The sources were kept anonymised in the statistical analysis here conducted.

and thereby retained exclusivity of influence over the apparatus of power' (Caeiro 2004, p. 218). More broadly, we found evidence of an 'upper class', with high 'concreteness' and 'compression', creating a 'community with common interests and social origins, inbred, with common education and culture', wherein the 'concentration and centralisation of economic power' and university 'over-education' prevails (Martins 2006, pp. 105–109). Note, however, that this oligarchy struggles with territorial cohesion (idem, pp.110) and internal segmentation determined by links with specialised resources. Under these national circumstances, Porto is, then, frequently represented as the 'capital of work' that, throughout the twentieth century, was 'traditionally liberal, querulous and unruly', particularly its 'liberal bourgeoisie' (Guichard 1994, pp. 560–566).

To investigate the relationships between employer sectors and state and corporative bodies in the mid-1960s, Harry Makler conducted an empirical study on the Portuguese industrial elite. Broadly observing Portuguese businessmen, Makler found a relationship between industrialists' socio-economic origins and political leadership that allowed for the ideological orientations of Northern industrialists to be characterised. He concluded that 'in the north of Portugal, those [industrialists] who occupy public positions were, at a certain point, mayors, council members or other municipal employees rather than holders of national positions'. Such a situation can be partly explained by the 'tendency of the regime throughout the last forty years to fill top political positions with individuals from Lisbon, which would have meant that political aspirants from the north would have had to fulfil their political ambitions at a purely local level' (1979, p. 135).[2]

For their part, industrialists 'with origins in the upper class that [oversaw] Northern companies in traditional and economically more stagnant sectors, such as textiles, food stuffs and wood and cork products, had more of a tendency to occupy corporate positions', comparatively more distant from the New State's centres of political power. It is also worth mentioning that, in the North, the prevailing leadership style is one that is personified, which tends to take on a comparatively 'traditional-authoritarian attitude' in contrast with the 'modern' attitude of their Lisbon counterparts. This more traditional bourgeoisie of Porto, in contrast with the more modern sectors that 'went around the corporate system and penetrated the government by more private and direct means, was only able to satisfy their political aspirations through guilds and municipalities. The 'New State', interested in maintaining a state of maximum political immobility, had an expediency to 'offer controlled political expression to the property-owning elite', thus restricting their access to top positions within the 'New State'. Solemn events, under these conditions, acquired a critical meaning for Porto's industrialists.

Through a systematic analysis of the textual corpus we amassed from the *A Indústria do Norte* (AIN), we identified the structural properties of the frameworks of solemn event interactions between industrialists in Porto during the 'New State'.

[2] The following quotations are coming from the same source (p. 136, 323,262,150,149).

Firstly, these occasions were opportunities to stage grandiosity. For example, on July 28th 1962, semolina production in Portugal was debuted with the inauguration, in Águas Santas, north of Porto, of the first factory in the country of its kind, a circumstance that was also chosen as an occasion for 'company employees to pay homage to its founders' (AIN, 511, pp. 3–4). Following the 'unveiling of the bronzes' of the entrepreneurs, the 'oldest' employee paid tribute to these figures and explained why the factory workers decided to honour them. The ceremony concluded with applause.

These solemn occasions were indispensable for the constitution and reinforcement of the employer's domination, a hierarchical position that was typically negatively defined or open to accusations of arbitrariness or discretion. In these descriptions, the employer is received festively and with entitlement: 'All the personnel, each of them rigorously dressed in suits for the occasion, gave a joyous appearance to that gathering of factory workers' (AIN, 499, p. 34). There is every advantage in seeing that the workers, who appear to be mere extras in these accounts, occupy a decisive position as the necessary counterparts to the role played by the employers. They only appear to be mute because they have been muted. At best, when speaking, they were living allegories for the whole group they illustrate, not truly individualised figures. Although taking place only periodically, *collective ceremonies* fulfil the function of officially reconstructing the social order (Goffman 1968, p. 160), whereby *ostensive practices* – through which the hierarchies, distances and precedents that organise factory social life are highlighted – must be found in the rites of institution that try to legitimise the discursive and practical pretensions through their literal observation (idem, p. 154).

The simple occurrence of the ceremonies themselves overtly underwrites the premises of the employer's discourse, serving to demonstrate by simply paying tribute, praising and thanking, all marked by routine and ritual, the 'naturalness' of the company's social order, acting thus as a true mechanism of self-affirmation. These employers emerge, then, imbued with the visible confirmation of social value, as they see themselves and are seen through the privileges and demands elicited by these solemnities. For their part, the other participants of these gatherings will accept, in an apparently voluntary and spontaneous fashion, the evident grandiosity and generosity of their employers, admiring and requesting the paternal aura of the 'captain of industry'. They cry tears of gratitude, clap enthusiastically or kneel submissively, feelings that are conveyed in these narratives as authentic reactions to the personified appearance of the figure of the employer. Alternatively, the participants feel anxiety and timidity when they feel close to the presence of the authority, the visceral evocation of a sense of their own place and an intuition of the appropriate limits in their relationship with employers.

Secondly, the participants produce and sublimate the industrialists' identity. On the eve of yet another anniversary of the *National Revolution*, apparently the most appropriate of all dates for paying tribute to the great businessman Delfim Ferreira (at that time, one of the most important in the country), a ceremony was organised to exalt 'his civic virtues and worthiness as an active and entrepreneurial businessman'. This event included the presence of ecclesiastic, civil and military

personalities – and the local working classes. 'His grateful workers are living at this hour moments of intense joy'. On this day, a series of *acts of tribute and appreciation* marked and ensured the recognition of the possession of a superlative honour ('exemplary citizen') by that 'man of work': the parade of delegates from local associations and bodies as well as their standards, official greetings, the awarding of a medal of honour, the unveiling of a portrait, the unanimous applause of the popular onlookers and the guard of honour of the Portuguese Legion. This performance of recognition must be done 'with heart in hand' to match the honouree's own *disinterest* in the charitable act. In accordance with this rhetoric (Skinner 2002, pp. 103–127), this businessman 'made it his motto to leave behind more benefits than trophies, certain that esteem was worth more than celebrity, consideration more than fame and honour more than glory' (AIN, 377–378, p. 85).

These solemn occasions are literally an investiture that, from the start, extract the honouree from indifference and indistinction, naming him so as to tear him from anonymity. As such, they establish and solidify the formalities and assumptions of the factory social contract. In short, they institute an identity. 'It is *to signify* to someone what they are and that they should act accordingly. The indicative, in this case, is an imperative' (Bourdieu 1998, pp. 113–114). All the enthronements of the industrialist, displaying his positive repute, place upon him, together with the privileges and prerogatives of notoriety, the peremptory obligation to act with purpose. The virtuous personification of the industrialist can, therefore, act as a technology for domesticating the sensibility and activity of workers when accompanied by a distribution of material and symbolic counterparts. Putting it bluntly, 'recognition creates a duty' (Weber 1964, p. 195).

Thirdly, these occasions contributed to the integration and, without contradiction, the hierarchisation among the dominant class fractions. The material arrangements and conventional norms that organised an event, which could come to constitute a protocol or label in their codified versions, were oriented to provide a simile of the ideal social order. From the composition of the guest lists; to the arrangement of the tables, platforms and seats of honour, particularly according to the up-down, left-right, front-back or centre-periphery system ('presidency', 'big chair'); to the inclusion, sequence and duration of the speeches or toasts to be given by 'personalities', who tend to follow an ascendant or descendant hierarchy ('opened', 'finally spoke'); to the references to names or dates made at the beginning, middle or end of speeches; to the prerogatives and privileges of the founding acts, such as starting the operation of a factory with the push of a button or the pull of a lever, cutting a symbolic ribbon or blessing a factory pavilion; to the occupation of positions within the procession ('the factory visit has begun'); to the attribution of the demand to wait or, perhaps, the attribution to be waited for ('awaiting they were', 'offered welcoming compliments') – all of these organisational principles behind the solemn events, evident to those constantly exposed to it, were coherent with the prevailing logics of notoriety and grandeur, or those that were trying to be upheld (for a detailed description of these aspects, see AIN, 520, pp. 40–42). Through their proxemics and pragmatics, these occasions try to summon and

reconstitute, on a small scale, the 'good society', the 'social medium', all the 'prominent figures' and the 'most representative figures of the country'.

Fourthly, these occasions served the invention of 'communities of interests' between 'leaders and the led', 'rulers and the ruled', 'employers and employees', 'capital and work'. During the visit of the engineer Rogério Martins to the CIFA company on July 2nd 1971, the president of the administrative council of this large, artificial fibre-producing company, Carlos de Sousa Magalhães would share these words to demonstrate the need to fulfil the distinct destinies of those present (AIN, 619, 3). Individual wills must converge upon a 'work of collective creation', making it urgent that each and every person understand the sphere of action to which they should cohere to guarantee the success of that 'collective effort' (idem, p. 3). Even those apparently innocuous events, such as technical congresses or expert panels, bring important contributions to the consolidation of a collective body of business owners. Physically and symbolically presenting the 'unity of all' in spite of their particular and competitive interests, they selected and highlighted common challenges of that sector of activity, translating them into 'grievances' and 'proposals' collectively shared (idem, pp. 31–33).

As arenas of social interaction used to catch up on the relationships between economy and politics under the 'New State', these solemn occasions allowed and stimulated meetings between economic and political figures, accompanied by their respective 'interpreters', the statesmen and the industrialists themselves. The representative of State power is burdened with expectations to achieve successful 'resolutions' to the 'problems' presented by the representative of economic power. For industrialists, these occasions present an opportunity to repay or gather 'support', for example, through 'tributes' purposefully given to prop up a certain ruling figure. 'Politics is the art of presence' (AIN 616, p. 29). We must, in fact, interpret this affirmation of Henrique Veiga de Macedo, given during a visit he made to EFANOR on June 12th 1957 for the company's 50th anniversary, quite literally. For governmental representatives, the visits served then to spread ideological teachings and carry out a strategy of political affirmation. The affirmation of a current of thought and interest in economic activities, as had occurred with the belief in the virtues of industrial progress that is 'engineerism' (Brito 1988), was only realised, in part, by proselytising in the *terrain*.

Porto's Industrialists and Their Interests in 1965

Let's turn to a less phenomenological and more structural perspective. Beyond interactions, social structures rule. Given the presence in the archives at the University of Toronto of the original surveys on Portuguese entrepreneurs carried out by H. Makler in 1965, we had the opportunity to revisit (Burawoy 2003) these materials and proceeded in the consultation of more than 18,000 pages of information gathered in this national representative survey.

Table 11.1 Themes, variables and number of modalities used in the specific MCA

Themes	Variables	Number of modalities
Inscription of the company	Region Economic sector	7
Economic capital of the industrialist	Annual income	4
Cultural capital of the industrialist	Level of schooling Studies abroad	7
Social capital of the industrialist	Positions held in other companies Relevance of lobbying activities	5
Social origins of the industrialist	Place of birth Relevance of ego's father in the company	8
Company's organisation	Legal form of the company Privileged form of funding for the company Relevance of engineers	9

Source: The information displayed is based on H. Makler's 1965 survey (Makler s.d.)

From these sources, we selected 12 variables, belonging to six themes that comprised detailed information about the industrialists and their firms. Besides data about the economic inscription of the firms and their organisations, it was possible to identify meaningful information about the industrialists' economic, cultural and social capital, as well as information about their social origins (see Table 11.1). Using 40 active modalities, the data herein was submitted to a 'specific' Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010, pp. 61–64).

With this procedure, we defined the social space of the industrialists of the Porto region and its surroundings in 1965 and revealed a well-demarcated configuration of social forces. For the purpose of giving an overview, our reading retains the first two axes of the 'specific' MCA. In this reading, it is possible to combine statistical and sociological interpretability and to show significant divisions within the employers.

The first axis has a modified rate of 39.11%. Its structure is configured around power differences (see Fig. 11.1). On the right side of the figure, we can identify industrialists with a less powerful social positioning: in this region of the space, industrialists have, in relative terms, less economic capital and, in absolute terms, less cultural capital. These industrialists were born in small villages or towns, and their firms are individual companies, operating in the construction industry, in the region of Aveiro, and without engineers in the companies' staff. In the opposite region of the space, industrialists have university degrees, usually obtained abroad. Their firms are modern: they take the legal form of joint-stock companies and include the presence of engineers. For these industrialists, issuing shares is also part of the usual economic investment options.

The second axis has a modified rate of 17.37%. As shown in Fig. 11.2, it separates the industrialists in terms of region, economic sector of activity and social

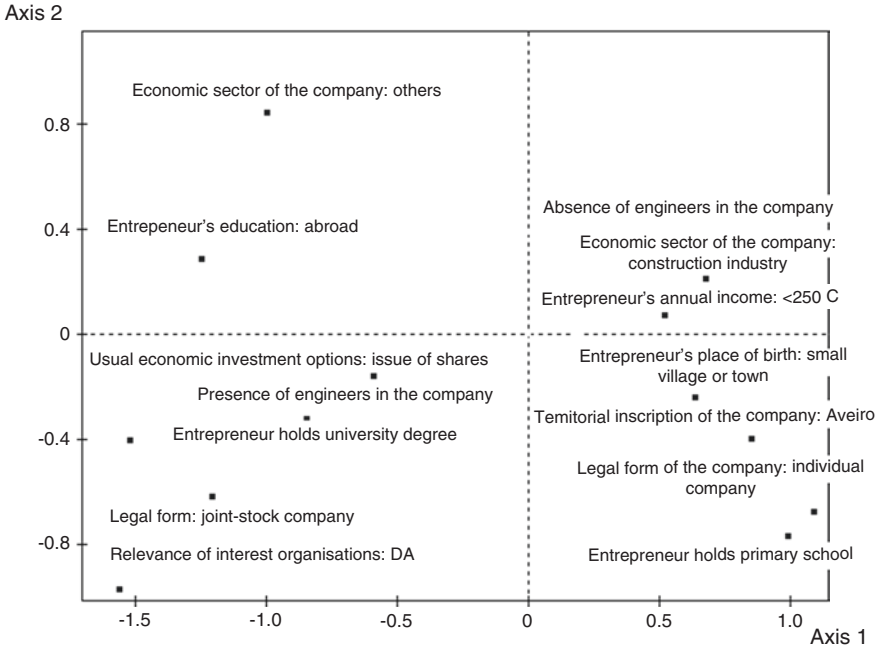

Fig. 11.1 Axis 1 of the Specific MCA. 14 categories selected to interpret Axis 1 in plane 1–2

background. In the upper region of the figure we can identify industrialists from Porto, working in different sectors of economic activity in the same district. Their companies take the legal form of limited companies and their respective investment strategies involve current business partners. Holding an intermediate level of cultural capital, these industrialists are often the heirs of the enterprises they run. In contrast, in the lower region of the figure, we can identify textile factory owners from the Braga district. Their companies have different configurations (joint-stock companies, but also individual ones) and are highly dependent on bank loans for investment strategies. In addition to reduced cultural capital through their attainment of primary school education only, these industrialists are newcomers to their businesses and have fathers with no ties to their properties.

In short, the social space of the industrialists of Porto is defined by significant social divisions. The first axis presents a clear divide between qualified big factory owners or directors and less qualified small industrialists. Big factory owners and directors are defined by a mode of reproduction dominated by the school. Small industrialists try to win their position and are clearly dependent on family resources and their personal 'initiative'. The second axis involves the specificities of time-space inscriptions of industrial ownership. Established medium-sized industrialists, who inherited their properties, have their businesses in Porto, and recent textile industrialists have theirs in the district of Braga.

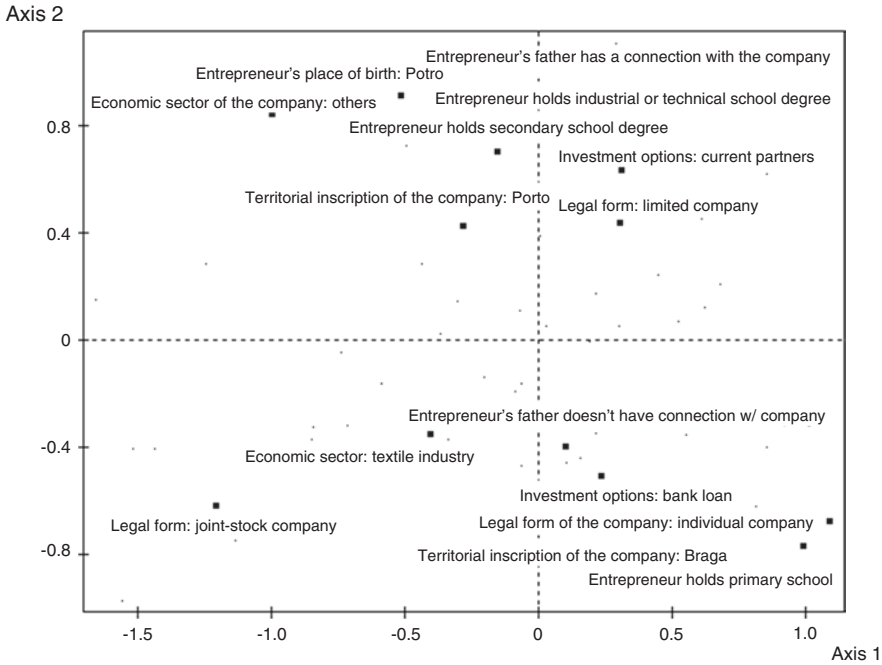

Fig. 11.2 Axis 2 of the Specific MCA. 15 categories selected to interpret Axis 2 in plane 1–2

The survey also included additional information about the industrialists' interests and associative priorities, among other facets. Figure 11.3 projects in the social space two supplementary variables indicating the industrialists' involvement in the official employers' representative organisation – *Grémios* -, as well as in the industrialists' association – AIP. Divisions in the social space in terms of power are characterised by notable differences in the involvement with *Grémios*. Small industrialists are members; big factory owners are not involved or, when involved, take on leadership positions. The divisions between Braga's textile industrialists and Porto's medium-sized industrial heirs are also informed by notable, or large, deviations in this domain. Traditional textile industrialists do not answer to these questions, while Porto's employers are leaders of *Grémios* as well as members and leaders of AIP. Influence over structures such as the *Grémios* is a top priority of these same industrialists, as we can see by analysing the information projected in Fig. 11.4.

In brief, in 1965, class associations and their activities have different inscriptions in the social space of the industrialists. The leadership of the *Grémios* and of class associations such as AIP is part of the priorities of established medium-sized industrialists of regions such as Porto. We can thus see that the transmutations between the economy and politics, as well as the other characteristics associated with factory celebrations, had a marked relationship with the priorities and interests of specific fractions of industrialists, in this case, Porto's established 'intermediate' industrialists. In this context, and for these specific industrialists, true 'insiders' of the city's

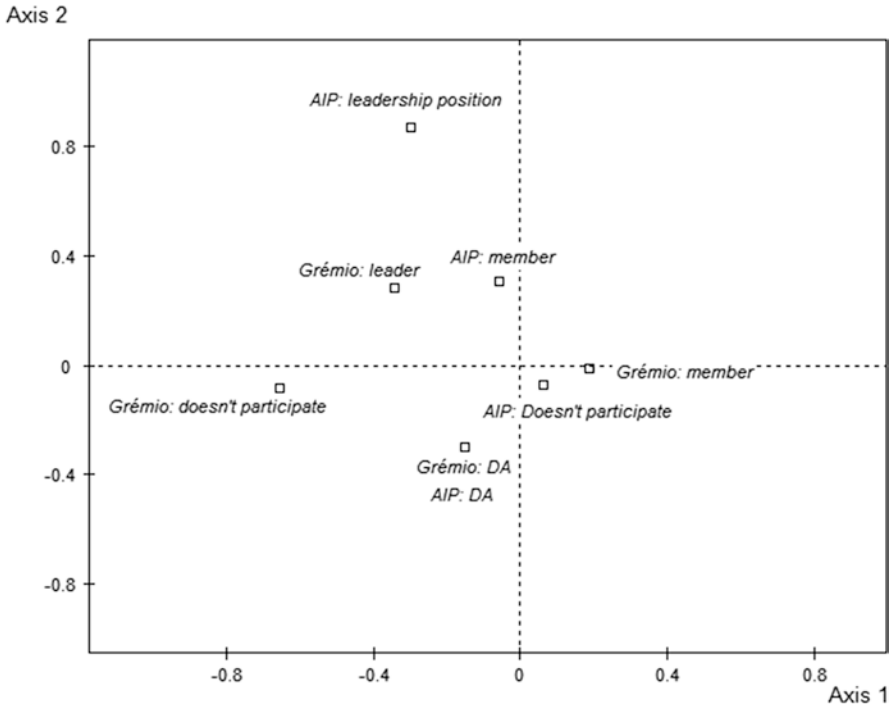

Fig. 11.3 Involvement in industrialists' representative bodies and associations projected, as supplementary variables, in plane 1–2 of the MCA

business world at the time, factory celebrations offered the means and the circumstances for identifying political priorities and economic opportunities to the New State's officials and representatives.

Monitoring and influencing industrialists' associative and representative structures was, thus, critical. Public ceremonies in the factory gained additional political force.

Conclusion

Our research into the order of interaction of industrialists' solemn occasions, grants us the possibility of more than simply contextualising these events. Following the line of research outlined by Erving Goffman, we were concerned above all in capturing the *situationality* of the events, that is, 'in passing from that which is simply situated to the situational, which means passing from what is casually inserted into social situations (…) to that which can only happen in face-to-face meetings' (1998, p. 196). At the same time, it is possible to explore the mutual implications between interactional situations and social positions. For understanding the pertinence these

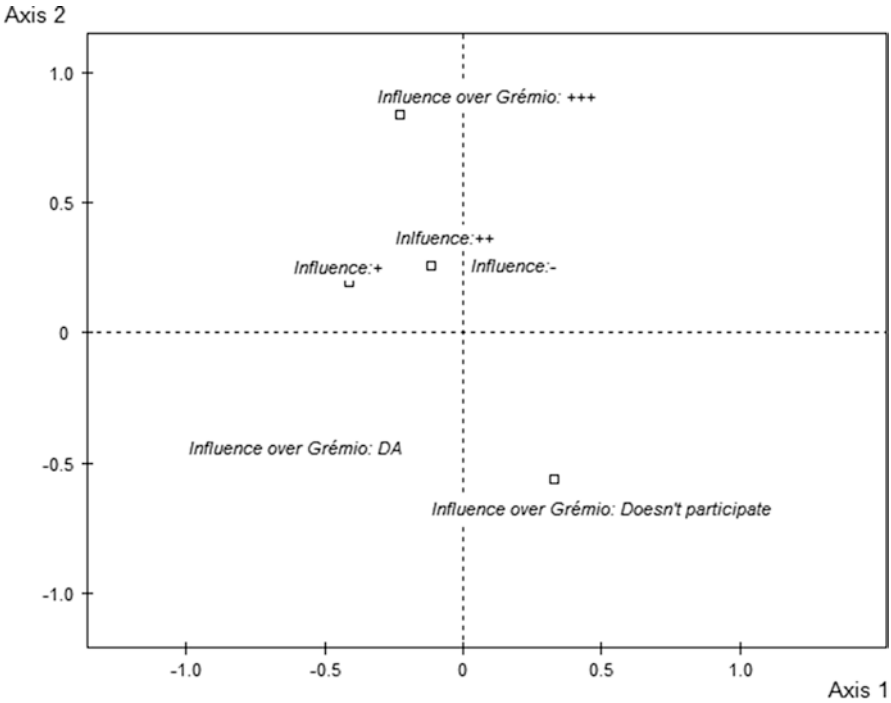

Fig. 11.4 Perceived importance of the industrialists' need to influence *Grémios* projected, as supplementary variables, in plane 1–2 of the MCA

occasions have for Porto's industrialists, it is therefore necessary to remember their particular social positioning within the contemporary field of power (Bourdieu 1989). In carrying out these solemn acts, the industrialists express their specific strategies of legitimation and intervention on their contemporary social world, which articulates with the associative and political standings seen in the statistical analysis of the social space. Through the exploration of the *loose coupling* between interaction order and social structures, we can move toward an approximation of the lived reality of these industrialists' that benefits at the same time from the textual hermeneutics of occasions and the statistical analysis of survey and prosopographic databases. In the phrasing of Max Weber, we aspire to articulate and, by doing this, challenge the very idea of their insurmountable separation, the ideographic interpretation and nomothetic explanation about the social experience of Porto's industrialists. This paired research, although it can progress much more in its entanglements in subsequent studies, enables already a mutual compensation of the respective biases originating from an exclusivist use of either archival sources or extensive surveys.

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Part III
The Formation of Elites

Chapter 12
How Should Historians Approach Elites?

Ciaran O'Neill

Introduction

In the summer of 2010, in that odd little interspace between my submitting a PhD and defending it, my partner and I spent a month teaching English at a private school nestled 1300 metres above sea level in the Swiss Alps. Penniless and under-employed, we knew little of the summer school we had signed up to. It turned out to be no ordinary school, and these were no ordinary students. The name of this institution was Beau Soleil, and in terms of elite status, expense, and exclusivity it was then second only to La Rosey in Switzerland – the country that is now widely acknowledged as a global leader in elite boarding schools, then and now. Fees for a final year boarder could soar above €100 k (Bertron 2019).

I had spent the previous 4 years writing a PhD on the education of transnational elite groups of Catholics in the nineteenth century, educated across a matrix of schools in Ireland, Britain, and Europe. I was interested in the cosmopolitan cultural capital they acquired from this transnational mode of education, and the schools I had studied had one thing in common: they featured a diversity of student origin, but a commonality of class and wealth. Their students came from the sugar colonies of South America, from the White Settler Empire, from Ireland, from Continental Europe, from Britain. Ecuadorians were educated next to Russians, Irish beside Prussians. It was the same at Beau Soleil. In the class that sat in front of me for that month in Switzerland I had two Spanish, two Russians, one Turkish, one Turkmenistanian, an Italian, a Swiss, and several more from across the Middle East. Their inherited wealth and privilege stemmed from a broad range of parental occupations in industry (petrochemicals), government, or finance. The effect on me as a professional historian was considerable. I found myself immersed in a contemporary version of a past world I had studied, and was confronted with my own

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positionality as a researcher. There were some methodological and theoretical revelations to be considered as a result.

Inspired by this need to think of the historian and their present(s), this brief chapter is broken up into three main sections. The first section advocates for a less nation-centric and more global and transnational approach to the study of historical elite groups. A second section will draw on the author's own experiences of research on nineteenth century patterns of elite education across several regions. The third section will ask: how historians can approach schools and schooling for elites better in future?

Historians, Theory, and the Nation State

Histories of elite formations have been gradually moving toward more global and transnational surveys of elite groups. Recent studies have observed either globalizing forms of education modelled on, say, English Public schools like Eton, or else they have traced and tracked particular elite or sub-elite groups across networks of schools that cater for their confessional or geo-political proclivities (Maxwell and Aggleton 2015; O'Neill 2014; Hatfield and O'Neill 2018; Hatfield 2019).The result is an exciting de-nationalizing of the history of elite education, a field formerly confined to studies tracing the production of various national elite groups. Since the 1970s no single scholar may be more responsible for this *nationalizing* tendency in the literature as Pierre Bourdieu, whose work on the French state nobility inspired many similar works of historical sociology across Europe. Conversely, the work of Bourdieu in developing concepts such as cultural capital and social capital may also be at the root of the newer, de-nationalizing impulse of recent work. Terms such as cultural capital, cosmopolitanism, and social capital are ones that can be said to work very well in transnational or global studies.

In a recent essay on the theoretical underpinnings of global history Juergen Osterhammel argues that most historians, even those interested in the relatively undervalued fields of global or historical sociology, seek to employ 'usable theory' or 'empirical social theory', when writing history (Osterhammel 2016). In doing so they prove themselves willing to borrow from more heavily theorized fields such as sociology or anthropology, but run the risk of being accused of dilution, cynical cherry-picking, or even scholarly subterfuge when doing so. In the interdisciplinary field of elite studies a mingling of the historical and sociological is inevitable, indeed it was considered inextricable by many of its mid-century practitioners such as Viktor Karady and Pierre Bourdieu, even if the latter sometimes referred to historians dismissively as 'masters of their little monopoly' who were likely to be 'extremely irritated by theorization' (Bourdieu 2018). Proving elite reproduction and systemic bias is something that can only be achieved over the longer term, and thus historians and sociologists have much to talk about when it comes to theory and concept.

Elite theory itself has a long and illustrious history. Pascal Daloz has recently surveyed 'classical' approaches to elite distinction from Plato to Weber, and of course nineteenth century historians such as Carlyle, Froude, and Macauley were all exercised by questions of leadership, natural authority, and great men more generally (Daloz 2009). In more recent historiography it is clear that the work of Bourdieu, Karady, and others of the 'French school' has been highly influential in historical work on national elites since the 1970s. Broadly speaking, such Bourdieusian studies argue for a progressive secularisation of education, in tandem with democratised access at lower social levels, concomitant with the rise of entrenched middle-class state bureaucracies alongside the progressive marginalization of the nobility from the exercise of political power in the second half of the nineteenth century. If there is a dominant theory in elite studies, this is a contender for the title, and it informs most of the work done on elite education as a result. The twentieth century historiography of elites is therefore a *national* and *state-focused* one, with much fewer studies of smaller groups of super-elites that have a generational connection to the gentry, noble, or imperial elites of the nineteenth century. The interesting quirk, then, is that historians of elite groups often look at elite education from a *national* perspective, even if the school or network of schools are serving multiple elite groups coming from multiple national or regional origins.

There are two literatures in the history of elite education that can already be considered quite 'globalised': the first is the study of higher education in relation to elites and intellectual networks (Chartier 1986; Charle 2004; Pietsch 2013; Perreton 2014). The second field that has seen a perceptible growth is that of 'international' education, something mostly located from the 1920s onwards and part of the nexus of 'diplomatic' space that gave rise to, among other things, the League of Nations, the IMF, and the International Bureau of Education (Gorman 2012; Resnik 2008). Likewise, the comparative approach to studying elites and education remains relatively strong. Of the 15 essays printed in the impressive *World Handbook of Education 2015*, three of the fifteen could be argued to have been comparative in nature, with the rest surveying a more globalised education in one particular national context, be it Chinese, Indian, Brazilian, or American (Van Zanten et al. 2015). What can a transnational approach add to this established field? The question must immediately address the 'when' of which we speak. It makes sense if we study the post 1920s world that the field should be so flatly influenced by national policies, but it makes much less sense the further back in time we tread.

In the nineteenth century, for example, the territorial spaces of the Ottoman, Hapsburg, and the British Empire all enabled a degree of transnational migration of elites, education policy, and ideas. Indeed, we cannot speak of a neatly 'French' elite education where we find Serbian and Scandinavian intellectuals availing of it, even if their incursion was successfully resisted by the dominant and native elite (Fette 2012). Likewise it is not easy to separate out neatly what an Ottoman, Russian, or British diplomatic or social elite might be when any analysis of them reveals a multi-ethnic and multi-territorial origin for their members (Itkowitz and Mote 1970; Brummett 2015). Neither can we speak of an 'English' Public school where we find that many such schools were educating second, third, and fourth generation migrants

alongside up to 20% Irish intake. The Catholic schools of present-day France, Germany, Austria, Poland, and Ukraine all educated a range of regional elite groups, with some of the most prominent and socially exclusive drawing in a near-global customer base. The same can be said of seventeenth century schools such as La Fleche in France, responsible for some of the education of figures such as Rene Descartes, and the site of production for no less a text than David Hume's *Treatise*. If we go back still further we find transnational flow in medieval schools and monasteries as far flung as Cairo, Lindisfarne, and Bobbio (Berkey 2014). How and why should we contain such institutions to a national significance when they are so patently broader in scope? In an historical context the default context for education of elites may be argued to have been transnational, the nationalisation of education is a comparatively recent phenomenon that coincides with the rise of state bureaucracy in the nineteenth century and the democratisation of higher levels of education down from an upper middle class to a lower middle class and, eventually, though hardly comprehensively, to the working classes of the world (Somel 2001; Cohen 1996).

Timothy Reagan has comprehensively surveyed some of the problems associated with the assumption that the relationship between society, culture, and education can be understood and analysed across quite different territories. Jane Kenway and Aaron Koh have likewise argued forcefully for the fallacy of transposing Bourdieusian ideas of capital and power to territories such as Singapore, as has Derek Robbins (2004). As the great age of empires came to a close in the early twentieth century we see a divergence and fragmentation in how various nations approached the issue of elite education. In Turkey, various scholars have argued convincingly that the religiously inflected Islamic elite of the Ottoman empire was replaced by an aggressively secular, Westernized, elite that conformed to the classic model of nationalism and modernisation (Yilmaz 2009; Szyliowicz 1971). The result was a struggle between the traditional educated elite, the men of the *medreses*, and their more modern state bureaucratic competitors. The Turkey of Ataturk was to be defined by its secularism, and by stripping away the religious base of education from its new elite, replacing one dogma with another. The resulting victory and subsequent dominance of the state bureaucratic elite did not entirely wipe the importance of the latter, however, and the rise of a new religiously defined elite is marked in contemporary Turkey (Yilmaz 2009). This is a pattern replicated in other societies to various degrees. The retention of a small group of elite schools serving the social elite is evident in societies as diverse as Sweden, England, Ireland, and Canada. The interplay between local specificities and the global picture will need to include the nation state, but the field stands to gain much insight from de-nationalized studies of regional elites and can learn from contemporary sociological work that takes account of local variations from territory to territory. More recent work on post-socialist elite reproduction point the way for scholars who are interested in continuity after apparent change (Lengyel 2000).

How to Conduct a Research Project About Elites

Historians in search of educational elites will usually consult several key sources, and compile their research in one of several fairly predictable methodologies. The sources are the easy part: these will be school registers, national biographical dictionaries, city directories, 'Who's Who' compendiums, land registries, political records, and so on. In short, anything that will give us a reliable starting point for identifying the key men (for it will usually be men) in positions of power and influence in historical society. We will cross-reference these and try to make some sense of the data. Here we will make the usual distinction of the sociologist between wealth and power, and try to think as sensitively as possible about the necessary gradations. The methodology, however, is where we lose all coherence. Most historians will construct some sort of rudimentary prosopography or database of names and mini-biographies. Some will conceive of this in terms of social class, others in terms of power elites. Others will factor in anomalies and differences of race, religion, age, and gender, and this is the point at which we must say, if we are honest, that all consensus among historians of elite groups begins to fragment.

Ideas of 'reputational' elites have begun to surface and point to new ways of conceptualizing the importance of visibility in elite reproduction (Pàl 2014). The inscription and re-inscription of "Who is Who' in society on an annual basis took place across societies right across the literate world and this form of list-making remains prevalent right up to the present day with the creation of monumental dictionaries of national biography (Ferrarotti et al. 1990; Vössing 2005; Carvalho 2003). The capacity for these biographical summaries to be exploited by the educational historian are legion. They very often contain details of schools attended, for example, and it would easily be possible to reconstruct a sample, however imperfect, of a multinational student body attending a school in Paris, for example, with reference to the various national biographies. Such shortcuts would allow a speedy and quite complete database covering years of interest, as well as allowing the researcher to sort and categorize student achievement and social mobility relative to their parents, and sometimes their children. This type of analysis allows the historian to extrapolate transnational trends and effects of elite education across borders and transregionally and transnationally. The idea, too, that the advertisement of educational attainment and prestige through such authorised and 'national' texts helped to elongate and promote some forms of educational inequality over a long period of time is also of interest to many historians working in this area (Priest 1982).

Prosopography has become one standard way through which historians feel comfortable uniting grand theory with historical specificity. A focus on aggregated biography allows the historian to anchor any study of elite reproduction and mobility in specific detail, relating to specific lives. We can trace a renewed interest in this classic historical approach in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Nicolet 1970). In his seminal 1971 article on prosopography in *Daedalus*, Lawrence Stone provided his readers with a rationale that he would later take to its extreme in an influential monograph co-written with Jean Fawtier Stone in the early 1980s, *An Open Elite:*

England 1540–1800? (Stone 1971). Stone was a digital pioneer before the term had any currency. His technique made use of emerging computing technologies, explained ad nauseum in the unabridged version of the text. Responding to Stone in 1973 TF Carney made the distinction between prosopographers who were interested in the masses and those who were interested in the elite (Carney 1973). This differentiation no longer exists. We have prosopographies of almost every substratum in between (Keats-Rohan 2007).

Other historians and sociologists have made close studies of the new mogul families, arguing for powerhouses such as the Rothschilds, Agnellis, and Rockefellers as a new dynastic power (Landes 2008). Broadly speaking we can see a similarity in style between this type of elite study, and that of royal dynasties such as the recent global history of dynastic power by Jeroen Duindam (Duindam 2015). Studies of nineteenth century elites tend instead to emphasise state bureaucracies, educational strategies, and professional monopoly as routes to and from elite status. As a result, it is much harder for grand theory to apply here, and a historian that wishes to capture a broad perspective across these various 'pillars' must necessarily depend on a synthesis of smaller works (LeDonne 1991). Nevertheless, something of the educational world of dynastic or merchant-elite families will emerge from these types of studies. The problem for a historian of elite groups is that they are necessarily limited in scope and horizon.

My own solution to some of these problems was to look at a variety of *schools* in an attempt to counteract some of the blind spots in work on educational elites. Furthermore I tried to select schools that I knew to be serving either regional or global elites. This allowed me to reconstruct a school experience as it may have been experienced by a cosmopolitan and well travelled elite class – in my case mostly European (or at least Europhile) Catholic networks (O'Neill 2014). Other historians have done similar work, but most look from a particular national lens, as in fact I did. Comparative work such as that emerging from scholars such as Charlotte Bennett, whose work compared elite schools in New Zealand and Ireland, or that of Christina De Bellaigue on French and English schooling, are moving us in the right sort of directions (Bennett 2018; De Bellaigue 2007).

One of the most important changes to my own practice back in 2010, when I found myself teaching a group of (very much alive and real) children of elite families, was the need to factor in the female half of elite families more directly. Realising just how limited my definition of elite membership had been, focusing as I had on professional or social affiliations, land ownership, and income, I worked hard to correct this imbalance, adding a whole chapter that had been absent from my PhD and that ended up in the book that emerged from that. But more than that, my experience at Beau Soleil allowed me to get some sense of what conflict might have been experienced at the heart of an elite school even while at the peak of its powers. The agency and autonomy of students, staff, and management alike were flat and two-dimensional to me before that summer. Being immersed helped me to understand the rituals of boarding school life, or elite culture, and it is something that historians seldom tend to think about or prioritize in their practice.

Futures

The current trajectory of the history of elites is that it is becoming more global, and more longue durée in style. Historians of elites are moving away from a national or institutional approach, and instead looking at cross-border mobilities, and at patterns over centuries rather than decades. This mirrors a larger shift in historiography, as noted by many recent surveys (Iriye 2012; Armitage and Guldi 2014). But exciting opportunities abound, not just in the potential for elites studies to stretch out over borders in time and space.

The definition of education itself will broaden out to include intra and inter-family education, sibling tuition, and other forms of child-rearing inside the home and in the wider community of individuals surrounding children as they grow up. Another curiously under-researched aspect of elite reproduction is its relationship to various imperial projects. Imperial elites tend to be explored by historians writing imperial biographies of certain important figures and their careers, both male and female, or else those interested in small cadres of diplomatic networks. A truly broad survey of elite movement across the various empires of the modern world is likely to show us that those empires were managed by a phalanx of nationalities and challenge ideas of a 'British' empire or Austro-Hungarian empire, at least in ethnic terms. An imperial approach will likely produce some interesting studies of the answering and mimicking that was commonplace from core to periphery. Petter Sandgren's work is instructive here, as it charts the 'globalisation of an elite institution like the English Public School as far away as Asia, India, Australia and North America' (Sandgren 2017; Sandgren and O'Neill 2019).

Female elite groups have proven the most resistant to historical analysis, something that is also evident in contemporary elite studies (Benjamin 2010; Maxwell and Aggleton 2014) Women were absent from the foundational work of the classical elite theorists: Mosca XE "Mosca, G.", Pareto, and Michels, as well as by the various schools of sociologists interested in power elites. (Burawoy 2008). Likewise, though feminist critiques of power have always focused on oppressor/oppressed, the sympathy and focus of those writing either 'classical' feminist tracts since the 1970s, or within the field of intersectionality, or black feminism, have always been for the oppressed category (Hancock 2016; Bilge 2013). When applied to history this leaves us with an uneven literature, where for once those at the bottom of the power hierarchy have more space devoted to them than their opposites (Chambers 2005; Adkins 2003). For the historian of elite groups, however, there may be much to learn from feminist theory in the future.

Conclusion

Back in Beau Soleil, as I surveyed my teenage elite class, I was forced to confront the class biases and positionality with which I had begun my research project some years previous. It was as clear to me as it was to my class that I was not from the same background as they were. My lesson plans began to slowly reflect this, beginning with apparently generic topics on which to build English vocabulary, only to find that I had missed the mark spectacularly. One lesson was on domestic chores, and the balance of who might be expected to complete them. This was met with much hilarity as my students broke the news to me that domestic chores were something done by servants. A class on pets elicited surprising information from my partner's class. One boy had a pet lynx. In a colleague's class there was a boy with a pet tiger, and another a pet white tiger, proving at last that no matter how wealthy you are somebody will always have a cooler toy. A Russian girl, let's call her Anna, informed me that 'women shop, men work' when I built a class around their future careers. As the month wore on our teaching became more misguided and experimental. We had a class on global income inequality, where I asked my students to estimate how much money their parents spent on them annually. The answer was a tonic to a historian of elites. The biggest single expense was education.

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Chapter 13
How Can We Identify Elite Schools (Where They Do Not Exist)? The Case of Ireland

Aline Courtois

Introduction

In the UK, there is hardly any debate on whether Eton and Harrow are elite schools or not. However, in countries where there is no visible, historically established elite, tied to equally visible historical institutions, there may not be such a clear consensus. For instance, what do elite schools look like in smaller or developing countries, in post-communist states, or post-colonial contexts? Do explicit or implicit criteria used elsewhere apply? Shifting the focus to a country like Ireland helps reconsider what we may otherwise take for granted when it comes to identifying elite schools.

Today there are 53 'fee-paying schools' in Ireland.[1] They educate 6.7% of the school-going population. Their special status allows them to receive state funding (for teachers' salaries, building renovation and so forth), while charging uncapped student fees. They do not operate entrance examinations because academic selection is forbidden; but they can – and do – give priority to siblings and children of past pupils. A number of fee-paying schools charge fees unaffordable to most families. As a group, they largely outperform 'free' schools in the national league tables. Some occupy castles surrounded by vast expanses of parkland and sport fields; others are located in Georgian houses on prestigious streets; their past pupils' directories feature prestigious occupations across a broad range of spheres (judges, surgeons, CEOs, horse breeders, art gallerists, etc.). Despite all these indicators, surprisingly, Irish fee-paying schools are rarely conceptualised as elite schools. Arguably, the diversity within the fee-paying sector, the absence of explicit

[1] Thus called to differentiate them from other schools, which are in private ownership but fully subsidised by the state and therefore 'free'.

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academic selection in these schools and their relative discretion (compared to the famous public schools of the neighbouring UK) make them less conspicuous than in other jurisdictions. In addition, the postcolonial context and the national narrative focused on 'meritocracy' and 'hard work' make discussions of class and inherited privilege difficult.

Cookson and Persell (1985) argued that in research on elite education, the relevant question is not 'if' elite schools play a role in the social reproduction of elites but 'how' they do it. Yet, such a situation, where schools are not designated or perceived as elite schools, poses a particular set of challenges to the researcher: How is the research object constructed? How is the field of research delineated and the appropriate research setting identified? Does it matter? When the 'if' is subject to debate, what is the setting where the 'how' should be investigated? This chapter examines these questions through a reflection on one aspect of my work on elite schooling in Ireland. The study employed a 'classic' qualitative methodology (interviews with staff and past pupils; observation and so forth), but in order to establish the legitimacy of my research object, I felt it was necessary to objectivise the category 'elite schools' in the Irish context. It is this particular aspect of my study and its relevance to my broader research aims, which I examine here.

Identifying Elite Schools

There has been a remarkable expansion of sociological studies of elite education in recent years. Some new contributions chart relatively unexplored territories in various regions of the world, while others examine contexts where elite schools are 'understated' (Forbes and Weiner 2008 on Scotland) or where the notion itself is 'a contradiction in terms' (Börjesson et al. 2015 on Sweden) or even 'taboo' (Deppe and Krüger 2015 on Germany). Drawing on Bourdieu's field analysis (1996), Börjesson et al. in this book convincingly establish which Swedish schools are elite schools. However, in countries where data on the social origins of students and/or reliable information on the educational backgrounds and trajectories of elites are not available, this approach is not possible.

The willingness to separate schools catering for elites from other (independent, Public, private) schools was central to earlier works. In the UK, Wakeford, (1969) selected 82 all-boys boarding schools; Weinberg (1967) selected 84; Walford (1986) reduced this number to 29. In the US, Cookson and Persell (1985) selected the 16 'most socially elite' schools by excluding girls' schools, day schools and other categories which, they argued, did not socialise students for power. As Gaztambide-Fernandez (2009) suggests, their work partly relied on an 'apparent consensus' with earlier authors that these schools were indeed the most elite. Similarly, in the UK, the 37 schools identified in the 1869 Clarendon Report formed the core of the schools designated as elite in later research.

Recent studies have unsettled this implicit consensus on historical prestige as an indicator of elite status for schools. With the rise of the private for-profit sector and the growing popularity of international schools, historically established schools may struggle to maintain their leading positions (McCarthy and Kenway 2014; Rivzi 2014). Further, analyses of the field of power or quantitative studies of elite pathways are no longer considered prerequisites in the construction of the research object. Researchers may simply select schools that they describe as leading', 'top-ranked' or 'privileged' – institutions that stand out in some way. However, where the notion of 'elite schools' is contested, it becomes necessary to objectivise this category.

The Irish Case

During preliminary fieldwork, a marked status hierarchy between the 53 schools became apparent. Fees varied widely, from €3000 to €12,000 for day students and from €8000 to over €25,000 for boarders. League tables made visible significant variations in academic performance from one school to another. Past pupils, well aware of the symbolic economy at play within the sector, would refer to one school as a 'knackers' school' and to another as a school for the 'super-elite', with supposedly 'more intelligent' pupils, such as 'sons of surgeons'. Some of these schools exerted such symbolic power that some interviewees grossly overestimated their fees, or believed that they still operated competitive entrance tests. One particular school was believed to be so 'elite' that its boarders were forced to swim in an outdoor pool every day of the year. Participants spontaneously sorted schools in various categories (old/new money; rugby/academic school) which complicated my own preliminary categories (Catholic/Protestant; boarding/day; single-sex/mixed; urban/rural). It seemed necessary to objectivise the identification of schools as elite by using criteria other than those of reputation, prestige or physical character.

Connecting Elites to Elite Schools

The analysis of social registers has led to fascinating studies of patterns of reproduction and social trajectories within the elites (e.g. Williams and Filippakou 2010; Ringer 1978; Reeves et al. 2017). Despite some limitations (editor bias, self-reporting – see Scott 1990, p. 163–172), social registers constitute useful resources to identify elites according to their own self-perception (Lewandowski 1974). In Ireland, the only recent register detailing individuals' educational history with reasonable consistency is *The Irish Who's Who* (Phelan 2006). The 1390 entries in this list of 'influential Irish' represent a wide array of individuals across various spheres of activity: aristocrats and celebrities feature alongside more discreet high civil

Table 13.1 Number of entries by elite category and by type of school

	Abroad	Ireland unknown	Irish non-fee-paying	Irish fee-paying	Total
Business	54	52	207	195	508
Arts	51	41	87	50	229
Media	19	12	88	25	144
Professions	10	11	44	69	134
Politics	19	8	83	21	131
Civil service	7	12	46	8	73
Academics	12	7	21	15	55
Clergy	10	3	19	9	41
Sports	2	7	21	4	34
Other	7	6	26	2	41
Total	191	159	642	398	1390

servants and top surgeons – suggesting that a loose combination of reputational, positional and decisional criteria was used in the selection. In my analysis I sorted individuals in different categories based on their principal activity. Employees and owners of small businesses that serve the elites (hairdressers, fashion advisers, etc.) were transferred to the 'Other' category. While the high number of women may be attributed to the editor's desire to reflect a certain image of Irish society, the largest category of activity is business, which reflects (intentionally or not) the structure of power in Irish society. The results of my analysis of the 1390 entries are presented in Table 13.1.

In total 398 individuals attended a fee-paying school, representing 28.6% of the total or 38.3% of those educated at an identifiable Irish school. By contrast, at its peak in 2008–2009, the fee-paying sector educated a mere 8% of the population. 16% of all politicians (20% of those who went to identifiable Irish schools) were past pupils of fee-paying schools but this proportion was 39% (49%) for business people and 52% (61%) for higher professionals (top architects and surgeons, accountants, judges, solicitors). This shows that fee-paying schools are not as central to the production of political elites (their educational and career backgrounds are relatively diverse) but that they play an important role for other segments (with various proportions and combinations in different schools). Especially in a country the size of Ireland (4.7 million inhabitants), it also raises questions about the social proximity between the business sector and the professions. In addition, a number of schools emerged with particularly high numbers of alumni. Blackrock College, in particular, had educated 3.3% of those in the Irish *Who's Who*, which is comparable with the proportion of Eton alumni in the British *Who's Who* (Kirby 2016). Finally, among the 191 educated abroad, 166 were educated in the neighbouring UK (including 89 in Northern Ireland) and 35% of these had been to Public Schools. A number were Irish-born but it was not possible to ascertain how many. As I focused on schools in Ireland, I did not investigate this segment further but the significance of international education certainly deserves further examination, especially in light of O'Neill's work on the transnational education of Irish elites historically (2014).

Mapping Fee-Paying Schools

In order to identify elite schools as objectively as possible, Gatztambide-Fernández recommended the use of typological, scholastic, historical, geographical and demographic criteria (2009). But these, and others, do not necessarily apply to the Irish context. While typically, lists of schools historically identified as elite are used either as such or to define ideal-types that guide categorisations, the historical context in Ireland makes this difficult: Ireland used to be a British colony and as a result the oldest schools are Protestant, but the balance of power has long shifted. After the Irish Independence (1921), many Protestants left Ireland, leaving their schools gravely undersubscribed. Some repositioned themselves (as international and/or multidenominational for instance) and maintained their prestige, but others ended up merging, closing or slipping into the non-fee-paying sector (this distinction between fee-paying and non-fee-paying exists since 1967 when the Irish state started to directly subsidize secondary education). By contrast, schools established in the nineteenth century for the rising Catholic sub-elite gradually rose to prominence. In fact, the two oldest schools, both Protestant, recently defected to the non-fee-paying sector.[2] Further, there is no specific accreditation or typology differentiating fee-paying schools from one another, and Gaztambide-Fernández's geographical criterion is not useful in a country the size of Ireland. Systematic records of pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are not accessible. Finally, while most researchers have more or less automatically excluded day schools, this is problematic in Ireland due to the overrepresentation of boarding schools in the Protestant sector, which owes mainly to the dispersed nature of this minority.

What may be the invariant properties of elite schools that could apply in Ireland? Given the wide variation in fees between these 53 schools, and the role fees play as economic barriers to entry, it seemed necessary to consider them as an indicator of social exclusivity. Rates of admission to high-point courses (rather than rates of progression to higher education) also seemed especially relevant given that these point to schools' ability to facilitate access to presumably 'elite-track' courses.[3]

Therefore, three groups were constituted: group (A) gathered the 15 schools with the highest number of alumni in the *Who's Who*; the 15 most expensive schools constituted group (B); and the 15 schools which were in the top 25 for admission to higher point courses, at least four times over the past 6 years, were selected to make up group (C). In giving these three criteria an equal weight, I assumed that they were of similar importance, reflecting at least what wealthy parents may look for in terms of prestige, social closure and promised futures. The number of schools selected in each group was also somehow arbitrary, guided by the assumption that

[2] Another two were also Protestant and the fifth was a Catholic boarding school at the centre of an abuse scandal after which enrolment figures plummeted.

[3] There are limitations with using league tables for this purpose: some students may apply to UK universities and/or take a 'gap year' after school; league tables are based on acceptance rates to Irish universities and therefore do not reflect these privileged strategies.

Table 13.2 Intersection of groups A, B and C[a]

Group 1 (N = 5)	
Intersection of (A), (B) and (C)	5 schools
Group 2 (N = 5)	
(A) and (B) (B) and (C) (A) and (C)	2 schools (none) 3 schools
Group 3 (N = 20)	
(A) only (B) only (C) only	5 schools 8 schools 7 schools
Group 4 (N = 23)	23 other fee-paying schools

[a]Tables 13.2 and 13.3 reproduced from Courtois (2018)

the final number of schools would be considerably smaller than 53. Table 13.2 shows how these three groups intersect.

Groups 1 and 2 overlapped almost completely with my provisional list, with three of the five schools identified by insiders located in Group 1 and one in Group 2. A small, relatively new (1920s), boarding school tucked away in the countryside, came as a surprise – yet further research and fieldwork confirmed it was indeed one of the most exclusive schools in the country.

Except in Group 1, there is no overlap between schools scoring high on the 'economic' criterion and schools scoring high on the 'academic' criterion. The way groups A, B and C intersect echoes Bourdieu's chiastic structure (1996), in which the economic and intellectual poles are opposed but only faintly so, for most of these schools remain unaffordable to most families. With the exception perhaps of a few non-fee-paying all-Irish schools, there is no such thing in Ireland as a cheap top-performing school.

Beyond this, while the proportion of businesspeople is higher in some schools compared to others, numbers are too small – and spread over several generations – to attempt to position these schools horizontally in relation to each other. However, examining their characteristics helps understand the general morphology and dynamics of the sector, as shown in Table 13.3.

Thus, with a more pronounced tendency to be boarding schools and to cater for boys, schools in Group 1 are closer to the traditional model of elite education as described by Wakeford (1969) or Cookson and Persell (1985). Schools in Groups 1 and 2 also operate more stringent criteria; are likely to recruit nationally rather than locally; and to operate scholarship schemes. Protestant schools, schools with an international orientation, and girls' schools are concentrated principally in Groups 3 and 4.

Arguably, all groups could be further sub-divided according to their religious ethos or their academic versus socially exclusive orientation. Even within Group 1, schools are highly differentiated (Courtois 2018). In addition, the hierarchy is fluid, for in Ireland, as elsewhere, the symbolic economy of elite schooling changes over time. Schools that were not overtly preoccupied with academic results may

Table 13.3 Characteristics of schools in each group

	N	Share of school-going population	Average day fees	Average boarding fees	Average number of alumni in the *Who's Who*	Share of boys	Share of schools with boarding	Share of Catholic schools
Group 1	5	0.7%	6490	17,750	26	83%	80%	80%
Group 2	5	0.8%	6450	17,760	14	79%	40%	80%
Group 3	20	3%	5500	15,560	7	60%	25%	65%
Group 4	23	2.2%	4150	9050	2	39%	39%	56%

suddenly propel themselves to the top of the league tables; some may increase their fees substantially while others become free; a few have repositioned themselves as international schools (Courtois 2015b). This model, which stratifies schools only vertically, is helpful in identifying elite schools as a relatively objective category. It guided the selection of case studies for the qualitative aspect of my work.

Yet it is worth noting that schools in Groups 3 and 4 are not irrelevant. They may not be the elites' first choice; but in different ways, they make the culture of exclusion, privilege and high expectations, that characterises elite schooling, accessible to the upper-middle classes. In his study of corporate circles, Useem (1984) identified an 'inner circle' that organized class-wide solidarity. He argued that its morphology and culture prefigured the political direction of the broader sector. Thus, the 'inner circle' of elite education, represented by Group 1, is made up predominantly of expensive, all-boys, Catholic boarding schools, whose students are more likely than others to reach positions of power.

What Does This Tell Us About the Field of Power and Elites in Ireland?

Since Nader's statement on 'studying up' (1972), many works have highlighted the importance of researching elites, and their social and educational spaces, in order to better understand the character and training of those who drive inequality (e.g. Khan 2011, p. 7). But recently, researchers have voiced some reservations in relation to how much studies of elite schools can really tell us about elites and power. For instance, van Zanten (2016) argues that in most studies, the influence of schooling on the normative and functional integration of individuals in elite groups is assumed rather than demonstrated. While it is generally agreed, including by schools themselves, that elite schools shape their pupils in certain ways, not much is known about how (or if) they influence their students' future political orientations and decisions once in power.

As shown in Table 13.1, elite schools produce elites across a range of spheres. This only becomes significant in the light of qualitative findings. Interviews and observation reveal how social segregation and class privilege are normalised and

legitimated in these settings (Courtois 2015a) and how schools cultivate class solidarity across the various elite segments they bring together (Courtois 2013, 2018). While arguably, other schools share such ideologies and practices to various degrees, this takes particular significance precisely because of the connection between elite schools and the spheres of economic and political power, which the mapping of the sector makes discernible. This connection does not in itself constitute evidence that elite schools play a part in producing an ideological consensus between economic elites and various arms of the state but, together with qualitative findings, it makes visible a number of parallels: the framing of meritocracy and the occurrences of 'class disgust' (Lawler 2005) that I detail in my work resonate with the neoliberal policing of the poor in Ireland; while schools' exclusive and exclusionary social and cultural practices mirror those of the elites. Yet the overlap between the circle of elite school alumni on the one hand, and the elites ruling Ireland and/or benefitting from the way it is run on the other, is only partial. In addition, we only have an incomplete or tentative picture of both these circles. To the challenges identified by Howard and Kenway (2015) and van Zanten (2016) could be added that of elaborating conceptual and methodological tools to better understand political socialisation in and outside elite schools, and to trace the roots of social violence (and resistance) in these settings. This can hardly be dissociated from further research on the mechanisms of domination and their variations across societies, and should therefore account for the impact of globalization on the elites.

Conclusion

While global perspectives and methodologies in research on elite education are gaining in popularity, and are very productive, this chapter suggests that attention to local contexts remains relevant if we are to better 'map' elite education and understand its impact on societies. In relatively uncharted territories, it is necessary to fine-tune established and implicit criteria in order to take into account local specificities, spatial and historical dynamics and shifts of power. In the case of the present study, the research object thus delineated is not fixed or strictly bounded, nor can it 'tell' us everything we need to know about elite schooling in Ireland.

In the absence of accessible 'objective' data, different ways have to be found, which lead to a questioning of the invariant properties of elite schools across research contexts: are all elite schools 'historically elite'? Are they all well-known and widely recognised as such? Is their reputation always based on academic results? Is economic capital always something that needs to be hidden, or 'tamed'? Can national elite education landscapes change significantly under globalizing circumstances?

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Chapter 14
"In Our School We Have Students of All Sorts". Mapping the Space of Elite Education in a Seemingly Egalitarian System

Mikael Börjesson, Donald Broady, and Mikael Palme

Introduction

This contribution is devoted to recurring methodological problems in research on elite education in a country where the existence of elites or elite education for many years was hardly acknowledged. The title, 'In our school we have students of all sorts', echoes an expression frequently heard in our interviews at exclusive study programmes. In such highly selective environments, many students, their parents and teachers, and especially the school principals are eager to expose to the visiting sociologist the fallacy that the institution is an elite establishment. Their attitudes surprise the researcher who has already interviewed an array of obviously highly selected and resource-endowed students and teachers as well as observed interactions and teaching practices seldom found in mass education contexts. Thanks to the depth and breadth of Swedish official statistics, the sociologist furthermore has access to hard facts on this matter, namely indicators on these students' – and their parents' and teachers' – possession of symbolic assets, including those that are highly valued within the educational system and in Swedish society at large. For all levels of the educational system, these statistics comprise information at the level of the individual regarding the attended educational institutions, courses and programmes as well as general and course-specific grades. This data can be combined with information from other official statistical registers on the parents' occupational

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positions, educational levels and incomes. Statistical information on the backgrounds of teachers is available as well.

From a sociological point of view, the refutation of a social fact that, to the researcher, seems undeniable calls for explanation. The educational system obviously works in a manner that obscures the truth of its social conditions and effects. By contrast, in virtually every country outside of Sweden (apart from the neighbouring Scandinavian countries), it is rather obvious that certain parts of the educational system constitute an elite sector.[1] However, these reactions of denial are not simply expressions of the spontaneous self-understanding that thrives within the educational sphere, but correspond to objective epistemological obstacles regarding the understanding of elite education in relatively egalitarian countries. Overcoming such obstacles is a first step in the construction of Swedish elite education as a research object.

In this contribution, we focus on epistemological and methodological dimensions of this research, drawing on our various experiences over a number of years.[2] We will first consider epistemological obstacles to the study of elite education in a country renowned for its egalitarianism and which seem to nurture the perception of an educational universe without elites. Thereafter, we will turn to the question of how to construe elite education as a research object, a task that implies considerations on useful definitions. In particular, the relations between different occupational groups and class fractions as well as between different meanings of elite education need to be clarified. Finally, we draw on a previous but recent analysis of the Swedish field of higher education in order to discuss how we have tried to overcome some of these discussed obstacles.

Epistemological Obstacles

The study of Swedish elite education has to overcome three major obstacles of epistemological nature: the egalitarian appearance of the educational system, its organisational homogeneity, and the administrative (and non-sociological) definitions of its participants.

[1] One can for instance mention the French *grandes écoles*, the American liberal arts colleges, Ivy Leagues and flagship universities, the Russel group universities and the public schools in England, and the Swiss boarding schools. Cf for example Anne-Catherine Wagner's contribution in this book and van Zanten (2018).

[2] Among recent publications in English, see Börjesson and Broady (2016); Börjesson et al. (2016a, b). Our work was originally (Broady and Palme 1989) much inspired by the ongoing seminal research at Centre de sociologie européenne in Paris (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1987; Bourdieu 1987, 1989), and is indebted to recent developments in the same tradition (see for instance Serre and Wagner 2015).

First Obstacle: The Egalitarian Beliefs

Relatively speaking, Swedish society has, in important respects, been one of the most egalitarian in the world. When it comes to economic equity, Sweden by international comparison went through a period of remarkable development from the 1920s until the 1970s in the direction of egalitarianism, and still today – in spite of the rapid growth of economic inequalities in recent decades – boasts one of the most egalitarian distributions of income and wealth.

For the Swedes, however, the neo-liberal turn in the opposite direction since the 1980s has been dramatic. The differences in income, wealth, housing, and so on within the population have widened, accompanied by profound transformations of government policies and dominant ideologies. The educational system has undergone parallel transitions. Traditionally, education beyond primary school was a concern almost exclusively for the upper echelons of the population, and especially its cultural fractions. During most of the twentieth century, rather successful policies for widening access were implemented (Lindensjö and Lundgren 2000) and the provision of education reached an increasingly larger share of the population (Melldahl 2015).

As far as economic factors go, the educational system still offers more equity than in most other countries. Tuition fees are not allowed at schools or at universities (except for students from outside of the EU/EES area). Swedish students, and students within the EU/EES area, who are admitted to an upper secondary school or higher education institution are entitled to grants and loans to cover most of their living costs.

However, since the late 1980s and early 1990s, the educational system has also undergone rapid transformations, involving processes of marketisation, privatisation and internationalisation. The result is sharpened social differentiation within the educational system, which can also be found in other sectors of Swedish society. While tuition fees are still not permitted, public funding of education from primary to upper secondary level is channelled through vouchers that enable families to engage with a free choice model of selecting schools. On the basis of this voucher system, municipal schools and a rapidly growing portion of private schools compete to attract pupils, with increased social and educational differentiation as a result (Forsberg 2018). Higher education, where privatisation has as yet hardly appeared, is increasingly marked by 'new public management' and 'academic capitalism', with more emphasis put on international excellence. Swedish universities are expected to be attractive and compete for students, researchers and resources on the global higher education market. Nowadays it is also possible to talk about 'elite education' in a non-pejorative sense.

Several traps exist here. First, the perception of the Swedish model as promoting equity and equality might be lagging behind its recent transformations, which means an underestimation of actual social and economic differences; there is the alluring temptation to extrapolate a former, and by comparison more equal, condition of the educational system to its current situation. Second, a related and inverse

obstacle stems from the increased importance of differentiation and excellence having the effect that self-proclaimed elite status must not be taken at face value. For instance, the term 'university' is not regulated when it comes to the English labelling of Swedish higher education institutions, and many Swedish university colleges use the non-accurate label of 'university' in English. Third, and most importantly, if we aim at sociological explanations and abstain from moral and political judgements, the public debates on whether the current degree of inequality is just or not, or whether it is high or low by international standards, constitute an obstacle to the research on the objectively existing social mechanisms at work in the educational system. The fact that educational inequalities are more pronounced in most other countries does not make it sociologically less relevant to analyse how the Swedish educational system contributes to the production, legitimisation, distribution and consecration of assets of key importance to social differentiation.

Second Obstacle: The Homogenous Outlook

One aspect of what has been called the 'democratisation' of the educational system in the twentieth century, described above as characterised by a focus on widening participation and expansion of the provision of education, was the continuing administrative homogenisation that peaked in the 1960s and 1970s. In the early 1970s, the comprehensive *grundskola* for all children up to the age of 15 was implemented everywhere in Sweden, which put an end to the former division between the *folkskola* for the common people and the *läroverk* (upper secondary grammar school) for the affluent classes. At the same time, all kinds of upper secondary education were merged to create a single type of school – the *gymnasieskola*. Furthermore, in 1977, the jumble of diverse tertiary (as well as some upper secondary) educational provision became amalgamated into one single organisation, *högskolan*, comprised of universities, the newer university colleges and the many institutions providing vocational training (such as for primary school teachers, social workers, technicians, etc.). As a consequence, the number of students in higher education increased by 50% overnight, and the share of the population with higher education diplomas also expanded significantly, inflating the value of a higher education degree (see Melldahl 2015 for details on these effects). While differences have been acknowledged between institutions, the homogeneity of the organisation of higher education has made the boundaries between elite and mass education less discernible than in most countries. The larger universities in particular have become much more diversified and complex in the structure of their educational offer than they once were. This means that the boundaries between elite and mass education, to an even greater extent, run within rather than between administratively defined institutions.

Third Obstacle: The Administrative Definitions

A golden rule of sociological research is to be careful not to base your analyses on vocabulary, definitions, categorisations, etc., produced within the domain under study. In our case, vigilance is called upon towards taken-for-granted definitions of different educational assets. What is spontaneously considered to be the boundaries between, for example, different educational levels, vocational versus theoretical secondary school programs, or advanced versus basic higher education programmes, are pre-notions, generated within the educational system and especially as a result of past and present struggles within administrative and political fields. To break with such pre-notions is an indispensable first step towards sociologically fruitful definitions.

The social or meritocratic differences might be hidden when, as is often the case in the public debate or in less rigorous research, you aggregate educational institutions and programmes in such a way that the distribution of assets becomes blurred. One such example is when the recruitment to upper secondary education is analysed on the basis of a dual division of 'theoretical' and 'vocational' programmes. This aggregation hides the substantial social and meritocratic divide that runs between the two major 'theoretical' study programmes, one in natural science and the other in social science. In fact, the former, much more than the latter, exhibits elite characteristics. Here, there is a concentration of students with both significant inherited resources, especially cultural and educational capital, and acquired assets, such as particularly good grades from compulsory school. Further, looking at their study careers following upper secondary education, having attended the natural science programme is more strongly connected to entry into elite institutions in higher education than having attended any other study programme at this level.

Another risk is that everything that falls outside of the educational system's administratively defined borders tends to become invisible, including less well-known institutions important to elite formation but seldom noticed in research on elite education. Outside of the university system, one important site for the formation of intellectuals has been *Tolkskolan* (The Armed Forces Interpreter Academy), an institution at the tertiary level which has trained many men for a variety of elite positions, ranging from business to politics, administration and diplomacy, as well as to journalism and academia. Another example is the diplomat programme at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a competitive tertiary programme that admits 20 students each year and that opens the door to careers in diplomacy. For the private sector, the large multinational corporations also have their own trainee programmes, which are little studied, but clearly of significance for careers in business and engineering. The great dynasties of bankers and industrialists have used officer training in the military reserve as a means of elite formation for their sons. Throughout the twentieth century, a crucial vehicle for the reproduction of influential parts of the political and administrative elites, especially connected to the Social Democratic Party, were the popular movements, the *folkhögskolor* connected to these movements and the labour unions' own training programmes. These are examples of

educational institutions that historically have been important for the formation of particular elites connected to specific social fields, such as the political field. Another example is the gradual transformation during the last five decades of certain *folkhögskolor* into a system of preparatory institutions for entry into the fields of cultural production, such as literature, art or music.[3]

Definitions

Another step in the construction of elite education as a research object is to find more productive concepts and definitions to be used as research tools.

The Need for Multidimensionality

To explore elite education, social complexity cannot be reduced to one-dimensional scales, ranging from high to low, such as 'upper class', 'middle class' and 'lower class'. This reduction of social differences to one vertical dimension makes the educational strategies of groups with particular assets disappear, additionally rendering the recruitment mechanisms to particular institutions incomprehensible. The university professor in Latin and the estate broker become inseparable when brought together in the same, undifferentiated upper middle class category. In this way, more elaborate analyses of social origin and social positions are called for. Making use of fairly detailed information on individuals' occupations available in the public statistical registers, we have, for our analyses, developed classification schemes that seek to give as much justice as possible to both the volume of social groups' assets and the composition of these assets. We most often distinguish 32 social groups that can be aggregated into fewer groups when the populations are small and again desegregated for specific analytical purposes. In order not to turn gender into a separate individual property artificially disconnected from social origin, we combine gender with social origin, differentiating sons of, for example, veterinarians from daughters of veterinarians, leading to 64 categories in total. We typically apply the same classification scheme to information collected from other, independent sources, such as questionnaires and interviews, with a view to make comparisons possible between different kinds of data.

Further, as elite education comprises the education of different types of elites, who hold varying types of assets, educational capital cannot be measured along a similar one-dimensional, simplified scale, going from low to high. This blurs all

[3] As Nylander (2014) shows, two *folkhögskolor* situated in the countryside in Sweden's most southern region are nowadays the most important sites for formation and consecration of the modern jazz elite, outrivalling the ancient and prestigious Royal College of Music (Kungl. Musikhögskolan i Stockholm).

crucial differences between domains of study and types of institutions. We know, for example, that artists have exceptionally long educational careers, but these individuals pass through very specific institutions which provide particular symbolic capital and give shape to a particular habitus (Gustavsson & Melldahl, this volume), whereas elite careers in the economic field pass through entirely different educational institutions, as they also do in other countries such as France (see Lebaron, this volume). Moreover, the sociological analysis of elite education needs to separate educational capital in its different forms from other types of inherited or acquired cultural assets, avoiding the transformation of one's educational level into the sole indicator of cultural capital.

Three Definitions of Elite Education: The Meritocratic, the Social and the Functional

From the point of view of our empirical research, at least three definitions of elite education should be departed from: a meritocratic, a social and a functional (Börjesson et al. 2016b; Börjesson and Broady 2016). The first definition, the meritocratic, takes the educational system's own credentials as the starting point and is perhaps intuitively the most obvious. In the operationalised version used in our studies, elite education in a meritocratic sense is defined as a programme or study track with a large proportion of students with high upper secondary school grades or high scores on the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test. Here, the key – and, in most cases, the only – selection instrument is scholarly merits, which makes the Swedish system very different from other national educational systems, especially the American one (cf. Stevens 2007). Other means of selection are seldom applied, except, for example, at music or art schools where the admission process comprises tests of skills or evaluations of portfolios.

The second criterion, the social, relates to the resources that students bring with them from their parental home and their upbringing. In a meritocratic system, social characteristics do not count as a legitimate means of selection. Since educational systems, despite all meritocratic ambitions, are de facto structured to a considerable degree according to students' social origin, admission can be organised with a view to compensate for less privileged students' lack of inherited resources, for example through initiatives such as affirmative action and broadening recruitment. Notwithstanding the effect of such initiatives, from a sociological perspective, elite education is characterised by a large concentration of inherited resources. It functions as a reservoir of different assets – social, cultural, economic and specific symbolic resources – that all students entering into elite institutions or elite study programmes, to varying degrees, may take advantage of. It also implies that the student body tends to share a certain set of beliefs, experiences and values, which facilitates further social and educational endeavours. Nonetheless, a conspicuously homogenous recruitment of privileged students might jeopardise the institution's

legitimacy. Elite institutions or particular elite programmes within larger institutions in Sweden are forced to exhibit some degree of diversity, preferably of a nature that does not threaten their de facto elite character (see Holmqvist 2018).

Thirdly, elite education might be defined via its capacity to pave the way for elite trajectories, to open doors to elite positions in the educational system, in the labour market, in particular social fields and in social life generally. This we have called a functional criterion. Whether it is regarded statistically, as a probability of success, or qualitatively as the elite institution's capacity to shape the minds and bodies of its students in certain ways, the most elitist institutions and programmes are capable of offering a high likelihood of a prosperous career. The challenge of research design is that the outcome can only be evaluated post factum and with a certain time delay in relation to when the studies were carried out. However, most evidence points in the direction that elite education is a conservative business. The longer the history of being an elite institution, the greater the chances of fulfilling the promise of a prosperous career.

These three criteria, used in the definitions above, often go together. Study tracks that are highly selective in meritocratic terms also tend to attract and form a student body with large inherited resources of different kinds and prepare students for dominant social positions. In spite of these incomplete overlaps between the criteria, the composition of resources depends on (and determines) the position of the track, programme or institution within the overall space of education and its relation to the wider social space and, most importantly, to specific social fields.

In other words, elite education should be defined and studied relationally. The position of a particular elite education track, the force that it exerts on students and its effects on society at large cannot be understood in isolation from the relations that constitute this position, primarily the relations to other educational tracks.

Construction of the Research Object

With the differences between these three definitions of elite education in mind, we will conclude by providing an example of Swedish elite education as a constructed research object. The empirical analysis is presented in more detail elsewhere (see Börjesson and Broady 2016).

Elite Education as the Top Subdivision of an Educational Space

We depart from a more straightforward definition of elite education as the top subdivision of an entire educational space, in this case the Swedish field of higher education. With a view to unveil the social structure of the space, we first created the social recruitment profiles of all programmes and courses with more than 100 participants at all Swedish higher education institutions. Based on statistical data at the

individual level, these profiles consisted of the number of daughters and sons (n = 264,000 students) of all previously mentioned 32 social groups, i.e. 64 categories. Further, we added as supplementary variables information on students' upper secondary study programme, their final grade at this level and their test scores from the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test. For the analysis of the resulting matrix, we used correspondence analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004, pp. 23–65).

The graph found below shows the overall structure of the Swedish field of higher education. The first and most influential axis, the horizontal one, separates female students to the left from male students to the right, with a gender neutral space between. The second most important axis, vertical in the graph, is primarily oriented according to the resources the students' parents possess. The volume of the inherited resources, especially the cultural ones, increases as one moves from the bottom to the top of the figure. This hierarchical structure is aligned with the educational resources that the students have accumulated on their own. High grades, high test scores and exclusive degrees from the most prestigious upper secondary programmes, such as the natural science programme, are found at the top of the graph, while low grades, test scores and degrees from vocational upper secondary schools or less prestigious theoretical upper secondary programmes, including the social science programme, are more frequently found towards the bottom of the graph, the dominated part of the field.

The dispersion of the students is determined by their distribution across the educational programmes, courses and institutions in higher education. The educational order corresponds to the gender and social orders in society at large. The field of higher education is most clearly divided according to the first dimension, here representing a gendered opposition – programmes in engineering, technology and natural science (male pole) opposing those in health care, education and culture (female pole), with social science in-between. Institutions and, more broadly, types of institutions are differentiated primarily along the second axis. Traditional, large and broad research universities together with traditional specialised professional institutions are positioned in the upper part of the space, and new university colleges and universities populate the lower part of the space. At a more precise level, it is clear that the educational programmes, and especially the professional programmes, are most crucial for establishing the structure of the field. At the most extreme position at the top of the graph is the medical programme, followed by the law programme, which are the two most clear-cut professional programmes. Shorter and semi-professional programmes define the opposite positions at the bottom of the graph: programmes for preschool teachers and nurses for female students and the shorter engineering programmes for male students.

When the first two axes are taken together, the cloud of the educational programmes and courses at specific higher education institutions and the cloud of the social groups divided by gender form a triangular structure with its base at the bottom in the graph. This implies that the difference between male and female students is greatest within the working class-dominated segment of the system and least pronounced in the segment dominated by the upper middle class. Another way to

put it is that elite education tends to be less gender differentiated than mass education (Fig. 14.1).

Within this field, the elite subspace is indicated by a trapezoid. It is the part of the space characterised by the highest density of cultural capital (both acquired and inherited), as well as by a strong concentration of other species of capital constitutive to the Swedish field of power: economic, juridical, administrative, political, scientific, artistic and so on. The high concentration of resources in this part of the field is understandable from the viewpoint that there is a close relationship between the elite segment and the most dominant spheres in society. The principal homology between the field of elite education and the field of power as demonstrated by Bourdieu and de Saint Martin (1987) and Bourdieu (1989) is arguably valid also for Sweden; although, there is not, in the Swedish case, as strong of an overlap between the two fields as in France, and, in addition, in Sweden there exists to a larger extent alternative trajectories leading into the field of power (see, for instance, the previous

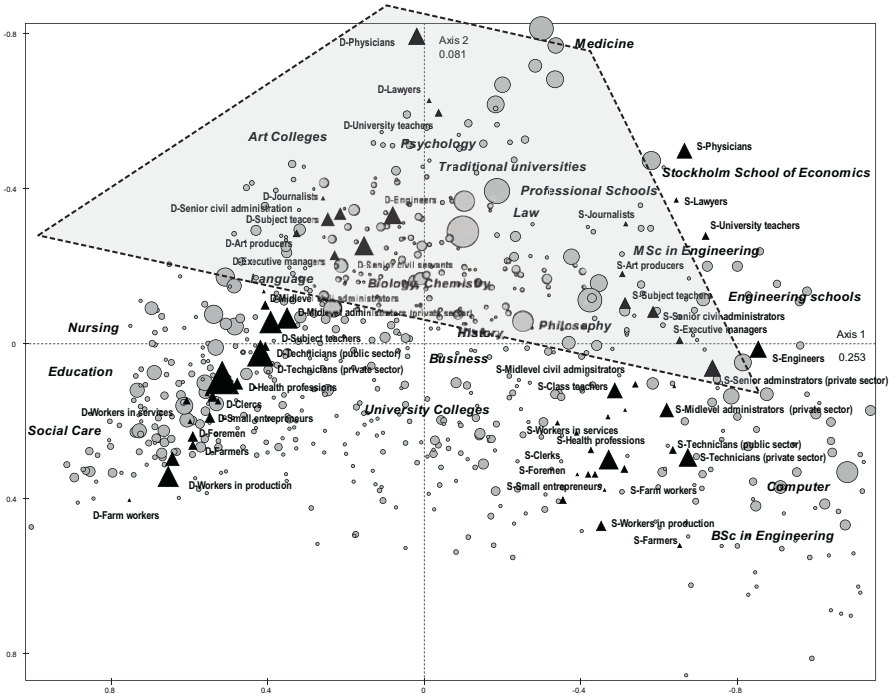

Fig. 14.1 The Swedish field of higher education and the subfield of elite education, autumn 2006. Correspondence Analysis, the plane of axes 1 and 2. 32 categories of social origin, sexes separated
Data source: Statistics Sweden
Active variables:
▲ **Social origin.** *S* **sons,** *D* **daughters**
○ **Educational programmes/courses offered by higher education institution**
The sizes of the triangles and circles are proportional to the number of students in a particular category

section on alternative elite educational institutions). The analysis reveals that the Swedish sub-space of elite higher education is strongly dominated by a few prestigious longer professional programmes, especially in medicine, law, engineering and social sciences. In fact, students with the highest grades, who in theory have all possibilities open to them, tend to be the most narrow-minded when selecting programmes, only considering the most selective programmes in order to reduce the risk of diluting the value of their educational capital (Lidegran 2009). Furthermore, these programmes are almost without exception located either at one of the few old and prestigious universities or at certain high-ranked profession-oriented schools in the Stockholm area, creating a very distinct geographical concentration of educational resources to the capital region.

From the perspective of the whole field, the subfield of elite education seems less heterogeneous than the rest of the field; gender differences are clearly larger in the bottom half of the field. However, when zooming in on the subfield of elite education, it becomes obvious that there are important differentiations. To start with, keeping to the overall structure of the field, the two most fundamental dimensions, that of gender and social background, do have bearing on the elite subfield. Engineering programmes are opposed to cultural programmes along the first and primarily gendered axis, where male students dominate the former and female students the latter. For the social dimension, the vertical in the graph, the medical programmes stand out as the extreme case, with the most distinct overrepresentation of students from homes with very large volumes of capital, especially cultural and educational capital, combined with an equally strong underrepresentation of students of working class origin. The medical programme is, in this regard, distant from all other programmes, including the other large professional programme, the law programme, which also has a gender-balanced recruitment.

In a complementary study (Börjesson et al. 2016a), we were able to further refine the analysis of elite education in Swedish higher education. In a large survey of 25 elite study programmes including the medical programme, the political science programme, various engineering programmes and programmes in fine arts and acting, at institutions such as the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm Institute of Arts, Stockholm School of Economics, and Uppsala University, we distinguished important differences related to symbolic investments in culture, taste and body-oriented as well as media practices, which primarily differentiated the students according to study programmes and institutions. This indicates that these elite programmes at these institutions very strongly shape students' habitus and embodied capital. In part, the weight of the educational institutional environment in forming students' cultural practices and beliefs is understandable from the perspective that these study programmes, while being fairly gender-balanced, are highly socially selective. However, their particular impact on students' minds and bodies comes from their function, as elite programmes, to prepare students for careers in various social fields where different field-specific symbolic capital is recognised and at stake. This function stretches far beyond classrooms and lecture halls.

Conclusion

Our discussion of epistemological obstacles to an understanding of elite education in Sweden and of the need for sociologically fruitful definitions and tools has led us to conclude that a reconstruction of the objective structure of the entire space of Swedish higher education is needed for delimiting the sub-space of elite education and further exploring how particular elite programmes and institutions relate to social fields of power. Here, it is crucial to apply a multidimensional definition of elite education, focusing on both social and meritocratic assets, as well as taking functional aspects into account. With such an approach it becomes apparent that the subspace of elite education is a battleground for the valorisation of different sorts of assets. Furthermore, the subspace of elite higher education in Sweden can, to a large extent, be understood as a relay between on the one hand, the social space (from where the students are originating) and on the other hand, both the field of power in general and particular social fields (the destinations of the students).

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Chapter 15
The Internationalization of Elite Education. Merging Angles of Analysis and Building a Research Object

Anne-Catherine Wagner

Today the dominant classes are characterized by their mobility, the geographical spread of their networks of relations, and more generally by their belonging to a reference space that goes beyond the national framework. This transformation undeniably has effects on the formation of elites in different countries, which increasingly includes an international dimension (Maxwell 2018; van Zanten and Darchy-Koechlin 2015). How can we, as researchers, take into account the international dimension in the formation of elites?

We would like to show here both the theoretical relevance and the difficulties of an approach of international capital that focuses on its institutionalized state, comprised of officially sanctioned educational qualifications. The multiplicity of levels and training models displaying an international dimension, and the social heterogeneity of their public, complicate the construction of this object. Should we include all schools defining themselves as international in the field? The internationalization of education programs often takes the shape of study abroad periods rather than attendance at specific institutions; and stays abroad concern a growing number of students that are not all part of the elite. What would be the invariant features of an international educational capital? How and to what extent is it mobilized in the reproductive strategies of the ruling classes? In a context of relative democratization of international experiences, how do the dominant classes maximize their potential for distinction? Do all students benefit equally from an international education?

These questions will be dealt with by focusing more specifically on the case of France where, traditionally, attending a few highly selective institutions closely defines the contours of the French elites (Bourdieu 1989; Denord et Lagneau-Ymonet 2016).

If the existence of elite institutions is obviously not unique to France, the specificity of the French context is partly due to the narrowness of recruitment of the "grandes écoles"; and secondly to the kind of legitimacy they confer. Scoring

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modes, academic selectivity, and the principle of the anonymous "concours" tend to give educational capital a central place in legitimating social domination (Gérard and Wagner 2015). What are the effects of globalization on this educational model? How does it change the content of legitimate cultural capital?

First, we discuss how inquiries into international schools help identify the specific features of the cultural and academic capital at stake in these reproductive strategies. These studies nevertheless make sense only if we try to situate international diplomas or international training in school hierarchies. This leads us to move to the issue of criteria for legitimizing elite institutions. Finally, we will show that the main difficulty is in assessing the conditions for mobilizing this capital in order to access leading positions.

The Institutionalization of an International Capital: Studying International School Socialization

We must guard against the illusion that elite cosmopolitanism is a radical novelty. Language skills, knowledge of several countries, familiarity with travel and ease in relations with foreigners are longstanding attributes of the upper classes. A fraction of the aristocracy and high bourgeoisie foster a family cosmopolitanism, consolidated from generation to generation and combining economic solidarity and family ties. In high society, the education of children traditionally includes an opening onto the world (Pinçon and Pinçon Charlot 2016; Wagner 2007).

The specificity of the more recent period lies in the institutionalization of these skills. International schools, originally founded for the children of high ranking civil servants working for international organizations, expanded in the 1960s as a consequence of the growing number of expatriates from the private sector. In 1968, an International Baccalaureate Programme was established by a private foundation in Geneva, "to provide students with a balanced education, to facilitate geographic and cultural mobility and to promote international understanding". Today, the International Baccalaureate Organization works with nearly 2000 schools in 150 countries and offers its programmes to more than one million pupils. In France, since 1981, an international option of the baccalaureate, prepared in international schools or in French schools abroad, validates a curriculum where literature, geography or history are taught in foreign languages by teachers from a partner country.

The methods used to analyze these forms of socialization need to be adjusted to the specificities of these programs. While school reproductive strategies are usually studied in a national context, these schools are located in a separate space, where languages, curricula and cultures of different countries compete. Curriculum studies necessarily include a geopolitical dimension. For instance, Dugonjic (2014) shows how World History and World Literature programs of the International Baccalaureate reproduce domination between nations and colonial relations. Nevertheless, it is difficult to identify a set of knowledge that would objectify the content of an

international culture of elites. The schools are quite free to choose their own teaching and pedagogical methods, and generally provide a large number of options to fit the heterogeneity of national and academic backgrounds of pupils. The specific features of an international school culture are less likely to be found in curricula than in the process of socialization (Wagner 1998). International schools have, indeed, the major characteristic of being explicitly organized by reference to a public defined by highly exclusionary social properties: they enroll children of expatriates or diplomats, binational families and a small fraction of the local bourgeoisie seeking distinctive programs. Almost regardless of their curricula, the distinctiveness of such schooling, compared to other languages training programmes, lies in its recruitment. It consolidates cosmopolitan habitus, leading students to consider geographic mobility, the transition from one language to another, and relations with foreigners as natural. These schools put a special emphasis on personal accomplishments and socializing, with many parallel activities. So, scholars give great attention to the observation of classroom activities and interactions between students from different countries to identify specific forms of socialization. Interviews with managers and teachers and an analysis of internal literature are also used to shed light on the ethical and political dimensions of the discourses promoting peace and understanding (Bertron 2015).

International schools for international children are an exemplary case of social and educational valorization of a lifestyle. Because this teaching is only effective on students' distinctive lifestyles, it promotes a very essentialist vision of "international identity" and it is based on a distancing of academic skills.

This segment of the educational systems allows us to objectify the cultural and social resources that define an international capital. Yet the analysis of educational content or socialization processes gives no indication of the value of these resources. If these schools enroll children of various nationalities and claim to form international identities, the diplomas which they have prepared have a value that varies depending on national circumstances. International schools are the road to access the elites in some countries (Nogueira and Aguiar 2008; Panayotopoulos 2000; Niane 1992; Weenink 2007), but they have a very marginal position in the French educational system. We should mobilize other instruments to measure the educational value of international capital.

The Internationalization of Legitimation Instances of Elite Training

Are we witnessing a transformation of the school hierarchy criteria in favour of international know-how and competencies? In the French system, international diplomas have an ambiguous status. International culture certainly provides distinction that benefits the dominant classes, but it does not mean recognition of international schooling or foreign degrees. The International Baccalaureate is not

recognized by the French state, and the international option of the French baccalaureate gives no advantage in the competition to access the best preparatory schools and "grandes écoles".

In higher education, in the same way, "international" programs, found mainly in the area of business and management, have long been a part of school products that offer a "refuge" to higher social origin students with poor academic results (Bourdieu 1989). The term "international" refers to diverse practices: some schools offer tuition in English, others organize internships and study abroad periods, some issue double degrees with institutions in other countries, others recruit foreign teachers or students abroad. "International" is not a well-defined program, which would hierarchize institutions. In fact, scholars studying elites have for a long time lost interest in these institutions, considered second-tier schools in the field of "grandes écoles".

However, since the 1990s, in France as in most industrialized countries, there has been a proliferation of business schools and a re-evaluation of their academic status, with an increase in the legitimacy of these programs and higher academic entry requirements (Blanchard 2009; Khurana 2007). How can we assess the changes in the relative value of these formations and the effects of internationalization of this area? The MBA is an American degree, but this is probably the diploma that can be considered closest to an international title due to its exponential expansion outside the United States, the cosmopolitan recruitment of major business schools, and international accreditation procedures. The Association to Advance Collegiate schools of Business (AACSB), which has accredited American institutions since 1916, expanded its geographical range in the 1990s to evaluate programs outside the United States. The European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), based in Brussels since 1997, delivers the EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) certification, while the UK-based Association of MBA accredits MBA and Master's degrees in more than 80 countries. Management programs are, moreover, subject to rankings with high exposure in the business press, notably *The Economist, Business Week, The Wall Street Journal* and the *Financial Times*. Linda Wedlin (2006) shows that these rankings that accompany the exponential development of management journals also challenge the competition between press titles. They contribute to the formation of an international field of management programs, with new original criteria.

Thus, whereas in France academic excellence has long been synonymous with state accreditation, we are witnessing the rise of new principles of legitimation, claiming their independence from national education systems. The "academic" selectivity of applicants in business schools is not measured by their previous academic achievement, but by international tests: the scores on the GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test) are intended to allow a comparison of the "skills" possessed by candidates all over the world, regardless of their disciplinary or national background.

The study of the criteria that make "international" excellence could thus provide clues to analyze the content of an international institutionalized capital. The accreditation organizations merge, on the one hand, academic criteria on the model of the most established disciplines and, on the other, market criteria based on careers and

output wages of alumni. Academization is inseparable from commercialization in this area, with increased market competition for recruiting students, teachers, and for selling training services to businesses (Wagner 2015).

These assessments and international rankings have an effect on major French "grandes écoles", even outside of the management area. If international programs were at first mostly offered by second-tier private schools, with a proliferation of internships and study abroad cycles, participation in international networks now also concerns the most prestigious institutions (Lazuech 1999). Studies of internationalization strategies of French elite institutions (Delespierre 2015; Van Zanten 2018; Schliping 2018) show how the very French model of the "grandes écoles" has adapted to the new situation produced by the international competition between Higher Education systems. French students are selected by relatively unchanged national "concours", but most "grandes écoles" have developed, in parallel, new admission procedures, English-speaking pathways, and international degrees in order to attract an international audience.

This movement could attest to an evolution of the national definition of academic excellence for the benefit of new international standards, which goes with the transformation of legitimate cultural resources for the benefit of international expertise and competencies at the expense of the more highbrow cultural capital (Serre and Wagner 2015; Coulangeon 2011).

Uses of International Capital for the Accession to Elite Positions

The analysis of "institutionalized" international capital cannot be limited to the conditions of its production and that of its academic position; it requires research on the conditions of its effectiveness for the accession to the ruling classes. Two types of research can contribute to the latter: we can study the school trajectories of the members of the elite in order to identify those who have had international training; or we can seek to trace the careers of former students of international institutions. The first path led to several investigations in France. Studies into the recruitment of the greatest CEOs (Hartmann 2018; Dudouet and Grémont 2010) and research on a wider population, that of the persons in the Who's Who, (Denord et al. 2011) converge to show the still prominent position of national "grandes écoles" in the training of the elite, albeit with a rise of business schools. Studies abroad or international diplomas remain relatively infrequent among the leaders' educational paths, although their share increases with time and they are more frequent when you leave the ruling elite and look at all high executives.

The second type of research that involves the alumni of international institutions is more difficult to conduct, which shows the limits of the effects of this educational international capital. Data on alumni of various international schools are indeed often incomplete: the directories do not exist or are not up to date; the alumni

associations are not very active. These shortcomings are indicative of a fragility of international capital. Networks seem difficult to mobilize internationally. Thus, a survey of Mexican students in French business schools shows that the majority of alumni interviewed gained very little benefit from their degree. Attending French business schools, even the top-ranked ones in international ranking, does not seem to guarantee career benefits outside the country (Garcia-Garza and Wagner 2018). The French business schools have opened to foreigners, but it seems that the social and symbolic capitals that they give remain largely reserved to nationals: national and social boundaries remain extremely present in the distribution of capital.

This calls for further reflection on the conditions for mobilizing international capital. The recruitment of students of different nationalities does not mechanically produce international networking. International capital, like all forms of social capital, is based on prior group cohesion, cemented by similarities in habitus and objective interests, and it assumes an active and ongoing work to be maintained and managed (Bourdieu 1980). This is probably one of the limits of international elite institutions. Sharing a classroom during preparation for a master or MBA is not enough to create an "esprit de corps" and the dispositions that are necessary to maintain it. The establishment and management of an international social capital are based on socially selective properties, directly correlated to the family heritage: agents who are already enrolled in a family international culture are the most adjusted to the constraints associated with the management of international capital (Börjesson and Broady 2016).

Various researches on international schools and institutions in the French case highlight the obstacles to the primitive accumulation of international capital. This is a case which calls for further reflection on the articulation between the different states; incorporated, objectified and institutionalized cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979). If cultural capital in its institutionalized state is always dependent on inherited cultural capital – as evidenced by the fairly universal correlation between social origins and school success- this link is even stronger in the case of international schooling. This is due to the lability of educational content in "international" training and to the social conditions of these educations. International tuition is only effective on students who are already socially selected by their international properties. International educational projects, whether for young children or managers, have in common a focus on the social dimension of school rather than their vocation, in terms of skills and relational networks rather than of academic knowledge. In addition, the acquisition of international cultural capital is much more dependent on economic capital than other cultural acquisitions because of the cost of private schooling and of experiences from abroad that it presupposes.

It seems as well that international capital has to be regarded less as a capital that produces effects by itself than as a multiplier of initial resources. In the field of education, international routes may strengthen the position of those who have already acquired capital, including in their national-space, but they do not open pathways to leading positions. Difficulties in isolating the specific effects of international educational capital reveal the limits of the institutionalization of this resource, inherited in the family.

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Part IV
Symbolic Power

Chapter 16
A Sociology of the Dominant Class. An Interview with Monique Pinçon-Charlot and Michel Pinçon

Mikael Palme and Bertrand Réau

In your writings on methodology, you often make the point that the personal background and social position of the sociologist count, not the least in the encounter with the upper class. So, what about you?

Monique was born into the provincial petty bourgeoisie. Her father was a magistrate, and her grandfather on her father's side was a physician in the small town of Boën-sur-Lignon, Loire. On her mother's side, her grandfather was a low-level silk industrial in Saint-Etienne, specialised in ribbon weaving. At the time, in that world, women did no work except from serving their husband and raising the children. On both sides, family homes hosted large gatherings and holidays with cousins. The shared joys of meals at long tables, blackberry picking, mushroom hunting, intrigue between the girls' and the boys' dorms and swimming in freezing ponds introduced the cousin turned sociologist to the enchanted world of castles, and made her keenly aware of the allure such places could have for children. However, Monique's childhood and adolescence were also spent in Mende, the prefecture of the rural department of Lozère, where her father worked as a prosecutor. It was virtually a cultural wasteland then; even TV only made it there by the early 1960s. This social and geographical background fostered a relation to the capital's high society that has been characterized by a mix of distance and closeness. Lozère is far from the chic neighbourhoods of the west of Paris. Yet, at the same time, spending one's adolescence in the company of the children of local senior officials and small businessmen

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made it somewhat easier to relate to the upper class, to acquire a relative but genuine ease in the art of conversation, language and manners.

Michel's childhood and adolescent experiences were quite different. He was born into the rural world of a village in the Ardennes, Lonny, where he lived until he was eight. His father, the son of a steelworker in Nouzonville, in the industrial part of the Meuse Valley, was an orphan by age 15, and soon left for the Paris area, where he joined his brother, a polisher in Renault's Billancourt factories. Having learned that trade himself, he then went back to the Ardennes to do the same work until the war. After the debacle and the Occupation, the metal dust he had inhaled over the years made it impossible for him to keep working as a polisher, and he found a job as a bank messenger at the Charleville branch of the national bank for commerce and industry, the BNCI, which later became BNP, and then BNP Paribas. This was in 1950. Michel's only sister, who was 12 years older than him, got married, and the family left Lonny for the regional capital. There, Michel gradually developed an awareness of his position in society and of the existence of social worlds other than his own. Michel's father had become a bank employee, at the lowest level, around 1945, at a time when he was already over 40 years old. But the family, who lived in a cramped, three-room apartment without a bathroom, kept identifying as resolutely working-class – "we're just workers". This experience inspired Michel to write a book on the crisis of blue-collar work in the Meuse valley, *Désarrois ouvriers* (l'Harmattan 1987).

You have published about twenty books about the upper class, starting with Dans les beaux quartiers in 1989. How did this sociological project begin?

We had both previously worked on other social environments: Michel on workers in the Ardennes and Monique on the middle class. We were affiliated with a research centre in urban sociology where Marxist scholars dominated. We never abandoned Marx's theory of exploitation, but we combined it with Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of domination. In the 1970s, the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, was analysed theoretically in terms of antagonistic class relations, but the members of that class were spared sociological, anthropological or ethnological investigations. In 1986, we started working together to put flesh and blood on the skeleton of class domination. Analysing residential segregation among the wealthy was the most accessible introduction to this intimidating new field of research. For a few weeks, we moved into a fancy hotel in a bourgeois neighbourhood of Paris. We walked around, observed and talked to passers-by, shopkeepers and servants. This unknown world began to open up to us. This early investigation became the first book, *Dans les beaux quartiers (*1989*)*. We were encouraged by Pierre Bourdieu, who had already published work on the spatial materialization of social differentiations in the world of Parisian haute couture, but our Marxist colleagues did not see the point of it and were wary, critical, even, of our undertaking. Perhaps this was simply because there was no funding for research on the rich: they did not pose problems to the public administrations that funded research, on which we depended both when we were researchers in a non-profit and after 1978, when we had CNRS research status, but still needed to secure funds to be able to conduct studies.

*In that book, and in those that followed in the 1990s, like Quartiers bourgeois, quartiers d'affaires (*1992*), La chasse à courre (*1993*), Grandes fortunes. Dynasties familiales et formes de richesse en France (*1996*) and Les Rothschild. Une famille bien ordonnée (*1998*), you tackle multiple dimensions of the upper class: spatial, social, cultural and economic…*

We were familiar with the spatial angle, as we had previously worked on urban segregation and housing. But very few researchers had applied the tools of urban sociology to the dominant class and its neighbourhoods. Likewise, the statistical data and indicators produced for political and administrative purposes are underused when it comes to analysing the residential spaces of the most well-off citizens. By drawing on demographic, economic or electoral data, it was possible to show how the upper class uses wealth and power to create inseparably geographical and social spaces, allowing members of that class to live in places from which other classes are excluded. These are also pleasant places, less populated, quiet, with well-maintained green areas. That class has the economic, political and social means to turn social distance into spatial distance. This isn't just about exclusion, about rejecting poorer families, but about bringing together and aggregating socially proximate families, which is one of several conditions for the development of the society life that is so crucial to the reproduction of the dominant class. More broadly, spatial position is one of the most manifest forms of expression of an individual, a family or a social group's social position. Our more detailed studies also show that internal divides within the bourgeoisie are reflected spatially, including the distinction between the old bourgeoisie and its more recent components. Additionally, the bourgeoisie creates protected places in those spaces, such as clubs or balls, which are points of condensation of social excellence, where the spatial aggregation process meets the social co-optation process.

The sociological importance of the clubs, like the Jockey Club, was one of our first findings. That it is located in the heart of Paris and extends over such a vast area whilst being frequented by a socially extremely select attendance attests to the power over space wielded by the bourgeoisie. One cannot imagine an association reserved to the members of other social classes occupying such a site. It operates based on the highly selective model of the social co-optation of new members, and is a venue for the bourgeois and most notably the aristocrats to meet and make themselves known. There's a whole social hierarchy between the clubs, with the Jockey Club at the top and the Rotary at the bottom, in which members are differentiated according to seniority, fortune, influence, etc.; economic wealth is not enough. Thanks to a recommendation, we were able to access the Jockey Club's directories, which allowed us to get a statistical overview of the social and geographical backgrounds of its members. The *rallyes* are a sort of organized circles reserved to young people, and carefully planned by mothers to enable their children to get to know and love their socially kindred peers by spending leisure time with them. This may include going out to see plays or exhibits, travelling or attending high society functions together.

What have been your most important methodological tools? You refer to interviews, ethnographic observations, secondary sources on individuals, families and institutions like clubs. Reading your books, one gets the sense that interviews seem to be an important instrument?

First off, there is no single interview method. Interviews will vary according to social context. Early in his career, Michel did interviews with workers in the Ardennes, and Monique with schoolteachers, as part of a research on the cultural fractions of the middle class. When we began doing interviews with members of the upper class, things were very different. We could no longer use a similar interview template for all our interviewees. Also, the bourgeois are well-informed and they have a complete mastery of the register of language that allows them to play with distance and to hide whatever they want to hide. We had to consult books, newspaper articles, club directories, the Bottin Mondain [a French directory of prominent members of high society], the Who's Who – in short, everything we were able to access – before we even got to meet the interviewees. They had always been contacted by means of recommendations from people familiar to them. We thought it was necessary to be polite conversation partners, interested and pleasant intellectuals, to access these usually very closed-off family circles. In order to gain acceptance, we had to demonstrate the regard we had for our object of study, the family, the neighbourhood, the village, the club, the castle, interests and practices, and good taste. The members of the upper class enjoy being respected, and they like courtesy. We had to learn and understand these values and codes of class domination.

As we wrote in *Voyage en grande bourgeoisie* (1997), each interview involves an entire methodological architecture. For one of our first interviews, with an aristocrat connected to the Rothschild bank, we had to do extensive research to be able to make the best of the rare opportunity of doing such an interview. Monique stayed with him for 3 h. She recorded, took notes and asked all kinds of questions pertaining to his lifestyle, his family and changes in his social environment. This 78-year-old count showed documents and answered all questions openly, as if we were having a work meeting. The interviewees took an interest in exploring their own history. This special social rapport, established through mutual trust, was key to the success not only of the interviews but also of the research as a whole. In that case, for instance, the interviewee said at the end of the interview that he was considering writing his memoirs. Monique offered him to use the transcript of their long conversation. On the next day, both of us received an invitation to a family dinner in his Paris residence that turned out to be highly significant for our study. Around that table, there was a very famous writer, a prominent industrialist, a painter, a politician, a banker, etc. And the two of us, two academic intellectuals. All of a sudden, we had contacts that we would normally never had been able to make. We entered that world step by step; each interview was an opportunity to get recommended to new people.

It bears repeating, though, that to make fruitful interviews, we had to know as much as possible about that social universe. If we take the example of clubs or circles, if the interviewee understood that we were already well-informed about his

own affiliations, his functions, he would be more readily available to enrich our understanding of the importance of the close-knit sociability, the *entre-soi*, that goes on in these circles. Each time, we had to work extensively before the interviews, using all possible sources.

What is the relation between interviews and ethnographic observations?

Let's take the example of our work on fox-hunting. We travelled thousands of miles in forests, often in the rain, which enabled us to be invited in mansions, sometimes in castles too. The *grands bourgeois* opened their doors to us perhaps because they were impressed by our energy and our interest in this form of hunting whose rituals had not changed for centuries, and which is fascinating from an ethnological and sociological perspective. We spent time together and sometimes we even sang together! This proximity was necessary to understand how connections between members of the bourgeoisie develop, how it excludes people who are not like them, and according to which criteria it co-opts new members, including deep in the forest amidst dogs and wild animals.

Thanks to the combination of participant observation during receptions to which we were invited and long, in-depth interviews, we were able to understand the deeply solidary functioning of this social class at the top of society. Actually, it was thanks to this form of sociological entryism in a social class that was far from our own in terms of class relations, that we became ourselves aware of our very average position in social space, very average and dominated. We experienced this in our bodies and in the intimate symbolic violence that results from these relations of domination, which statistical studies alone cannot fully explain.

These personal experiences allowed us to get a better sense of the struggles faced by the *nouveaux riches*, be it the new bosses who made a colossal fortune in the first generation or millionaire lottery winners, in gaining acceptance in high society.

It should be noted that there is nothing easy about participant observation; it doesn't offer a direct or immediate understanding of the reality under observation. On the opposite, it requires an effort of constant construction and reconstruction of that reality, which can be done only on the condition that constant and systematic work is performed in parallel on other types of statistical data and on a variety of documents on this social milieu, which leaves a lot of traces in writing. Still, it is only by committing to the observation of details of everyday life, such as a house's furniture and decoration, or an individual's expressions, gestures and ways of doing things, that sociologically significant research can be achieved, and that insightful observation can replace superficial observation.

Is it fair to say that you have acquired a degree of familiarity with that world? Hasn't this put you in a delicate situation, being at least partially co-opted by your research object while working as rather critical researchers?

In our case, we can't use the word familiarity! It's too strong. We were strangers, visitors and we remained just that. We have had friendly, sometimes very friendly empathy for some people, but it is impossible to bridge that much social distance, and attempting to do so was not our goal anyway. Also, when we had to write

about the findings of our investigations, we stopped all contact for several months in order to put distance between them and us so that we could keep our sociological reasoning abilities intact. It was at the time of writing that we integrated the findings of our observations and interviews as well as those from other sources of information concerning fortunes, properties, and the political and ideological stances we identified in papers and books.

The fact that many researchers were critical of our work was a rather positive thing, as it precisely forced us to be very careful to remain as scientific as possible when we reported on our investigative work. Their criticisms were actually more often on a moral level, "you are fascinated [by them]", than on a scientific level. The importance of the fact that we were working as a couple is also worth noting. Simply being able to regularly discuss our interviews, our observations, our readings, and partial drafts of our books allows us to automatically distance ourselves from the object of these studies, and that has been very productive.

In your books on chic neighbourhoods, fox-hunting or castles and their owners, for instance, you worked with a combination of ethnographic observation and interviews, whereas in the latest books, on the new generation of CEOs or on millionaire lottery winners, you're only working with interviews?

Yes, the new CEOs with whom we worked for our 1999 book *Nouveaux patrons, nouvelles dynasties* worked all day and came back home very late at night, and there were very few opportunities for observation, much less participant observation. None of them invited us into their families or homes, and interviews always took place in their offices. They took part in far fewer society events than the older bosses and those were less varied. These new bosses were very busy making a fortune and expanding their companies. Admittedly, we had decided to work only on big bosses with working-class or lower-middle-class backgrounds, who had accumulated a colossal fortune within one generation. They had not formed dynasties – at least not yet. They were the first generation of a class group that had high levels of economic capital, but low levels of social and cultural capital. Their high-class bourgeois habitus had not been constructed yet, since that takes a lot of time. Yet our analysis was not only based on interviews. We also analysed data on their fortunes and companies.

As for the millionaire lottery winners (*Les millionnaires de la chance* 2010), on the contrary, we were able to conduct many observations in a variety of meetings organized by the Winners' department of the Française des jeux [the national lottery operator]. We attended educational workshops on financial and property investments, family and tax laws at the training centre located near the Française des jeux's IT site, in the area of Marseille. We were also invited to awarding ceremonies for winners; like those held for Legion of Honour recipients, they are rituals of consecration. We were also there for various functions held in Paris for the new millionaires to collectively learn how to handle their sudden wealth.

Without disclaiming Marxism, you were inspired by Bourdieu's sociology?

Michel was lucky enough to be Bourdieu's student when he was a professor of sociology in Lille. Pierre Bourdieu would have his students work with him on his

own sociological research, and to that end Michel and a dozen other students were invited to do an internship with him in his Parisian laboratory. Michel was the first to introduce Bourdieu to urban sociology. This was original, as the sociology of culture and education dominated then in Bourdieu's close circles. In the early 1970s, Michel began to link relations of exploitation and the dynamics of domination in geographic space, thus spatially objectivating divisions in social space.

Also, at the time we were members of the French communist party. We attended the training sessions that they offered us, but not the year-long one in Moscow… They had catchwords at the Party like the *grand capital* or "monopolistic state capitalism". We were very interested in the party's anti-capitalist posture, but it seemed to us that the social agents who own the means of production were not sufficiently personified, identified, and that this hindered understanding of the arbitrary functioning of this capitalist system, for which considerable efforts are made to make it appear "natural". Our goal then was already to show that this was a social construct that benefited a few and that could accordingly be demolished by all the others. It is fair to say that our analyses of the *grande bourgeoisie* reflect this early commitment. We have never given up on combining Marxism and Pierre Bourdieu's sociology.

But, in your work, how do Bourdieu's sociology and Marxism relate?

Pierre Bourdieu's sociology has most importantly helped us to analyse the transition from economic domination, which relates to one's place in relations of production, to symbolic domination, which allows the dominant to be recognized as legitimate. To do so, we took a keen interest in forms of capital other than just economic capital, which include cultural, social and symbolic capital. These different forms of capital cannot be separated; their combination is what creates excellence and social domination.

The concept of habitus also plays a fundamental role in our work, with Bourdieu's idea of an internalization, an embodiment even, of social determinisms by individuals. This gives us a better understanding of the processes of reproduction of the social order.

On the other hand, we believe that our very strong interest in Marxism has made us slightly critical about another key concept in Bourdieu's theoretical system – namely, the concept of field. That concept defines autonomous spaces in social activity, such as the political field, the economic field, the media field, etc. which in each case comes with a specific form of capital that acts as the driving force of each field's internal hierarchical structure. However, our analysis of the ruling class, whose members occupy the most dominant positions in each field, shows that this autonomy is, in a sense, weakened by the solidarity of the members of that class and their mobilization in defence of their class interests. In that social class, conflict of interest doesn't exist; it is left to the members of the middle class, whose professional capital is embedded into specific institutions. The oligarchy, on the other hand, is constantly synthesizing its interests, which know no border between the private and the public sphere, between the economy and politics, etc. At the other extremity of social space, blue-collar workers and rank-and-file employees, all those who have precarious jobs with little recognition, have little to do with this

autonomy of fields, which itself is increasingly threatened by the plundering of state resources by the richest, who massively refuse to contribute, for instance by paying taxes in proportion to their fortune, to social and national solidarity.

For similar reasons, you don't identify class fractions within the bourgeoisie, you discuss it as a single class?

Indeed, and the value of our work is that it shows that the dominant class is heterogeneous, but that despite that heterogeneity, it shows solidarity in defending its class interests. There are huge disparities in economic wealth within that class. If you take the list of the 500 biggest professional fortunes in France, you can see that Bernard Arnault, who has been number one for several years, has 400 times the amount of the person ranked 500. There are no disparities to such an extent in other social classes. In effect, the basis of membership in the dominant class under the capitalist system is holding the titles of ownership that enable the exploitation of others' labour. Thus, membership in this class rests on the radical and arbitrary antagonism of class relations. And all of its members are mobilized to defend the capitalist system in its current neo-liberal phase, which sees financialization seep into all areas of economic and social activity, including health, education and transport, which until recently still escaped the grip of capital. This generalized and globalized financialization has somehow been collectivizing the dominant class even more, by covering up its internal social differences with investment funds and collectivized portfolios.

This class mobilization involves the construction of family dynasties. Inscribing titles of ownership and the wealth and power that come with them within a long generational line allows for the reproduction of all these privileges within the same brotherhood of wealthy families, the same caste, the same dominant class. What is at stake is to make sure that nothing trickles down towards the other social classes. This is so true that we observed in our study on the new CEOs that only those whose wealth and company were embedded in a family dynasty could hope to be co-opted into the "ghettos of Gotha", of the grande bourgeoisie.

Although there are forms of competition and inequality within that oligarchy, which we could have chosen to analyse in their diversity and complementary, for political reasons in the noble sense of the term, we opted to use the tools of sociology to analyse the practical modalities of the solidarity and the surprising collectivism of a social class that hoards all wealth and power. Thanks to the new weapon of climate deregulation, this class has recently been waging an all-out war on the poor, who in the age of robots and digital and technological revolutions have become useless mouths to feed.

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Chapter 17
When Moral Obligation Meets Physical Opportunity. Studying Elite Lifestyles and Power in the Saint-Tropez Area

Isabelle Bruno and Grégory Salle

Concluding their article defining promising lines of research for "exploring geographies of the super-rich", Iain Hay and Samantha Muller (2012, p. 85) "assert[ed] that there is a moral obligation on the part of those of us with the resources to do so, to undertake detailed analysis of the worlds shaped by the super-rich, and in which all of us live". The authors were probably not aware that French sociologists Monique Pinçon-Charlot and Michel Pinçon had given a similar exhortation a few years earlier. Claiming that "studying the privileged is a necessity", precisely owing to the various obstacles standing in the way of such a task, they added: "understanding society without comprehending the top of the social structure is impossible" (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 2007, pp. 5–6[1]). It was this kind of call that impelled us to take what had long been a mere laughing matter and turn it into a proper research program: a sociological (and soon also historical) study of "Saint-Tropez", more precisely the Saint-Tropez peninsula.[2] Over time, we felt increasingly compelled to undertake this research, motivated by the idea that, particularly in the context of the

[1] See also the interview with Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot in this volume.

[2] The Saint-Tropez peninsula—a geographical entity, not an administrative one—includes four communes: Saint-Tropez, Ramatuelle, Gassin and La Croix-Valmer. Our fieldwork focuses on the first two, particularly because the spatial setting of the area lends itself to widespread confusion over the boundary separating Saint-Tropez from Ramatuelle. More broadly, a symbolic annexation must be taken into account. Saint-Tropez, whose surface area is limited, is more than just a town; it is a brand, registered with the French National Institute of Industrial Property in 1992, an international label whose name vastly overflows its administrative boundaries and invades the surrounding territory. Consequently, "Saint-Tropez" here refers not only to a town, but to a broader area.

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global financial crisis, not conducting a study on/in this area when we had the possibility of doing so would virtually amount to professional misconduct.

As already mentioned, before we took the idea seriously, it first emerged as a joke between us. There are three reasons why this was our initial attitude. First, there was the "misguided sense that this is a frivolous topic of passing interest and of little real significance" (Hay and Muller 2012, p. 83; Hay 2013, p. 1), a sense that was all the stronger given that the very name "Saint-Tropez" immediately evokes images of the futility—if not indecency—of conspicuous consumption and the flaunting of external signs of wealth. Second, at that time we were unfamiliar with the field of elite studies. We were both separately working on completely different topics, including prison issues—far removed from the glitz and glamour attached to the name "Saint-Tropez". Third, it just so happens that our actual opportunity to undertake an in-depth study of this area stemmed from a long-standing familiarity with the site, not just a subjective sense of belonging but an objective relationship. This was definitely an asset in terms of securing access to the field site, but it could later complicate the research process. We begin this chapter discussing the advantages and drawbacks of our ambivalent and unusual position, before addressing broader methodological challenges and empirical strategies.

Advantages and Disadvantages of an Insider/Outsider Position

When it comes to investigating elite lifestyles and power, there are many solid, fundamental (geographic, historical, economic, etc.) reasons to study the Saint-Tropez area, as we have argued elsewhere (Bruno and Salle 2018[3]). The fact remains that the origin of our research was contingent. It just so happens that one of us grew up in Ramatuelle, the village adjoining Saint-Tropez on its south side.[4] This is where the famous Pampelonne beach is actually located, contrary to the common (often self-interested) mistake that incorrectly situates it in Saint-Tropez. Although our study actually began in 2014, it originated in a long-standing and deep familiarity with the site on the part of one half of our duo. Not only did one of us spend her entire childhood there, but she is also the daughter of Ramatuelle's current mayor. He was first elected to this position in 2001 after starting his career as a town councilor in the mid-1980s, and has been reelected twice.

In this town, the mayor is a prominent yet approachable figure, and we can easily be publicly seen together there. Visible kinship of this kind is admittedly not without its drawbacks, especially during public disputes or controversies, as some authors have experienced in other contexts (see for example Desmond 2004). In our case, Pampelonne beach is the focus of an ongoing social and legal conflict that is

[3] This chapter borrows elements of that article.

[4] It is actually both a village and a town. According to the last official census, the population of Ramatuelle was under 2200 in 2015; however, because of the high number of tourists, the village is officially listed among towns with populations of 20,000 to 40,000.

intense and persistent. It is arguably one of the most prominent "beach battles" in the world, lasting approximately 30 years and involving various key players, including the municipal government (Bruno and Salle 2017). This context makes it difficult to approach some of the beachside managers and owners, who are battling with local authorities, and convince them that we are carrying out an independent study. Most of them are already secretive enough, but this is exacerbated by the fact that they make almost no distinction between social scientists and journalists.

Yet experience shows that the advantages of kinship far outweigh the disadvantages. As a matter of fact, the main obstacle we face is that we live and work on the other side of the country, and this forces us to conduct our research in a discontinuous way. When on the ground, the mayor's social capital has facilitated direct or participant observations in closed (private and/or expensive) locations and at society events, such as a polo match. It is also beneficial with regard to local (municipal) archives, to which we are unusually granted full, direct, open access, thanks to special arrangements. It was also easier for us to organize interviews with wealthy seasonal residents, some of whom the mayor associates with regularly, if superficially. The benefits go beyond mere access, affecting the very conditions in which interviews take place. Some authors have discussed the difficulties of interviewing elites (unequal power relations, verbal self-control, time management, etc.), and strategies for overcoming these obstacles (e.g. Morris 2009; Rice 2010; Harvey 2011). In our case, we could add that the implications of conducting interviews—arranged through an acquaintance—with highly placed actors who are on vacation far away from their workplace, are ambivalent. On the one hand it might seem easier, in the sense that the interviewees are well-disposed towards us and the interviews are quite relaxed and informal. On the other hand, and for the same reasons, interviewees can be reluctant to talk about sensitive, "serious" matters, so there is a risk that we might obtain only trivial information. More generally, having family ties on-site, and therefore having the opportunity to stay there either at regular intervals or over a long period, would seem to be a requisite for adopting a genuine ethnographic approach in this case. Indeed, the cost of living in the area in question has now become so high than even camping for only a few weeks each year would be very expensive.[5] Another factor that is far from trivial is that the practical knowledge of the area that comes with site familiarity proves to be very useful when carrying out day-to-day fieldwork.

In their "investigation diary" [*journal d'enquête*], Monique Pinçon-Charlot and Michel Pinçon (2011 [1997], esp. p. 64–66; also Khan and Jerolmack 2013) have given a good explanation of how working in pairs can be helpful, particularly when direct or participant observation is involved. In our case, our unusual position enables us to develop a dual perspective, between familiarity and unfamiliarity, and

[5] Although the issue of inequality is once again on the social science agenda in France (and elsewhere), the fact is that, understandably, getting substantial grants to study the top of the class structure is not an easy task, and may appear irrelevant or even inappropriate. Therefore, family ties on site are all the more valuable. For instance, they also conditioned the comparable research conducted by Bruno Cousin and Sébastien Chauvin (2013) on/in Saint-Barthélemy (St. Barts).

this in two ways. First, as already mentioned, one of us is a "local girl", familiar with the environment and the local population; yet in her youth she was only a lay witness to ostentatious wealth, herself living in social housing that was built in the 1970s so that local workers could live not far from their workplace. Second, the other of us was initially a total stranger to the place, making it easier to take a step back from the field site. We can play upon this dual insider/outsider position in the course of our study, by assuming the contrasting roles of the "native" one and the "naive" one. It proves to be heuristic, insofar as the comparison between our points of view, inherited from different socializations, helps what Pierre Bourdieu used to call the objectification of the objectifying subject (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 213–215), that is to say the cultivation of a reflexive relationship to the field of study before, during and after the fieldwork. Since fieldwork in the strict sense means direct observation, it is worth considering both its benefits and its limitations in the present case.

The Benefits and Limitations of Observation

As ethnographers, we are inclined to give primacy to direct observation and physical experience—perhaps too much primacy when observation is a *de facto* end in itself rather than a means of supporting an argument, and is insufficiently related to the aim of the research. Here again, the contribution that direct observation actually makes to sociological knowledge proves to be debatable. Obviously, when it comes to documenting or capturing elite lifestyles, direct observation has supreme advantages. It makes it possible to provide first-hand descriptions of scenes that, though not necessarily visually spectacular—such as quietly spending the afternoon chatting and drinking upmarket champagne around the pool at an elegant villa—nonetheless characterize upper-class lifestyles. It is one thing to hear or read about it, but quite another to witness and even experience it. That said, observations might still not be very significant *per se*. In the case of the villa just mentioned, a proper interpretation of the scene requires sociological information about the owner of the place. He was born and raised in a very modest social situation, as the son of a poor Italian sharecropper. He first belonged to the working class as a factory worker before establishing himself as the owner and chef of a high-end restaurant. Therefore, the scene is noteworthy not so much from a descriptive point of view, but rather as an empirical illustration of a swift upward mobility emblematic of the socioeconomic effects that the transformation of a rural village into an elite haunt has on the locals. In short, here—as on any other field site—we should bear in mind that observation is only valuable in connection with the other methods involved in the research process, which itself depends on how the subject is problematized.

Moreover, one could argue that in our "expository society" (Harcourt 2015)—and all the more in a much-discussed place like Saint-Tropez, whose reputation hinges on the celebrities that notoriously visit it—direct observation quite often serves to confirm intuitions or second-hand knowledge, instead of bringing fresh

insights. Before even stepping onto the field site, some documents (primarily gossip magazines, society newspapers and websites, specialized publications like yachting magazines, and occasionally the mass-media) do in fact provide detailed, if frivolous, accounts of elite lifestyles. For example, a fawning description of a day spent inside and outside the superyacht of some celebrity might provide useful information about the area's hotspots, its social network, maybe its residential property, and so on. If carefully chosen and thoroughly examined, a vast collection of these written sources could be enough to get a rough but passable picture of elite lifestyles. It would also provide a good sense of one aspect that makes Saint-Tropez sociologically interesting: the heterogeneousness of the elite in terms of its spheres of activity (as well as its spheres of power and influence), from big business to show business, from the pharmaceutical industry to finance and sport. In this respect, a descriptive ethnography can certainly sketch a more vivid and accurate picture, but whether or not it adds much in terms of substantial knowledge is uncertain. After all, when Charles Wright Mills (1956) made his powerful sociological statements in *The Power Elite*, there were based on few direct observations; moreover, he somewhat downplayed the value of ethnographic accounts, at least in the case of local community studies.[6] And if we are to demonstrate the existence of a ruling class, for example, a well-designed statistical analysis is most probably the best option (Denord et al. 2018).

In our case, observation proved priceless not on methodological principle, but for empirical reasons. Particularly in a case like that of Saint-Tropez, most public documentation only provides access to the tip of the iceberg, that is to say—to borrow from Mills' typology—"celebrities", and secondarily "the very rich". And not even all of them, but only the most visible segment, including those who indulge in the paradoxical behavior we have oxymoronically termed "conspicuous seclusion"—super-yachting being the paradigmatic illustration (Bruno and Salle 2018). As a result, the researcher is inclined to primarily examine what Saint-Tropez is already well-known for, namely for being a place of ostentation, consisting not only conspicuous consumption, but also social parading. Therefore it only gives a partial and possibly distorted view of what Mills called "local society", which in our case includes "chief executives" and "the corporate rich" (nowadays we should add "top executive managers"), who are wealthy but do not necessarily make headlines. This is where fieldwork can help complete the picture, highlighting what is less visible by definition, namely the mechanisms of social closure. This is all the more relevant in that the "retrenchment" or even "exit" of elites can be seen as characteristic of the current age of inequality (Friedman 2004), although it is consistent with a long-term trend described by historians that sees the rich increasing their ability to entrench themselves behind closed doors, keeping members of other social classes at arm's length.

[6] Mills (2000 [1956], p. 386–387) only offered observations and field notes in the second chapter, "Local Society". In that same footnote, however, he writes: "Most local community studies of prestige, so often the unit of sociological study, are of merely local interest." He then draws a parallel between descriptions by sociologists and by novelists—to the advantage of the latter.

This entrenchment itself mirrors two aspects or tendencies that only fieldwork can fully clarify. The first is a deep, quiet process of renewal of the elite on the territory under consideration, an elite that values discretion over ostentation, reserve over publicity. Elite practices are gradually changing, with seasonal wealthy residents shunning outings to the town's public places and nightspots in favor of private parties or catered receptions in villas, even with chefs in the kitchen and servants in livery, not to mention private security at the gates. This is why it would be wrong to cling to stereotypes of Saint-Tropez as a hangout strictly reserved for flashy jet-setters, provided that we give attention to places other than nightclubs. The second is the relative social decline of what used to be established as the upper class in this area during the 1980s and 1990s. The influx of super-rich newcomers has "raised the stakes" too high, causing the established upper class (particularly, but not limited to, the French upper class) to undergo a drop in status that, when they speak of it, is tied to the lament that the area has lost its "spirit" or "authenticity". This is an expression of the fact that Saint-Tropez is—or has historically become—a distinct site of one-upmanship. In this respect, it captures not only the elite's homogeneity, but also its heterogeneity, both "horizontally" in terms of spheres of activity, but also "vertically" in terms of socioeconomic hierarchy. Given that the top percentile of wealth distribution is more internally differentiated than any other, one major benefit of this investigation site is that it makes it possible to work at a limited scale, not just on the wealthiest among the so-called "1%", but also on the various categories that make up this fraction; not only the more or less famous "superrich", but also more anonymous people of privilege.

By All (Consistent) Means Available

We social scientists sometimes lose sight of what should be obvious: that the value of a method only depends on whether it is or is not consistent with our research interests and the questions we raise (see Lahire 2012). Is it about giving the reader a vivid sense of a social world he/she does not know about, by providing a more detailed description of scenes, practices and places of sociability that are usually depicted in a simplistic way? Or documenting the physical and symbolic mechanisms of social closure? Or defining the typical characteristics of a social lifestyle? Or taking a position with regard to the unity or diversity of the elite, or is it about the debatable existence of a global dominant class? Or showing how the power that elites exert over space is at the core of their social reproduction?

Adopting the latter perspective (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 2018), one objective of our study is to challenge the standard—if not official—historical accounts of Saint-Tropez, which narrowly focus on the (supposed) leading role played by a handful of celebrities. In particular, we seek to challenge a deep-rooted narrative that says the natural beauty of the area was destined to attract "tasteful" people. This narrative tries to explain the region's longstanding popularity among elites, dating back as far as the late nineteenth century, by recounting how eminent outsiders

spontaneously arrived in waves, attracted by the irresistible appeal of the place. To challenge this view, we highlight the generally overlooked fact that, over the course of a long-term process, the place had to be "made appropriate" for elites so they would be likely to "appropriate" it. And to show this—which entails unearthing forgotten or little-known facts (particularly concerning land-use planning)—there is no better method than digging into archives.

Given the obstacles already mentioned, our empirical strategy is, as a general rule, to use all of the means at our disposal, and cross-reference sources whenever possible. For example, in order to piece together the history of the Pampelonne beach clubs, we used a special issue of a society yearbook containing interviews, some of which were with people who are no longer accessible, and we cross-referenced them with local archives. To get sociological information on people renting superyachts, we went out on the water with members of the local marine observatory, who were themselves trying to get information as part of a project to create special mooring areas for superyachts. To get a picture of the different social groups permanently or seasonally living in Ramatuelle, we built a dataset based on one hundred marriages celebrated at the town hall. The speech given at these events by the mayor (or a deputy) provides more or less detailed facts about the social background of the newlyweds, such as where they were born and raised, their education, their occupations, and in some cases even their favorite leisure activities (which can be an indication of their class). This information (crossed-referenced with other sources when available) makes it possible to establish a typology in which three distinct profiles clearly appear, including low-income people who have nothing to do with wealthy seasonal residents socially, except as subordinates in a service relationship. All in all, even though the place we are studying might be unusual in some ways, we apply the usual techniques of the social sciences.

Pampelonne beach, which we already mentioned, deserves special attention. At the beginning of our research, it was only one observation site among others, but then it became an object of study in itself. This beach is a social scene that can reveal elite lifestyles, given that expensive beach clubs are typical of the "conspicuous seclusion" logic we mentioned earlier. But there is more. We wanted to challenge the local conventional wisdom, which says that whatever it may cost to eat in the beach restaurants, the beach is still available "for everyone", "for the common man", given that most of the beach (about three-quarters) remains free of charge. It is then presumed that as a result of this, Pampelonne beach is frequented by people who have a wide range of social statuses. And yet observation would seem to make it quite clear that the upper class is overrepresented, even on the free parts. Now how do we prove it? We had no choice but to devise a quick questionnaire and ask beach-goers to complete it on the spot, trying to get a sample that was as representative as possible. In addition to enabling us to collect data, this short survey was also a way for us to initiate informal interviews with the people we met.

Conclusion

If, like us, one agrees with the conception of social life as both relational and conflictual, as opposed to the stratification approach in particular (Wright 2015), then it is clear that the upper class cannot be studied in isolation. If the top of the social structure is spatially secluded, for example, this in no way means that it has no effect on its surroundings. In this respect, we not only subscribe to the idea that the study of elites must be linked to class analysis (Savage 2015), but we also aim to include them in a sociology of domination that gives attention to the power that a few people exert over others. Even though elite lifestyles are an integral part of our research, they are not its focus, which more broadly concerns economic inequality and social domination. For this reason, our study gives attention to the viewpoint of locals, who are led to rub shoulders with the elite without being part of the same world. Working in/on Saint-Tropez, we cannot help thinking of a statement made by historian Alain Corbin (1994, p. 232; also see Vincent 2008), who said that "the people of the shores were scarcely visible except through a process of domestication that brought them into the service of members of the leisure class". From this perspective, a fully-fledged sociological study of the Saint-Tropez area should also go counter to common perceptions, by scrutinizing the lower echelons of the social structure. Saint-Tropez certainly offers a precious vantage point from which to study the elite. Getting the full social picture, however, calls for the consideration of a more unexpected question: what does it mean to belong to the working class, and more specifically to the "precariat", in Saint-Tropez?

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Chapter 18
The Social Closure of the Cultural Elite. The Case of Artists in Sweden, 1945–2004

Martin Gustavsson and Andreas Melldahl

Introduction: Symbolic Dominance and Social Closure

A central concern in research on elites and ruling classes has always been the degree to which social elites manage to monopolise the resources required to reach the positions they hold. There is a normative element to this concern, revealed for instance by the public 'power surveys' conducted in the Nordic countries. Here, the attention is directed towards trying to gauge which social strata are represented within different elite groups. An open, representative elite is considered to be more democratic – and hence 'better' – than a closed elite (cf. SOU 1990:44; NOU 2003:19; Togeby 2003). However, the concern is also clearly related to classical sociological questions on class formation and class reproduction. How do privileged groups – classes as well as elites – manage to occupy central positions and to what extent do they succeed in retaining power, by limiting the access to such positions?

In this chapter, we discuss ways to study the position-takings and the social reproduction of powerful groups. We are especially interested in whether processes of social closure seem to be in operation. Closure theory describes the processes through which insiders circumvent the possibilities of outsiders to participate in the competition over scarce resources on equal terms. The fact that the monopolised benefits can be 'appropriated' on a more or less 'permanent basis' by certain groups is relevant to our study (Weber 1963, p. 44). We also orient our study towards the

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'exclusionary' forms of closure, which is when the term 'insider' is equivalent to different kinds of dominant collectives, or social elites (Parkin 1981, pp. 44–47; cf. Murphy 1988). To define the social areas being 'enclosed', we draw on Bourdieu's concept of 'fields' (Bourdieu 1993). Fields are by definition restricted areas with limited access, and therefore probable sites for exclusionary closure.

The most common research strategy in elite studies is to examine individuals who manage to occupy – and retain – formal positions within institutions and organisations (Mills 1999 [1956]; Giddens 1972; Scott 2008). Research in this vein has generated important insights into these extremely secluded and interconnected worlds (Stanworth and Giddens 1974; Mintz & Schwartz 1985; Useem 1984; Hartmann 2007; Savage and Williams 2008). However, from a field theoretical point of view, this conceptualisation is inadequate for apprehending the distribution of power in society. In fact, a significant part of the 'field of power' – Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the struggle for power within the ruling, dominant class (Bourdieu 1998 [1989], pp. 264–272; cf. Wacquant 1993) – is characterised by the absence of formal positions. This is especially true for the cultural and intellectual fields, where the most important positions tend to be informal. In other words, a focus solely on formal positions would leave these areas entirely unchartered. Arguably, however, expanding the notion of power to include informal positions is also productive in other parts of the field of power. Elsewhere, we have demonstrated that if the economic elite in Sweden is defined by ownership of large-scale capital instead of by holding CEO-positions etc., then half of this elite has been professionally active in positions other than those with formal control over the economy. Moreover, this hidden half of the economic elite have to a greater extent descended from capitalist dynasties compared to the more visible, formal half (Gustavsson and Melldahl 2018; Melldahl 2018; cf. Hansen 2014).

In this chapter, we will describe and discuss ways to locate and identify the position-takings and the social reproduction of elites that largely cannot be apprehended through formal positions. We focus on cultural elites – through a case study of the fine arts in Sweden – since this condition is particularly conspicuous in the areas where artists compete for social prominence. To account for their specific power, methods and sources adapted to the task are required. For analysing social closure, the Swedish field of art is a sufficiently restricted area to enable us to chart all – formal and informal – dominant positions within it during a rather extensive period of time. Moreover, in social spheres such as these, the relation between position-takings and social reproduction is particularly interesting, since the resources being accumulated are symbolic rather than material and consequently not immediately socially inheritable or possible to monopolise. Under such conditions, social closure should be more complicated to achieve.

Our study deals with three challenges. First, identifying the elite in cultural and artistic fields where formal positions are more or less missing is a challenge in its own right. How are 'informal' positions of dominance to be defined? A second, related challenge consists of finding sources and methods adapted to the demands inherent to a historical perspective. Processes of social closure – where the hierarchisation of the active agents in the field is an outcome of different power

struggles – become visible only when *time* is taken into account. Is a certain group able to successfully both claim and retain key positions? A third, underlying challenge is to relate two parts of Bourdieu's sociology that often are employed separately from one another. How are origins in different classes and class fractions in the social space (the topic in *Distinction*, Bourdieu 1984 [1979]) related to the capacity to reach and retain elite positions within specialised fields (the theme in Bourdieu's later works, e.g. Bourdieu 1988 [1984], 1996 [1992])? Do incumbents of elite positions, by definition more transitory, typically originate from the same more durable classes (cf. Baltzell 2009 [1958], pp. 6–8; Bottomore 1993 [1964], p. 52)?

We argue that this way of widening the research domains for the sociology of elites also enhances the understanding of the real magnitude of class reproduction. If only certain elites are investigated, the degree of monopolisation and social closure in a given society is not sufficiently examined. Hence, both formal and informal positions should be subjected to inquiry, during varying political and economic regimes.

Intellectuals as a Disputed Elite

Within the sociology of elites, the position of intellectuals, and especially dominant cultural producers, is ambiguous and disputed. There are remarkably few – if any – empirical studies that examine (informally defined) intellectuals within the traditional framework of elite studies with focus on social recruitment etc. There are some studies that examines these groups in the making, by focussing the social recruitment to elite art schools (e.g. Börjesson 2012), and the social closure of such schools (e.g. Saner and Vögele 2016), but this is at the stage before some of them has a chance to occupy any 'informal' positions of power in intellectual fields. Rather, these intellectuals are at times discussed in theoretical accounts on the definition of the elite. Anthony Giddens, for instance, recognised that leading groups may be defined 'in any given category of activity', including the arts (1973, pp. 119–120). Similarly, C. Wright Mills and Tom Bottomore both thoroughly discussed the role of intellectuals, or more generally individuals with a large impact on the imagination of the general public ('The Names that need no further identification', Mills 1999 [1956], pp. 71–72), focussing on their potential significance for the structure and mediation of power in modern societies (Bottomore 1993 [1964], pp. 52–58, 69–70; Mills 1999 [1956], chap. 4). However, Giddens, Bottomore and Mills were ultimately unanimous in their verdict that such groups should not be considered as part of the elite proper. This term, they all agreed, should be reserved for groups with a real capacity to rule, to 'those individuals who occupy positions of formal authority at the head of a social organisation or institution' (Giddens 1973, p. 120; cf. Bottomore 1993 [1964], p. 69; Mills 1999 [1956]). Hence, whenever power is tied to the potential to yield formal political, bureaucratic and organisational influence, intellectuals are excluded from the elite.

When a different, composite understanding of power is evoked, the position of the intellectuals within the elite is altered. By allowing for multiple – and, more importantly, competing – forms of power, Pierre Bourdieu defines a central role for intellectuals and cultural producers in the overall 'division in the labour of domination' (Bourdieu 1998 [1989], p. 265). In *Distinction*, the central theme is the opposition between holders of cultural and economic capital, expressed by their diverging cultural preferences, political stances etc., especially pronounced within the dominant class (cf. 1984 [1979], pp. 114–125; 260–267). In *The State Nobility* this is further nuanced through the already mentioned concept of the 'field of power', a theorisation of the opposition especially between economic and cultural capital, and the groups that produce, distribute, legitimise or in other ways control these forms of capital (1998 [1989], pp. 263–272, 336–339). Consequently, if cultural capital has gained the status of a form of power able to compete with the dominant economic capital, those who produce culture are as central for an understanding of power as those who control the economy. From this perspective, the lack of empirical studies on the recruitment and reproduction of intellectual elites is troublesome, especially given the amount of scholarly attention that economic and political elites have received. In this chapter, we take Bourdieu's multidimensional understanding of power – where intellectuals play such an integral role – as our point of departure in order to examine how dominant positions within the field of cultural production have been a site for historical processes of social closure.

Following this introduction, we describe Bourdieu's concept of 'field' and how we have employed this concept primarily as a selection device. After a few words on the sources that we have used, we present some empirical results to illustrate this approach. In a concluding section, we relate our approach to discussions on social closure, reproduction and the possibilities of examining hidden elites by illuminating less visible subdivisions (individuals populating informal positions) within the already opaque and inaccessible social elite.

Intellectuals Within Fields of Cultural Production

In Bourdieu's sociology, the field of power is in fact a field of fields, or a meta-field of sorts. Within this field, Bourdieu situates, amongst others, the economic field, the field of the state administration and the fields of cultural production (the local fields of art, literature, journalism and science, etc.) (Bourdieu 1998 [1989], pp. 264, 266, 270; Bourdieu 1987, pp. 841–843, 850–853). Although intellectuals and cultural producers occupy a dominated position within the overall power elite, like the 'poor cousins' of the economic bourgeoisie (Bourdieu 1984 [1979], p. 176; cf. spiritual elites in Moulin 1987 [1967], p. 105), they have the power to take initiative in the struggle for the dominant interpretation of reality. This specific power that intellectuals and cultural producers possess, the 'essentially symbolic power to make people see and believe' – a capacity to impose a certain interpretation of how society should function – is central when social struggles are conceived primarily as battles

over legitimacy (Bourdieu 1990 [1987], p. 146; cf. pp. 141, 149; cf. Scott 2008, pp. 30–32; Swartz 1997, p. 223).

Through the concept of the 'field of power', a link is established between the various specialised fields and the central concern in traditional elite studies to focus on those 'at the top.' A crucial feature of this concept is that not all of those involved in the various specialised fields are 'effective agents' in the struggles over legitimacy and over the relative power of the various recognised forms of capital that take place within the field of power. Only agents equipped with 'enough specific capital […] to be able to occupy the dominant positions within their respective fields' are capable of making an impact in the field of power (Bourdieu 1998 [1989], p. 264). In other words, the field of power can be conceived of as a representative body, where the dominant agents from the most important fields, at a given place and time, compete with each other over the 'dominant principle of domination' (Bourdieu 1998 [1989], p. 265).

Consequently, in order to define and identify the key players within the field of power, the distribution of specific capital in the various fields first has to be examined. Our approach here is limited to this second task, in other words to scrutinise a specific field in search of the individuals occupying its dominant positions.

Working with Bourdieu's Concept of the Field of Cultural Production

Fields, in Bourdieu's rendition, are relational constructs, defined by the tensions between oppositional, field-specific polarities. Within the field of cultural production, the primary polarity runs between an autonomous, intellectual pole (where *l'art pour l'art* or 'science for science's sake' are mottos indicating the invisible borders to other areas of activity, a *nomos* in Bourdieu's vocabulary) and a heteronymous, commercial pole (following the rule 'business is business'). This opposition is a division between two economies: the subfield for restricted production, driven by claims for long-term recognition, and the subfield for large-scale production, driven by a pursuit for short-term gains. In this context, we will only focus on the aforementioned, most autonomous subfield, where production is directed at a market primarily composed of other producers (colleagues as well as competitors) and other groups equipped with the necessary skills and dispositions (i.e. especially consumers from the cultural and intellectual elite etc.) (Bourdieu 1996 [1992], pp. 132–136, 141–147, 223–224).

Within the subfield of restricted production, a second polarity is present. The 'old', highly consecrated defenders of the established order (the reigning 'mandarins' of culture [cf. Bourdieu 1980, p. 212] and the critics and gallerists etc. that are associated with them) opposes the 'young', less consecrated challengers of the tradition (avant-garde artists and their supporting critics and gallerists etc.). This pattern, Bourdieu argues, is cross-temporal. Hence, the new avant-garde always

challenge the avant-garde from an earlier period (Bourdieu 1993, pp. 37–40, 46; Bourdieu 1996 [1992], pp. 121, 149–152, 159–160).

The concept of 'field' is applicable to any relatively autonomous sectors of social activity (cf. Kauppi 2003, p. 778; Swartz 1997, pp. 126–127). The subfield for restricted production within the field of art is definitely such a closed and restricted area to which access is limited to 'old' and 'young' artists renouncing the 'economic' economy (cf. Moulin 1967/1987, pp. 139, 145, 163). Important for our analysis is also that the subfield is a structured and hierarchised area populated by different types of agents, not only by old and young artists in our example of the field of art, but also by different critics, gallerists, art museums, scholarship committees, etc. performing the necessary role of recognising the artists *as artists*. In the field, these agents are distributed in the same manner as the artists are: some endorse the new, innovative and provocative avant-garde; others cherish the old, consecrated avant-garde. In other words, the critics, for instance, are not in mutual agreement, but rather position themselves in relation to the choices and strategies taken by other critics (Bourdieu 1993, pp. 76–77; Bourdieu 1996 [1992], pp. 157, 167–169, 216–229). In this sense, the oppositions in the field are embedded within an institutional order (Swartz 1997, pp. 120–121; cf. the explanatory model in Becker 1982).

An important implication is that there are multiple ways to achieve success and gain recognition in a field. This means that there are different types of recognition and consequently different kinds of dominant positions. An analysis of leading or elite positions within a field must therefore include several modes of success to avoid selecting only *one* kind of influential agent (cf. Swartz 1997, pp. 221–222; see also empirical studies operationalising this kind of definition, for instance on writers [Sapiro 2002] and on central bankers [Lebaron 2008]). As indicated above, this requires sources fit for the task.

The Elite Within the Field and Their Origins in Social Space: Sources and Selection

Since fields are delimited social arenas where different types of agents are competing for recognition in different ways, we have, for the construction of the prosopographical database from which the data in this chapter is drawn, collected archive material from many different institutions within the field of art. As a starting point we have employed criteria of success endemic to the field of art, used and recognised by the agents in the field themselves. Such criteria are expressed, for instance, in curriculum vitae (CV) of artists or in presentations in exhibition catalogues.

Consider the 'typical' CV of any given artist. Because this is a highly standardised genre, certain items, or rather certain headings, tend to be reproduced over time and across national contexts. The typical artist would include a list of his or her exhibitions, giving special emphasis to any solo shows and including information on the gallery responsible for each exhibition (the greater the artist's public

recognition, the greater the probability that the list is rather short, containing only a selection of the most important exhibitions). Moreover, if the artist has received any awards, grants or scholarships, they are – regardless of their pecuniary worth – bound to be included in the CV, as are any acquisitions of the artist's work by public art councils, museums or other significant public or private collections. Other headings are also frequently found; for instance, the co-optation by a fine art academy or the publication of a book or a catalogue on the artist by a central art scholar.

However, to rely only on information supplied by *some* artists does not resolve the issue of making an adequate selection of leading artists. Therefore, we have collected data on *all* artists exhibited at central galleries (etc.). This required thorough discussions with art historians, to complement and value the headings mentioned above using their expertise, in order to, for instance, distinguish *which* galleries and grants to include or to determine the *most* important art critics for different time periods. After this procedure, we complemented the data with information on additional informal (e.g. art reviews) and formal positions (e.g. holding the position of professor at important schools of fine art). In Bourdieu's terminology, each and every item included on the 'typical' CV can be regarded as 'agencies of consecration' (Bourdieu 1993: 112), key elements in the sacred act of recognising, selecting and celebrating the *real* professionals in a world where the professional title is not legally protected (cf. Filer 1986: 58).

There is an important methodological point to this strategy of identifying the leading artists *a posteriori*. It allowed us to construct the individuals occupying dominant positions at different points in time based on the actual distribution of field-specific capital, as opposed to identifying them *a priori*, departing from a certain selection of artists included in *Who's who* or other similar publications such as published dictionaries of artists or surveys on art history. This strategy permitted the inclusion of artists that made real contributions to the field, but were left out of sources of institutional memory of this kind. It is of significance to note that, in this field, formal positions (heading 8 below) are less important than informal (headings 1–7). Our indicators on the artists' field-specific capital in the prosopographic database are organised in the following headings:

1. Exhibitions
2. Reviews
3. Grants
4. Acquisitions
5. Commissioned Public Art
6. Transnational Investments
7. Publications
8. Positions

Each heading involves agencies of consecration that at given points in time occupied different positions within the field. The prosopographic database contains, for instance, information on older as well as younger galleries; domestic exhibitions as well as exhibitions abroad; market-oriented activities and institutions (pieces of work traded as acquisitions, commercial agents such as galleries, etc.) as well as

state-supported activities and public institutions (commissioned public art and financial support for artists); and field-specific recognition (academy co-optation, peer-appointed teaching positions) as well as public acknowledgment (large museum exhibitions, publications, reviews, etc.). For every heading, we collected all obtainable data for every year between 1945 and 2004. As an example, the heading 'Exhibitions' contains data on all artists exhibited at central galleries (44 galleries in the database), museums (2) and Swedish *Konsthallar* (6 in the database).

Due to this archival strategy, the number of artists in the prosopography is substantial. For instance, 3685 artists were exhibited at the 44 galleries alone during the period. In total, the prosopography comprises information on activities of 14,500 artists within the field. In other words, the amount of data to work with was similar to that of Raymonde Moulin in her cross-sectional study of 18,600 French artists in the early 1980s (cf. Moulin 1997 [1992]).

To identify the elite within the field, among the 14,500 active artists, we followed principles similar to those employed by Moulin by successively sharpening the criteria. Artists who we defined as'successful' (the 'highly visible' in Moulin's terminology [1997(1992)], or 'integrated professionals' in Howard Becker's [1982]) either upheld the few leading formal positions in the field (e.g. professor at the Royal Institute of Art) or, more importantly, made a mark through informal activities in different areas of the field. The end result was a group of 627 elite artists who have in common that they made a significant impact on the Swedish field of art at some point during the 60-year timeframe.

For an examination of the social closure of dominant positions within cultural fields, however, it is necessary to relate the achieved positions within such fields to origins in the social space. Often when elites are studied, data on the social origin is extracted either from questionnaires or biographical handbooks (such as *Who's who* and similar publications). We have instead studied the social origins of the elite artists as they were recorded in the birth and baptism registers from the parishes where the artists were born, which were available at regional archives or in some cases still kept at the parish offices. Although it is a time-consuming approach, this strategy has three main advantages. First, it is not biased towards already known artists, who more frequently are to be found in *Who's who* or in artist dictionaries. Second, the origins of all artists are measured at the same point in time: at the time of their birth. Third, accuracy is drastically improved: so far, we have found the social origins of 89% of the artists, while in studies using *Who's who*, the numbers are often significantly lower (cf. Bourdieu 1998 [1989], pp. 342–343). We used the parents' occupational titles as indicators of the artists' social origin (although in most cases, due to the data, information was only available for the father).

Social Recruitment to Dominant Positions in the Swedish Field of Art, 1945–2004

Social closure is a process where a group monopolises the conditions for its own reproduction. In order to reveal such a process, the social composition of a group should prove to be increasingly distinctive. In this section, we will analyse changes in the recruitment to dominant positions in the field of art during the period 1945–2004. Since careers span over vast periods of time, several artists were active during large parts of this timeframe, especially the selection of artists that we have focused on who are defined by their significant and extensive activity in the field of art.

To facilitate analyses of changes over time, we took two measures. First, the 60-year-long researched timeframe was divided into four shorter periods of 15 years. Second, the artists were allocated to the specific 15-year period during which they first achieved sufficient recognition to reach elite status in the field, in order to capture different artistic generations. Hence, in the following tables and figures, each and every artist is found in one and only one 15-year period, even though most of the artists did in fact surpass our analytical 'thresholds' by being active during the subsequent periods as well (on generations, cf. Mannheim 1952 [1928]; for applied studies of generations in fields of cultural production, see Sapiro 2002 and Ekelund and Börjesson 2005).

To retain a solid linkage between achieved positions in the field and origins in the general social space, the social origin of the artists were not measured solely with reference to *classes* but also to *class fractions*. This incorporated into the analyses the crucial point in Bourdieu's apprehension of the fundamental lines of division within modern societies, namely that not only the volume of capital (i.e. classes) has a stratifying effect, but also the composition of that capital (i.e. class fractions), and especially so in the upper regions of the social space (Bourdieu 1984 [1979], pp. 114–125). As will be demonstrated below, this two-dimensionality proved vital for our results (for a description of the classification into classes and class fractions, see Gustavsson 2002; cf. Gustavsson and Melldahl 2018). Table 18.1 shows the recruitment to dominant artist positions in the field of art from different class origins in the social space across the entire 60-year timeframe (Table 18.1).

Looking first at the representation of artists with a popular class origin, their share amounts to approximately 24% (of the individuals for whom we could

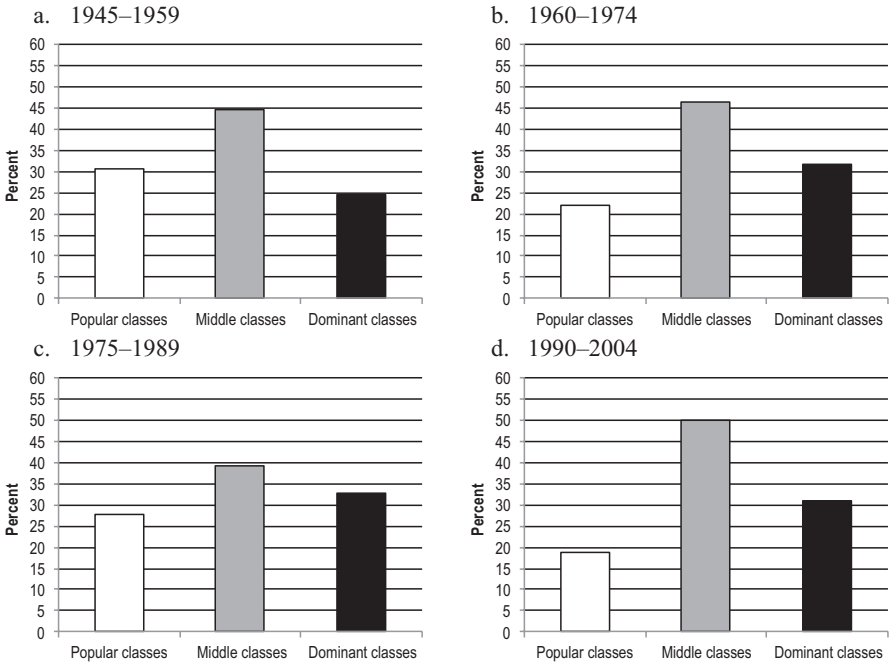
Table 18.1 Class origin of elite artists, 1945–2004

Class origin	n	Total percent	With info percent
Dominant class	177	28.2	31.8
Middle classes	246	39.2	44.2
Popular classes	134	21.4	24.1
No info	70	11.2	
Total	627	100.0	100.0

identify the social origin). This is roughly the same as for the overall elite in Sweden, when defined through formal positions (SOU 1990:44, pp. 321–322).

Conversely, combining the shares for the dominant class and the middle classes, Table 18.1 reveals that 76% of the artists originated from privileged Swedish households. This figure is similar to, or even surpassing, the share of individuals from privileged backgrounds found in the theoretically vastly different (and far more researched) economic elite, in Sweden as well as in various other countries (on Sweden, see Göransson 2007, p. 126; on elite recruitment in the UK, Denmark, France and Germany, see Ellersgaard et al. 2013; Hartmann 2000).

Turning instead to the question of change, Fig. 18.1 testifies to a remarkable stability in the recruitment pattern of elite artists, when the four 15-year periods are compared. The size of the working class (i.e. popular classes) in Sweden has hovered around 50% throughout the twentieth century, although the composition of the class has changed over time (Ahrne et al. 1996, pp. 61–64; Bengtsson 2010, p. 25). Within the artist elite, however, the share of those with popular class origin (black bars) is at most 28% (in 1975–1989; Fig. 18.1c). In other words, even though Sweden had a social democratic government throughout the majority of time under study (all but nine years: 1976–1982 and 1991–1994), and a proclaimed social reformist cultural policy since 1974, individuals originating from the popular classes were constantly underrepresented in dominant positions within the field of art.



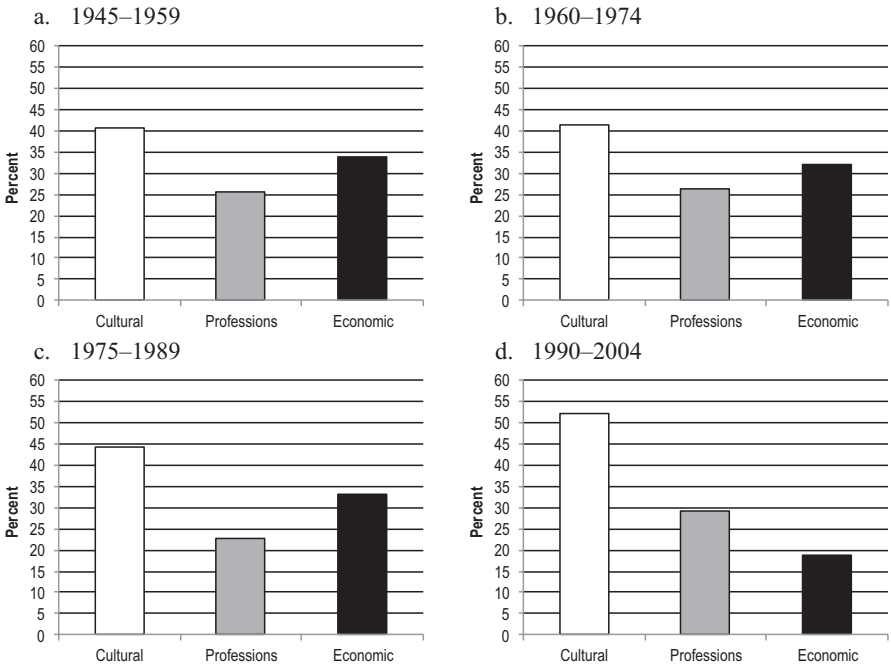
Note: The figures are based on information regarding the 89% of the artists for whom we have located social origins.

Fig. 18.1 Class origin of elite artists, across the four 15-year periods (**a-d**). Note: The figures are based on information regarding the 89% of the artists for whom we have located social origins

Hence, in this field, the social and cultural policies do not seem to have had much impact.

However, as argued above, the class origins of the dominant cultural producers only provide a partial linkage between the field and the general social space. To provide a more detailed picture of the artists' origins, we need to also look within the social classes and scrutinise differences between class fractions. In Fig. 18.2, only such horizontal distances are highlighted (the fractions of the dominant class were here conjoined with the fractions of the middle classes). They are illustrated by three fractions: 'cultural' (professors, artists, teachers, etc.), with a capital composition dominated by cultural capital; 'professions' (physicians, engineers, nurses, etc.), with a balanced capital composition; and 'economic' (managers and executives, shop-keepers, bank-clerks, etc.), with a capital composition dominated by economic capital.

This operation dramatically alters the picture. If Fig. 18.1 conveys social stability, Fig. 18.2 reveals a pattern of clear social change with one apparent direction: artists with origins in the cultural fraction (white bars) increase with each successive 15-year period (from 40% in 1945–1959 to 52% in 1990–2004). Simultaneously, artists with origins in the economic fraction (black bars) decrease over time (from 35% 1945–1959 to 18% 1990–2004). This is in line with studies by Raymonde



Note: The figures are based on information regarding artists with origins in the dominant class and the middle classes.

Fig. 18.2 Class fraction origin of elite artists, across the four 15-year periods (**a-d**). Note: The figures are based on information regarding artists with origins in the dominant class and the middle classes

Moulin who argues that artists in all western countries, to a large extent, originate from what in our terminology could be labelled the cultural fraction of the higher strata of society (Moulin 1997 [1992], p. 275; cf. results showing a more general tendency of field-specific auto-reproduction in Flemmen et al. 2017).

Narrowing the Eye of the Needle

One way to further nuance the analysis of how the accumulation of field-specific capital is related to social closure and social reproduction is to change the size of the constructed elite, making it successively more restricted. In our data, this is possible by raising the thresholds in the data for being qualified as elite, thereby diminishing the number of artists in the resulting elite. When only those who have accumulated extremely large amounts of field-specific capital are included, the size of the elite decreases from a total of 627 individuals to about half (254, with some 65 highly selected artists making their debut in each period). The results are clear: in all but one period, the representation of elite artists with social origins from the popular classes decreases (from 25% to 15% in the first period; from 19% to 12% in the last) and, in all but one period, the representation of artists originating from the cultural fractions of the dominant class and the middle classes increases (from 42% to 43% in the second period; from 52% to 60% in the last). These results differ from Raymond Moulin's study in France, where popular origins actually were more common in the highest strata than in the lower (Moulin 1997 [1992], p. 279; cf. the discussion on the 'over-selection' of individuals less equipped with inherited capital at the top of symbolic hierarchies in Bourdieu and Passeron 1990 [1970]). In the Swedish case, it seems as if the acquisition of field-specific capital indeed is related to the volume – and especially the kind – of inherited capital, indicating an accentuated pattern of social closure when the elite is further narrowed down.

Making Invisible Elites Visible

We have in this chapter argued for the need to include informal positions in sociological research on power. Through a case study of the Swedish field of art between 1945–2004, we have described and discussed sources and research procedures that have allowed us to identify individuals holding dominant positions, formal as well as informal, in this field. Here, we will briefly summarise our main results and discuss the implications of our findings with regards to understanding the social closure and the social reproduction of elite positions.

Increasing Social Closure of Dominant Positions in the Field of Art

Social reproduction and social closure highlight the processes through which groups manage to sustain an achieved position of certain privilege over time by excluding others. Our results show that the social recruitment to the artist elite in Sweden is similar to other elite spheres in Sweden, as well as in other countries, in terms of the under-representation of individuals with popular class origins. Through a historical perspective often lacking in elite studies, we were able to show that this pattern in the social recruitment from different classes has been remarkably stable over time, indicating the efficacy of the efforts of dominant groups to monopolise access. However, this stability is countered by a marked change when horizontal class fractions are used as a complement to vertical classes. This illustrates the relevance of incorporating a certain precision in the analyses of the social recruitment to areas that are unattainable for most people. As our results show, a solid and stable over-representation of individuals with origins in the dominant class may well obscure a pronounced and intensifying closure based on class fraction origins: the people reaching dominant positions within this cultural field are increasingly of the same cultural kind (i.e. auto-reproduction). Thus, in order to be productive, Weberian analyses of social closure benefit from being complemented with a Bourdieusian interest in the differentiation *within* larger social aggregates, in order to achieve a more precise definition of what characterises the insiders.

The Field Concept as a Tool to Locate a Hidden Elite

In our study, we have tried to match the aforementioned precision in our definition of the insiders with a similar degree of precision regarding the restricted social area being enclosed. For this task, Bourdieu's field concept was utilised. When the incumbents of informal power are sought, a selection device attuned to highlighting different parts of any sphere of activity is needed, since the population cannot be defined *a priori*. In fields, agents – producers, distributors and consumers alike – compete with each other over recognition, or field-specific capital. Through the forces of attraction and repulsion at different, oppositional poles in the field, Bourdieu sees recognition as something that can be won in several ways. The strength of this approach is that it identifies areas where individuals who potentially occupy dominant positions are active. However, because the dominant positions do not come ready-made but are defined in relation to the factual distribution of field-specific capital, the approach is also fairly labour intensive. For this study, we collected information on *all* artists active at important 'consecrating instances' during a 60-year timeframe, in order to apprehend the distribution of field-specific capital (we used information on 14,500 artists to identify 627 elite artists). In other words, access to productive sources of data is necessary. To define the inhabitants of the

field, unprinted material from museums, galleries, scholarship committees etc. was used. Similarly, to study the social closure of the field, unprinted material about the population's social origin from church archives in different parts of Sweden was extracted.

The strategy to identify different kinds of elites (e.g. 'old', 'young', 'autonomous', 'heteronymous') within one elite group is applicable more generally and not restricted solely to the field of art or other intellectual fields. Even though the logic of intellectual fields might be peculiar and idiosyncratic in several ways, perhaps especially so in the manner they, as Bourdieu argues, glorify 'great individuals' and in the degree to which this occurs (Bourdieu 1993, p. 29), there are also similarities to be observed in other social arenas that are, at face value, very different from intellectual fields. The struggle between the 'old' and the 'new' is arguably a crucial component in most specialised arenas, whether these are structured around perceptions on religion, bureaucracy, medicine, law or the economy. In certain ways, there are striking similarities between how Bourdieu portrays the temporal logic of intellectual fields (e.g. the transition between and within aesthetic regimes) and Schumpeter's description of structures of transformation in the capitalist economy (e.g. the transition between and within economic phases). This similarity extends even to the cult of the genius, which in Schumpeter's work is present in the guise of the 'young' radical entrepreneur and his/her battles with the 'old' conservative companies (1975 [1942], p. 132).

In other words, the idea of different regulating and legitimising principles that compete with each other within a specialised social sphere is not restricted to the numerically rather insignificant field of art. As we have already argued, this indicates that the basic postulates behind the concept of 'fields' should be regarded as more generally applicable, although the analytical and empirical strategies for apprehending the competing principles, as well as the means for identifying the actors and institutions embodying and representing them, naturally have to be adapted to the sphere in question.

A more Complete Picture of Class Reproduction

Elites are opaque. Consequently, the role for the sociology of power and elites is to identify them and subject them to scientific inquiry in order to illuminate, among other things, the extent to which positions of social power are sites for (upper class) reproduction through processes of social closure – that is, the degree to which the functional division of legitimate authority corresponds with structures of persistent social inequalities. Our results indicate, and the research strategy described in this chapter illustrates, that the degree of social reproduction often encountered in elite studies probably is underestimated. The social recruitment to the informal positions that we have highlighted is more or less identical with the recruitment patterns to the formal positions that elite studies hitherto dominantly have emphasised. Regardless of whether the positions of power are formal or informal, individuals from

privileged backgrounds have disproportionate access to them. Hence, elite studies should seek to identify invisible elites in informal positions as well as visible elites in formal positions in all fields of elite activity – not just in the field of art.

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Chapter 19
How to Study Elites' "International Capital"? Some Methodological Reflections

Felix Bühlmann

The Emergence of a "New" Concept: International or Cosmopolitan Capital

The second half of the twentieth century is a period of an immense densification of commercial, financial, cultural and personal exchanges across nations, societies and regions. This has been echoed in many fields of the social sciences: general theorists have tried to grasp the development by notions such as "denationalization" (Sassen 2003), "transnationalization" (Faist 2000) or "glocalisation" (Robertson 1995); in the methodological realm scholars have discussed methodological nationalism, multi-sited ethnography or nomadic methodologies. Globalization has become important in many sociological specialties, such as cultural sociology, economic sociology or political sociology. Also, in the area of elite studies, internationalization has triggered a whole range of new debates and has led to considerable conceptual innovation. This is no wonder, as elites have been (and are) important actors of the recent dynamics towards internationalization and are among those who have most profited from these changes. Strategies of internationalization are initiated by managers of multinational firms, new exchanges between nations are created and prepared by powerful professions such as lawyers; international collaboration and exchange is considered as stimulating and contributing to the development of knowledge by culturally influentially social groups such as scientists and intellectuals. At the same time, it became clear that approaches based on network connections (such as interlocking directorates) or personal interactions (such as in transnational communities) were not able to cover central issues of elite research: elite selection, recruitment or careers (Hartmann 2007). To understand how elite members control the access to top positions, how they collaborate and coordinate themselves and

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how globalization has reconfigured formerly national structures, we need a more comprehensive theoretical framework – such as field and capital theory (Bourdieu 2005). In this contribution we discuss the concept of "international" or "cosmopolitan" capital, the methods to study it and its use in research on the internationalization of elites.

International or Cosmopolitan Capital: Approaches, Definitions, Critiques

Approaches

International, transnational or cosmopolitan capital is used in studies which are more or less close to the concept of field. While some researchers use the term in close combination with field theory (Wagner 2010; Bühlmann et al. 2013), others consider it rather as a general form of social or cultural "resource" that is not necessarily linked to a field (Weenink 2008), or even combine it with economic capital theory. Gerhards et al. (2016) for instance, use the term "transnational human capital" and understand the concept as a kind of blend between the bourdieusian ideas and Becker's theory of human capital.

The bulk of studies are interested in the *process of inheritance, production and acquisition* of international capital. On this topic we have studies from the Netherlands (Weenink 2008), France (Wagner 1998) Great Britain, (Maxwell and Aggleton 2015), Sweden (Börjesson and Broady 2007), Germany (Gerhards et al. 2016) and Switzerland (Bertron 2015; Dutoit 2016). These studies concern pupils in primary and secondary schools, but also at the university level. In order to study the acquisition of international capital these studies focus on (private) international schools, on internationalized streams of state-funded schools and on the international mobility of students – either in the form of an "exchange year" at the secondary level or as university students. Many of these studies are based on ethnographic material or qualitative interviews, some also on statistical material or mixed-methods. As the focus lies on the process of acquisition of international capital, most of them concentrate on the social origins – mainly from the middle-and upper classes - of the pupils who enjoy such an international education and study their parents' habitus and motivations. A weakness of all these studies is that they are rarely able to follow these pupils biographically and to study how they will later utilize their international capital in their adult life and what role this part of their education will play for their future class position and life styles.

The second type of approach is concerned with studying the *use and deployment* of international capital, for instance in the economic (Igarashi and Saito 2014; Bühlmann et al. 2018; Schneickert et al. 2015), in the academic (Rossier et al. 2015; Fourcade 2006) or in the administrative field (Dezalay 2004; Jansson 2016). Dezalay proposed an examination of the utilization of international forms of capital in

national fields and how certain elite fractions deploy international capital in order to defend themselves against more "provincial" or "national" elite fractions. These studies often use quantitative methods and try to describe the value and the use of international capital for economic, professional or academic elites. An important question here is how international forms of capital interact and combine with national forms of capital (such as national educational credentials or national political capital): The flaw of this kind of approach is often that it is not able to link the current position in one of the elite fields with the social origin and the trajectory of (international) education that potentially precedes the entry into an elite position.

Definitions: Between Cultural and Social Capital

To wear the insignia of internationality is without a doubt seen as an asset in certain social groups and professions (Fligstein 2008). Even though already historically, the European nobility and the business bourgeoisie shared an international outlook, for the contemporary elites it seems to be particularly important to possess "international" or "cosmopolitan capital" (Wagner 2007). But what do we understand by "international capital"? Most scholars define it as either an international form of cultural capital, an international form of social capital or a blend of both.

Certain scholars, such as Gerhards et al. (2016), insist on the importance of distinguishing between cultural and other (mainly social) forms of international capital. In their definition of "transnational human capital" they concentrate on cultural (and personal) aspects and structure them in four dimensions or sub-forms: foreign languages, understanding of the regulatory system of another country, intercultural competence and cosmopolitan orientation. Each of these sub-forms can manifest itself in institutionalized, embodied and objectified forms. The mastery of a foreign language for instance can be institutionally certified as a diploma from a TOEFL-Test, be embodied as writing- and speaking skills and be objectified as the possession of English written books.

However, most of the authors use a larger definition of international capital and include both cultural and social forms (Wagner 2007; Weenink 2008). Wagner (2007) argues that international *capital* corresponds to the capacity to 'feel at home', even in places which are geographically distant. This capital is according to her *'inseparably cultural, linguistic, and social, in large parts inherited, reinforced by international educational trajectories and occupational experiences in several countries'* (Wagner 2010, p. 6). Besides being able to speak foreign languages, being familiar with foreign countries and their cultures, being used to traveling or being at ease in exchanges with people from foreign countries, it encompasses also forms of international *social capital* (Carroll et al. 2010). Formal and informal contact networks spreading over several countries, built across an international education curriculum or an international occupational career, allow top managers to develop international strategies and impose their authority on the boards of multinational companies and transnational governing bodies.

Critiques

The concept of "international or cosmopolitan capital" has frequently been questioned and criticized. The first issue concerns the sometimes thin line between what we consider as "cosmopolitan capital" and what as "cosmopolitan habitus" or cosmopolitanism. Weenink, for instance, argues that bodily forms of cosmopolitan capital and includes also mental dispositions. He writes: "Cosmopolitan capital comprises bodily and mental predispositions and competencies (savoir faire) which help to engage confidently in such arenas. […]." (Weenink 2008, p. 1092). Also, Gerhards et al. (2016) think that the use of the term "cosmopolitan" should be reserved to cosmopolitan orientations. They propose that such a cosmopolitan orientation should be understood as an embodied sub-form of "transnational human capital".

Another debated issue remains whether we actually need this concept or if it is already contained in more "fundamental forms" of capital, such as cultural, social or economic capital. Neveu (2013), for instance, asks if we really need to multiply the different forms of capital. According to him, most of the new forms of capital – such as "erotic capital", "emotional capital", "ethnic capital" or "activist capital" – can always be subsumed under the three basic forms of capital: cultural capital, social capital and economic capital. Indeed, most authors using the term international capital conceive it as international forms of cultural and social capital. This begs the question of the added value of the concept of international capital or the heuristic advantage to distinguish international from other forms of cultural (or social) capital. We have argued elsewhere (Bühlmann et al. 2013) that the distinction between national and international orientation and forms of capital is more and more transversal across different fields (such as culture, science, business). In addition, the opposition between the national and the international seems to arouse strong moral forces and feelings and is therefore symbolically particularly divisive between fractions of a field (Prieur and Savage 2011). Finally, we can make the hypothesis that the acquisition of cultural cosmopolitan capital in many cases goes along with the acquisition of social cosmopolitan capital—in other words, it is quite likely that the two forms reinforce each other mutually.

The Contextually Varying Meaning and Value of International Capital

Following these definitional issues, we would now like to enter the discussion of the value of international or cosmopolitan capital. Our basic hypothesis here: there is no intrinsic value in internationality as such. International capital has different values according to the national context, depends on the logics of a specific field and on what we really mean when we say "international". To illustrate this hypothesis we

would like to draw on a series of empirical studies on Swiss elites and relate these to other national cases.

Are Foreign Citizens Per Se Endowed with International Capital?

When studying national elite fields and how cosmopolitan capital is used in these fields, one of the most easily available information is the number of foreign top-managers, professors or administrators. However, just to have a foreign citizenship does not mean that somebody automatically possesses international capital. Also, not all elite members coming from the same country necessarily possess the same amount and/or the same form of international capital. Like for all forms of capital, we have to analyze its dynamics of inheritance, acquisition and accumulation. That being a "foreign citizen" is hardly ever a good proxy for the endowment with cosmopolitan capital became evident when we studied the group of foreign managers in the direction and the boards of large Swiss firms (David et al. 2012). Even though their number has increased strongly from 1980 to 2010, the (career) paths on which they arrived at the top Swiss firms – their processes of acquisition and accumulation of international capital – varies widely. A first group of international managers were major share-holders of a firm. Often these managers moved their family firms to Switzerland for fiscal reasons or invested heavily in Swiss firms. Their capital is economic in the first place – coming from another country is not an asset that they bring into the Swiss field. Other managers can best be described as internal climbers in Swiss multi-national firms. These top-managers, moved to a Swiss firm relatively early in their career and then climbed the internal ladders of these organizations. When they arrive at the top of these Swiss firms, it is not necessarily because of their international experiences and networks, but rather because of their internal, firm-specific networks and knowledge. A third type of international managers can be called "merger & acquisition climbers". These managers pursued internal careers in firms which by processes of merger and acquisition became Swiss firms or merged with a firm residing in Switzerland. Also in these cases it is not necessarily their international assets but their local knowledge of the firm and the local firm specific networks which made possible their move to the top management. Only one last category of top managers seems to owe its success to what we usually define as international capital: the – growing – group of international managers who are recruited externally. These managers often possess very international educational credentials and had a career that led them across several firms in several countries. Their education and career has truly been an accumulation process of international networks and of international cultural capital and we can presume that this international capital was important for their recruitment. This closer examination of the accumulation process of (international) capital across careers shows that often the relevance of international capital is overestimated. Behind what we sometimes too

quickly identify as "international" are often more prosaic mechanisms which are not based on the import of international capital.

Country Size and International Capital

Even though globalization has been identified as a trend which has seized the whole world and is palpable in the daily life of almost everyone, we can posit that international or cosmopolitan capital has more value in certain contexts than in others. Heilbron (2001), for instance, shows that the size of a country is important for its implication in (cultural) international exchanges: while large countries have comparatively few exchanges with other nations, smaller countries tend to have more transaction with other countries. At least when it comes to economic exchanges the size of the domestic market is an important explanatory factor to understand the amount and density of exchanges with other countries. Generally speaking, the smaller a group is, the more exchanges with other groups matter (Blau 1977). Applied to elite research, Heilbron posits that elites of smaller countries tend to define themselves with respect to the elites of larger countries. Elites of small countries cannot protect themselves and must adapt themselves constantly to the international developments. Reformulating these reflections in terms of international or cosmopolitan capital, we can make the hypothesis that in smaller countries international capital has a comparatively higher value. As international exchanges in the academic or economic field are dense, in these small countries, it is important to speak other languages, to know the habits and orientation of foreign clients or to possess a degree from a foreign university. In a comparative study on four national fields of top management, we found that while France and Germany's business elite is still rather nationally oriented, the Swiss business elite was much more internationalized (Bühlmann et al. 2018). Swiss firms, at least in recent years, are apparently more open to promote managers to top positions who have no title from a Swiss university or who have any hardly linkages to the Swiss political field. The high value given to international capital also means that top managers of Swiss firms (including those with a Swiss citizenship) have a more international education and more international careers than their colleagues in France or Germany. That Switzerland's business managers possess a particularly high amount of international capital can be explained – to a certain extent at least – by the countries small size and the very international orientation certain sectors of its economy have had since the late nineteenth century. We also know that other small countries, such as Belgium or the Netherlands, have relatively important shares of international managers (Timans and Heilbron 2017). We can therefore make the hypothesis that international capital has different value according to the country and that the size of the country – and therefore the size of the field – is important for the value of international capital.

Field Specific Hierarchies of Countries – What Does "International" Mean

Besides the size of a country, also the international hierarchy of countries determines the value of international capital.[1] The dominance of the USA in several spheres in the second half of the twentieth century has slightly buried the fact, that each field – the economic field, the cultural field or the scientific field – has a different international structuration or hierarchy. To possess an international network, to have spent some years in a foreign country or to speak a foreign language has a different value according to the position the country occupies in the international hierarchy of a field. When we speak of the international hierarchies of countries we have to take into account at least two aspects: the steepness of international hierarchy and the actual form that this hierarchy takes. A comparison between economic elites, banking elites and academic elites allows us to understand some of these aspects.

The academic field is a good example to understand the question of the steepness of international hierarchy. A discipline such as "economics" is strongly hierarchized. In economics, most scholars easily agree on what is "good" or "bad" science. Therefore positions as PhD graduates are allocated through a highly standardised, collectively organised and hierarchized process. What is more, the field of publications in economics is strongly concentrated and hierarchized: the hierarchy between journals is clearly established through widely accepted markers of quality. This clear internal hierarchy makes it easy to rank individual scholars, universities and even whole national disciplinary fields. Therefore, the hierarchy also includes an international component which clearly places the US field of economics at the top, followed by countries such as the UK and other European countries. In other scientific disciplines, such as the humanities or law, national or linguistic contexts matter, criteria of quality are disputed and a clear hierarchy between the disciplinary fields of different countries is lacking. When the international hierarchy is clear – such as in economics - the value of international capital is relatively easily identifiable and attributable. When the international hierarchy is flatter in a specific field, the value and meaning of international capital also becomes less easy to decipher and attribute.

In a study of Swiss elite bankers it became apparent that in the field of banking the USA and the UK are placed at the top of the international hierarchy of countries (Araujo 2017). With New York and London these two countries possess the worldwide most important financial centers. Many of the Swiss top bankers have spent a part of their career in New York and London. In fact, it is a career spell in these two cities – and not necessarily the US or the UK as countries – which endows the Swiss bankers with international capital. None of these bankers have studied or spent a part of their career in Latin America or Africa, very few have spent some time in Asia (meaning Hong Kong or Singapore). In other words: what is important here is

[1] Heilbron calls this second aspect the "centrality" of a country.

not just to have spent a year abroad, but to have spent it in the centre of power of a specific field. International capital takes its value only with respect to the hierarchy of countries, which are strongly field specific.

The Historical Evolution of International Capital's Value

Most of the literature on internationalization, globalization or transnationalization is rather recent, reflecting the importance of globalization in the second half of the twentieth century. However, the very term "recent globalization" reflects that at previous periods in history, transnational relationships and spaces were already important. For instance, the end of the 19th and the beginning of the twentieth century was, in many European countries, a period of relative international openness. Historical data over a longer period thus make it possible to compare different periods of more or less international openness and to compare the relevance, value and functioning of international capital across these periods (Bourdieu 2002).

To illustrate this evolution, we would like to present the historically changing meaning of "being German" or "having a German" degree for the academic elites in Switzerland (Rossier et al. 2015). The Swiss German Universities (Zürich, Basel, Bern) have relied, since their (re-)foundation in the nineteenth century, on the import of knowledge, titles, professors and academic habits from Germany. From the First World War onward, the share of German (and more generally foreign) professors decreased significantly. Only by the 1960s did the second internationalization begin and the number of German professors at Swiss universities began to rise again. In 2010, almost 50% of professors at Swiss universities were non-Swiss citizens, many of them from Germany. The situations at the beginning of the 20th and twenty-first century seem to resemble each other – and also trigger rather similar political reactions.

However, the status, meaning and value of a "PhD from a German university" or a "stay at a German university" differs at the two historical moments. At both moments, German scholars had a specific "local capital" (Wagner 2010) in the German speaking part of Switzerland. Speaking the same language, they could easily adapt to the local situation, communicate with their colleagues or befriend the local elites. The commonalities between the German and the Swiss-German University systems are also structural: in both contexts the "habilitation" is a precondition for recruitment as a professor. While this aspect remains historically more or less constant, the symbolic value of "German experiences" changes in the scientific field. In the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, Germany was the leading scientific nation and a PhD from a German university was an indicator of the scientific excellence of a scholar. By the 1940s and 1950s, Germany lost its status as a world leading scientific nation and was overtaken by the USA. This new dominance of the US is conspicuous for disciplines such as the natural sciences or economics. A career spell in Germany or a doctoral degree from a German university no longer necessarily has a high value. Analyses of professors

of economics in 2000 showed that a PhD or a scientific stay in the US is clearly the best explanatory factor of scientific reputation – both for professors with Swiss and German nationality. The German experience alone no longer has a particular symbolic value in the field (Rossier et al. 2015).

Conclusion

International or cosmopolitan capital has, during recent years, become a promising new concept of the social sciences which allows us to understand how elites acquire and utilize internationality in order to control access to and coordination of elite positions. To conclude with we would like to briefly evoke some challenges for future studies on cosmopolitan capital and elites. While we have a good deal of studies from different countries on the acquisition process of international capital, we still know relatively little about the value and utilization of international capital in a comparative perspective. It would be interesting to know more about how elites use international capital – both in countries at the top and at the bottom of the international hierarchy. We also think that study of international capital suffers from the afore-mentioned divide between an approach focusing on the acquisition and an approach focusing on the deployment of international capital. We lack longitudinal studies which are able to biographically link these two processes. Finally, we think that (too) little attention has been given to possible combinations between international and local capital (Wagner 2010). Are international and local forms of capital opposed or can we observe specific combinations or even signs for mutual reinforcement between national, regional and international forms of capital?

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Chapter 20
Is a Participant Objectivation of Elites and Symbolic Power Possible?

Sylvain Laurens

> The ethnographic account is a supremely ex post facto product of the actual uncertainty of life. (…) The subjects stand too square in their self-referenced world. The method is also patronising and condescending – is it possible to imagine the ethnographic account upwards in a class society? (Paul Willis, *Learning to labour*)

As suggested by this epigraph from Paul Willis, can participant objectivation, through ethnography of the dominant classes, be a tool for social scientists? This question not only implies examining the feasibility of the investigation inherent to particular types of fieldwork, but also means questioning what produces an asymmetric social position and how our professional habits structure our research practices on this type of object.

The sociology of elites has been historically structured around key issues and preferred methods. Its major issues are known: the circulation and renewal of elites[1], their more or less welded character (Mills 1956), the creation of an aristocratic taste (de Saint Martin 1993) and a bourgeois ethos (Sombart and Esptein 1913; Davidoff and Hall 1987), the strength of family socialisation, the role played in social reproduction by a selective school system, the importance of minimal differentiation and distinctive practices, etc. (Veblen 1934).[2]

[1] A classic theme of Italian sociology. See in particular Vilfredo Pareto, *The rise and fall of elites*, 1901.

[2] For a review of those approaches, see Jean-Pascal Dalloz, *Sociology of elite distinction. From Theoretical to Comparative Perspectives*, 2009.

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To address these various issues, the sociology of elites often mobilises very classical methods: mainly statistical analysis, secondary analysis or textual interviews, but rarely historical analysis (Elias 1983) or ethnography.[3] This predominance of statistical approaches is probably due to the objectifying ability of these techniques and the impression of direct accessibility to data given by biographical directories. Research design also seems less risky through this set of methods because many classical sociologists have previously utilised it: Bourdieu, ethnographer of Algerian workers, abandoned his notebooks in favour of statistics in *The State Nobility;* C. Wright Mills of the *The Power Elite* also favoured prosopography and data obtained through media over other methods. We will not here re-examine the opposition between quantitative and qualitative methods; suffice it to say that the use of quantitative methods (especially dominant today are Optimal Character Recognition (OCR) and web scraping, which make the creation of large corpuses possible), should not prevent a crossing of methods in order to avoid the confinement of the sociology of elites within a 'sociology at a distance' where respondents are simply found in *Who's Who* and other biographical directories.

Combining statistics with ethnography and qualitative methods is especially important when one tries to mobilise a sociology of dispositions, through the notion of habitus and through exploring the black box of 'symbolic capital'. Without ethnography, how do we account for the ability given to dominant agents to exert, within a field, a form of power related to the merger of possessed (economic and cultural) capital? How do we analyse this located authority and the specific form of capital that social agents produce and reproduce in their daily activities?

Advocating for an ethnography of symbolic power immediately, however, raises other issues. How do we write an ethnography on the exercise of power? Can we reduce power to its symbolic dimension? How do we integrate the fact that fieldwork on dominant classes gives the sociologist a particular position within a game of asymmetric relations? As underscored by the anthropologist Alban Bensa, 'under the risk of naturalizing the structures, the ethnographer has an interest, wherever possible, to integrate into his experience the historical conditions of the fulfilment of this experience' (Bensa 2006a, b, p. 49).[4] We will push this argument further by asking whether it is possible to objectify symbolic capital from this asymmetric, and often unfavourable, social position given to the social scientist in the field.

[3] With few exceptions of course: Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot, *Grand fortunes: dynasties of wealth in France*, New York, Algora, 1999. Cris Shore and Stephen Nugent, *Elite cultures: anthropological perspectives*, London/New York, Routledge, 2002.

[4] For a translation of these works: Alban Bensa, "Pierre Bourdieu and Anthropology", in R. Lardinois & M. Thapan (éds.), Reading Pierre Bourdieu in a dual Context: essays from India and France. London/New-Delhi, Routledge, 2006.

The Ethnography of Symbolic Power: A Blind Spot in the Division of Labour Among Sociologists of Elites

Ethnologists of the bourgeoisie have very minutely dissected the elements of 'bourgeois culture'.[5] They have used ethnography for a very specific purpose, attempting to isolate the values of this social group without seeking to link their description to a general hypothesis on what symbolic power is. The 'cult of legacies', the strong socialisation into the 'legitimate culture', the family's stronghold, the exercise of power over space, and the time spent on the maintenance of social capital through institutions such as selective clubs are all classical topics for specialists of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie.

The Traditional Arenas of the Ethnography of 'Bourgeois Culture'

From this perspective, ethnography is primarily used to analyse the contours of an *entresoi* in which social capital is nurtured and maintained. It focuses on those moments when the group mobilises and expresses a common cultural background. The observer, however, faces one methodological problem: how to identify what would be the specificity of a 'bourgeois culture'. Beatrix Le Wita describes 'bourgeois culture' as a 'déjà-là' (an 'already there') based on the need to control 'the historicity of society'. Bourgeois culture is defined as something only shaped by the needs of the bourgeoisie (Le Wita 1990, p. 10. Le Wita 1994). The bourgeoisie, according to this definition, have a 'mobile' culture and control their own cultural referents; they have the ability to adapt their culture to their daily needs, which explains its elusive and ever-changing character. The power of the bourgeoisie, from this perspective, lies in the specific nature of their culture.

To illustrate this in research, the ethnography of bourgeois traits of culture focuses on specific moments and interactions. But several elements are still regularly absent from this type of fieldwork and have yet to be elevated in a proper ethnographic object of investigation as a way to break with the lens of 'cultural isolation' through which bourgeois practices are seen. What is at stake in these moments of intense sociability between peers, these moments when the group is seen in and of itself performing the social rituals that maintain its collective self? Do the bourgeoisie only spend their time sending their children to selective schools, attending their private clubs, going from these clubs to their swimming pools, and then further to attend their selective parties?

The links between the aristocracy, or the bourgeoisie, and politics, and in particular the links with political parties, are a dimension often absent from these

[5] To borrow the title of a special issue on elites of the journal *French Ethnology* published in 1990 (Vol. 20).

ethnographic accounts of 'bourgeois culture'. Recent research clearly shows, for example, the distant relationships of the upper classes to classical forms of activist work (door to door distribution of leaflets, participation in electoral events, etc.) (Agrikoliansky 2013; Geay 2019). But this distance does not mean that the great bourgeoisie do not have a link to the political field that could be further explored, including whether it is tied through informal partnerships or funding. Another dimension often absent from these ethnographies of bourgeois culture, which tend to be quite family-centred, is *work* or – if we consider that the term *work* is not suitable for the description of activities linked to capital incomes (Barthélémy 2005) – the issue of the maintenance of economic capital and its reproduction. Even the most disinterested inheritor by material standards is probably concerned with what is happening to his resources. At the very least, he will have links with a series of advisors managing his assets.

To sum up, even a researcher whose primary purpose is to describe 'bourgeois culture' would do well to follow these agents in other social arenas to grasp the instances when this supposed 'bourgeois culture' confronts institutional norms, laws and interactional arenas that are not structured solely by the codes of mundanity. These moments, however, won't show the bourgeoisie demonstrating less dominant traits (one could observe, for instance, the asymmetry between the upper class and desk officers in charge of tax adjustment) (Huret 2014; Spire 2013). Rather, these moments would show elites benefiting from symbolic power, likely profiting from social interactions with other groups. These dominant agents would then be grasped in the wide panoply of social arenas in which they are immersed. It is through appearing in all these social arenas that the bourgeois agents' dispositions are acquired and transformed through primary or secondary socialisation.

If bourgeois culture evolves, it is not because the bourgeoisie has the ability to change its culture or benefits from a 'mobile culture' but more commonly because facing a series of institutional orders with their own changing rules (the evolution of multinational firms, the transformation of the education system, the changes within the political field, etc.), this social group has to constantly adjust itself to other organisational principles than those of bourgeois worldliness. Ethnography of the ruling classes, by obscuring these other social arenas, spreads the idea of a united and cohesive group at the expense of analysing the constant influence of institutional orders. This is particularly true when we consider studies on education and social reproduction. Few works, like those of Shamus Khan, consider seriously the meaning of the relative maladjustment of some well-born children responding to the changes impacting the field of ultra-selective schools (Khan 2011). We will defend here the idea that ethnography can contribute to re-embedding these dominant agents in the multiple relationships that tie them to different groups or social activities.

Power Elites Without an Observable Power?

For opposite reasons, researchers mainly using statistics and who are part of the debate on the monistic or pluralistic character of our elites also avoid dealing with the issue of qualitative analysis of symbolic power. Defining elites through their occupation of high positions in different institutional orders, they endlessly debate over the divided or united nature of 'elites', thereby losing sight of which social groups these institutions draft their troops from.

The methodological problem here is that we can certainly assume that the occupation of high positions provides capital and chances of power. However, you cannot deduce only from occupied positions the existence of common spheres of practices, producing a common *ethos*. No room is given to the operation by which resources are transformed into 'symbolic power', through new and specific capital linked to a field. The simultaneous presence of individuals in certain places (in the physical sense) does not mean the production of a common principle that generates common practices or symbolic power. As Bourdieu emphasises in *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* 'the search for correlations or factorial analysis cannot lead us to the system of rules which generates regularities, neither in the case of an economically and socially undifferentiated society, nor in a stratified society, within the same social class' (Bourdieu 2000a, b [1972], pp. 281–282)[6]*;* however, 'the construction of a class *ethos* may, for example, make use of a reading of statistical regularities treated as *indices,* without the principle which unifies and explains these regularities being reducible to the regularities in which it manifests itself' (Bourdieu 1977, p. 85). A similar criticism could be made of interlocking directorate studies which hastily infer the existence of a community of interest from the simultaneous presence of agents on the same boards of large firms.

It is on this point that ethnography likely has its own and very specific utility. Ethnography can help with exploring what is hidden behind statistical regularities and not only by highlighting specific cultural principles typical to the bourgeoisie or aristocracy. By focusing on how the practices of the agents are confirmed, disrupted and updated in different social arenas and how they face different institutional orders, it may be possible to avoid the pitfalls of the ethnological approach of bourgeois culture (the description of a 'mobile culture') and the limits of an institutional approach (which starts by analysing institutional positions only to end up in an analysis of common psychological traits). There is not, on one side, a 'bourgeois culture' made of homes on the beachfront and, on the other side, top positions in power institutions occupied by interchangeable agents listed by biographical directories. What we need to grasp is precisely the areas of intersection between social institutions and dominant groups.

[6] Author's translation; this passage is not included in the English edition from 1977.

Beyond an Ethnography of Mundanity: How to Grasp Symbolic Power in a Relational Context?

According to Willis (and here we should transpose this statement to the ruling classes), 'class cultures are created specifically, concretely in determinate conditions, and in particular oppositions. They arise through definite struggles over time with other groups, institutions and tendencies' (Willis 1977, p. 59). The idea of a 'bourgeois culture' shaped by confliction with other groups and institutions has merit in that it rules out the idea of a 'bourgeois culture' having in itself a capacity of adaptation that other cultures have not. Rather than drawing the contours of a bourgeois culture (or popular culture), the ethnographer should seriously consider those moments where the *practical sense* of agents listed in biographical directories faces evolving institutional orders.

A Constant Socialisation Between Class Positions and Institutionalisation Processes

A bourgeois socialisation probably provides resources to access positions on the boards of the larger firms, but these companies are at the same time impacted by large changes (growth of financial capitalism that requires adaptation and new strategies such as creating family holding companies). Dispositions imported into institutions in this way change and become re-combined. Ethos is not only formed inside the *entresoi* but also serves as a protective mimicry, and is shaped through external confrontations. Transposed to the study of the dominant classes, such a research programme implies that we should, as a first step, study how the army creates its own way of being a 'bourgeois/colonel', the Church a 'bourgeois/cardinal', the bank a 'bourgeois/leading banker, etc. Then, in a second step, we should analyse how these differentiation processes from 'bourgeois' primary socialisation renew the values and practices of these privileged groups. It would then appear that this 'bourgeois culture' does not change because of its mobile nature but because of its permanent confrontation with institutional orders which leads to the re-importation of these micro-adjustments into the *entresoi*. By doing so, it would be possible to circumvent the pitfalls of an ethnology of the ruling class, and finally break with the notion of 'culture', which some anthropologists for years have argued for.

By defining upper class practices as a part of a specific culture, a circular concept is produced. 'Bourgeois culture' becomes defined as an entity composed of practices ('the practice of genealogy', 'the taste for legitimate culture', etc.). If, to save the concept of bourgeois culture, we emphasise the strength of beliefs that are the principle of practices, the risk is to fall back into a form of mentalism considering 'bourgeois beliefs' as a unified system explaining practices. The notion of 'bourgeois culture' can at best be a tool for describing at first glance a more complex reality. By isolating the analysis of practices from its confrontational social

environment, it freezes singular moments of interactions that need to be analysed as a process and therefore are continuously shaped by all the social relations in which they are embedded.

Moreover, we should resume critiques that Pierre Bourdieu puts forward in *Pascalian Meditations* against the 'thick description' of Geertz or anthropologic culturalism. When it comes to studying elites, we should take seriously the criticism of any anthropological practice that does not include in its theory the distance between practical logic and scientific logic. To explain the practices of dominant agents observed during fieldwork through the notion of bourgeois culture is 'imputing to its object what belongs to the way of looking at it; it projects into practice (with, for example, rational action theory) an unexamined social relation which is none other than the scholastic relation to the world. Taking various forms depending on the traditions and the domains of analysis, it puts a metadiscourse (a grammar, a typical product of the scholastic standpoint, as with Chomsky) at the origin of discourse, or a metapractice/…/at the origin of practices' (Bourdieu 2000a, b, p. 53).

A second danger with the notion of 'bourgeois culture' refers more specifically to the conventional and critical remark of Claude Grignon and Jean-Claude Passeron in *Le Savant et le populaire* (1989): a relationship of domination cannot be conceived of by separating the effects of this relationship on both the dominated and dominant who are symbolically associated. One cannot imagine a 'bourgeois culture', that is to say, a symbolic production that would be independent of a relationship of domination. If bourgeois culture exists, it cannot be separately analysed from the categories it produces to differentiate different social groups; bourgeois culture exists only in opposition/relationship to other groups and even provides 'names' and categories to create a distance with them.

This relative uncertainty and active dimension of social asymmetry have mainly been explored in urban sociology. The mobilisations of upper classes to maintain their territories makes particularly visible the existence of these active processes of adaptation and conflictual differentiation. We are thinking here in particular of the work of Monique Pincon-Charlot and Michel Pinçon, and also of Sylvie Tissot, that addresses urban and neighbourhood struggles (Tissot 2015). If we transpose this sociological approach to the sociology of workplaces, ethnographic practice should then lead us to explore all those moments when the maintenance of social status for the ruling classes appears as a social activity in itself.

An Exploration of the Dispositional Adjustments and the Valuation of the 'Symbol of Class Status'

Ethnography of the field of power should particularly focus on dispositional adjustments and seek to describe the system of correspondences between models of achievements provided by different institutions (the 'good boss', the 'good political leader', etc.) to link them with the already known features of aristocratic or

bourgeois tastes. This is one of the strengths of ethnography: not only signalling the outline of a culture but also concretely showing how whole areas of social practices are articulated, how what has been learned in primary and secondary socialisation facilitates the occupation of high institutional positions and, in reverse, how playing social roles always involves adjustments.

If ethnography is used as such, spots of observation have to be chosen on the basis of the probability they offer for providing opportunities to observe the confrontation between agents belonging to the upper class, and also the specific rules of a field which filter access to positions of power. In this way, the most central places to the bourgeois way of life may not be the most interesting spots of observation. To grasp how symbolic power is exerted and related to the possession of resources recognisable by third agents, one should focus on sites of power and explore them as places where agents with an upper class background are immersed in a specific field with its own logic.

An Ethnography of the *Sites of Power*

In his book *The mediation of power*, Aeron Davis suggests that we should stop trying to study the power of powerful people, which is hard to measure, in and through the media and rather focus our attention on the *sites of power* that we can explore, such as, among other things, the relationship these individuals have to the media (Davis 2007). Such an approach suggests capturing dominant agents 'at work' and in their daily context (for instance, asking what the cultural practices of MEPs are or how MEPs deal with journalists, instead of focusing on how MEPs become dominating citizens through the power of the media).

An Ethnography of the Habitus of Dominant Agents 'At Work'

An ethnography that focuses on the habitus of dominant agents allows one to grasp how the capital owned by these agents is perceived as it is mobilised in the maintenance of social positions. MEPs, traders and journalists actively compete against other players. The efficiency of their resources is partially uncertain and earlier socialisation becomes partly reshaped in the social arenas investigated. Qualitative methods no longer describe a culture but a struggle in a field. We could here underline how Karen Ho addresses the issue of daily interactions (including the trivial evaluation of clothing choice) in her ethnography of Wall Street (Ho 2009). These brilliant students from the best Ivy League institutions are first drafted through the promise of a highly privileged status in a famous bank. But the adjustment to their first job position in this elite arena is not so natural. They first have to face a test based on overwork. Daily interactions in investment banks redistribute the symbolic resources of these Ivy League recruits turned managers. They are classified and

reclassified according to their adjustment to their job position, and their career in the bank now becomes linked to their ability to conceal any distance to the very particular investment banker ethos. Gender hierarchies also fully play their role within this elitist workplace just as statutes and potential social mobility are daily defined. Here, ethnography is not used to describe the bank only as an *entresoi*, rather the bank comes across like a competitive field where social differences play a role in producing hierarchies between the actual practices of the new recruits.

These *sites of power* can be much more interesting spots of observation for sociological work than more mundane sites like private clubs. These are stable social arenas at little distance to the 1%, privileged observation spots of the regular and repeated confrontation between agents belonging to different dominant social groups and institutional orders. By observing in these sites 'small' social mobility (for instance, from the lower fractions of the bourgeoisie to upper sections of the bourgeoisie), we can also more easily analyse interactional logics that structure relationships of domination and the expression of a symbolic power. Symbolic power has, of course, to do with the credit granted or not given to others. In his article on the field of the Grandes Écoles, Pierre Bourdieu gives a relational definition of symbolic capital that is useful for ethnographic fieldwork. He writes that 'the best measure of the position of an institution (or individual agent) in the distribution of symbolic capital lies undoubtedly in an index taking into account an assessment of its socially recognised claims (granted by its competitors) as well as the gap between these claims and its asserted, self-ascribed claims' (Bourdieu 1977, pp. 3–30; author's translation). Since the logic of symbolic capital responds to a logic of 'to believe and make others believe', symbolic power has to do with third-party certification of social resources.

An Ethnography of the Differences Between Objective Properties and Given Credit

If an ethnographer seeks to analyse symbolic capital in context, he must abandon the description of salient outlines of a bourgeois culture to pay attention – for instance – to the discussions when agents talk together about other agents and give credit to one of them because of his 'specific' potential. What are the naturalised traits that are given as a 'credit' to an agent and thus that function as efficient capital recognised and updated? The ethnographer should notice that this credit, only given to a handful of agents, allows them to do things others cannot, to access places without limits (not needing to show their ID, for example). The differences between self-perception and the perceptions of others are difficult to measure. But in some workplaces where assessment is formalised and recurring (including senior management), the ethnographer can likely benefit from material traces of these differences: by contrasting, for example, the positions to which an agent applied (available in his career records) and the positions to which he seems sufficiently qualified according to the viewpoints of his supervisors. If we consider agents with

comparable resources, how can one agent be given a credit whereas others cannot? What are the collective practices through which objective resources produce something that others cannot afford?

Symbolic capital has something to do with the efficient but localised recognition of possessed capital. It presupposes the existence of a field, a relational structure of agents able to bring objectively measurable resources to a higher level of collective recognition. This means, for instance, that the ethnographer should pay attention to moments when collective operations of redistribution and reallocation of tasks, as well as the rewards associated with them, are played out (for instance 'how is it decided who will be in charge of this important case with related subsequent chances of social mobility?').

In a recent review of 'The Sociology of Elites', Shamus Khan suggests defining elites as agents having control over resources or having the ability to redefine their resources as valuable. We could add that in order to grasp what is symbolic power, one should pay attention to these moments when the collective definition of what constitutes a particular type of capital is described as exceeding the sum of the capital objectively possessed by agents. What is at stake when a group is led to a naturalised social verdict, a collective recognition of the full embodiment of the expectations of a field (the musician dedicated to music becoming 'a natural born musician' etc.)? An ethnography of symbolic capital does not only presuppose the isolation of the few cultural practices that will be analytically erected to the rank of distinctive practices of an elite group. Rather, it aims to understand how the observed group gives more credit to some agents, recognising – between agents with comparable possession of capital – extraordinary or rare properties and talking about them with reverence, as these 'happy few' have embodied all the expectations of the field. Using a variety of methodological tools and techniques when observing the interactions in which the revaluation and reclassification of the agents' symbolic capital take place, the ethnographer creates the conditions for writing an ethnography of symbolic power that avoids falling into the culturalist trap.

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Chapter 21
Conclusion

François Denord

This book analyzes power relations between classes, institutions and social positions. It does not lend extraordinary qualities to the elites it studies. Inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu, a number of contributors emphasize the competition between the "High and Mighty", to use an expression from C. Wright Mills. Regardless of the capitals at their disposal, and whom they claim to exert power over, they struggle against each other to define the legitimate principle of domination. Building on research by the "power structure" theoreticians (the inheritors of C. Wright Mills), other contributors show that an unequal division of rare (economic, cultural, political, etc.) resources and the existence of networks account for the distribution and concentration of power.

The institutionalist, structural or, in some cases, Marxist approaches put forward in this volume highlight two types of relations, shedding light on the relationships between social spaces that each have their own logic: the first relations are effective, as they are inscribed in the materiality of social ties developed in a variety of circles (schools, clubs, workplaces, etc.) or produced by interactions; the second are objective, as they are associated with the possession of social characteristics that make agents comparable, regardless of their individual wills and their possible connections. Drawing on relational data (affiliations, biographies, careers), explored using methods that are themselves relational (geometric data analysis, social network analysis, Sequence Analysis), many contributors to this book propose to model

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power as a structure, with its dividing lines, its interplay of forces and its relative inertia. While they do not shy away from theory, their proposals are always empirically founded. They use material from the contemporary world, or turn to history for assessments of the situations of various states of the power structure.

An Increasingly Economic Power

At a time when economic capital has come to prevail as the dominant principle of classification, the possession (or absence) of power over means of production is one of the main dividing lines among the dominant. Indeed, while power establishes hierarchies in a given society, powers themselves are hierarchized. The domination of the economic order, produced by a neo-liberalization process that has been underway at the very least since the 1970s (Harvey 2007), continues to intensify, and sidelines previously central groups such as politicians or senior civil servants. This transformation in the power relations within the dominant class has especially benefited corporate executives, finance CEOs, and, to a lesser extent, consultancy firms. The fact is that these activity sectors operate based on a logic that is at odds with ordinary economic relations. In some cases, the bosses are not the only ones who decide: some employees (traders) who work closest to the sources of profit (the clients and the trading platforms) can pressure their employers with the threat of going to work for other firms (Godechot 2007). In others, the clients do not have the upper hand: the service providers, the consultants, prescribe policies and organizational methods to their clients. Economic power can therefore move in unexpected ways, as well as in more classical ones, including lobbying, which is never as effective as when corporations rally political power and its representatives to their cause. In any case, what is at stake is not so much a market mechanism in which the prices would depend on supply scarcity ("skills", "talents") but rather power relations between individuals and organizations that make it possible for a few to accumulate wealth. This economic order has its custodians, who may own the means of production, as is the case of some family CEOs who display their power publically, or who enforce the rule of monetary orthodoxy, like the central bankers, most of whom have received their economic training in US universities.

Under this configuration of the power structure, birth inequalities, manifested in inheritances, and indirectly in educational degrees, play a key role. They are actualized by ways of being and of acting ('habitus', in the sense of Pierre Bourdieu) that predispose some to occupy dominant positions in the most powerful economic organizations. At the top of the social hierarchy, economic and cultural capital are combined rather than opposed. On the one hand, having one of the two can make up for the other's relative absence, and then pave the way to their joint accumulation. On the other, the wealthy and their inheritors are further legitimized in handling money and passing on fortunes through the accrual of academic certifications. As a result, the individuals who have been integrated the most in the economic order have increased their power over the conditions of production and legitimization of

cultural capital. This is particularly visible in countries where earmarked curricula are reserved for socially selected groups, such as in certain elite schools. It is no accident that in such establishments the social distance between teachers, with socially more modest backgrounds, and students can be great. In countries where egalitarianism and meritocracy are promoted as key values, as in Scandinavia, elite social reproduction may operate more subtly in the seemingly meritocratic selection to a handful of prestigious study programs at the most established universities or in less visible individual pathways that pass through particular courses providing dense transmission of capital. The important thing is to think in terms of homology. Whereas, for instance, academic systems greatly differ in France and in the US, the French *grandes écoles* and the US Ivy League colleges do share similarities. They occupy structurally equivalent positions. Likewise, an analysis of recruitment into Irish private schools shows that the chiastic structure described by Bourdieu, with reference to the French field of power, can also be observed there, albeit in a milder form. Educational systems thus contribute to the preservation of the power structures in place. In addition to legitimating unequal distributions of economic and cultural capital, they can also reinforce their effects. Additionally, attendance at the most prized educational institutions confers social capital in the form of contacts that may turn out to be particularly useful in times of crisis.

From Power Structure to Practice

In the specific case of international programs and prestigious international schools, they serve to reinforce the cosmopolitan dispositions that aristocrats and the grand bourgeois have historically nurtured. However, the recognition of this international capital is not guaranteed permanently and everywhere. Power always involves a strong symbolic dimension, which is often expressed tautologically: in the Swedish art field, the elite is mostly composed of individuals who come from the cultural fractions of the ruling class. Despite the existence of this differential prestige, the reproduction of the social order crucially requires a form of solidarity between the powerful: common dispositions, properties and interests, and shared worldviews and lifestyles connect them. The tools that could be used to study this are not necessarily of a statistical nature.

When it comes to representing the power structure, the affinity between methods such as geometric data analysis and field theory has often been noted. Several contributors elaborate on this: GDA allows for the coincidence of the spatial representation of data, pictured as clouds of points, and of a relational vision of the social world (Duval 2014). When it comes to practice, however, the ethnographic approach is especially valuable. Its pitfalls are well known. Not only is access to fieldwork the subject of intense negotiation, but the effectiveness of the snowball method remains highly conditional on the interviewer's social capital (as well as that of their intermediaries). Additionally, the social distance between the investigator and the investigated may, in some cases, complicate the task: faced with professionals of public

speaking, maintaining the interaction framework can become a struggle and sometimes require recourse to contradiction, the effects of which can be double-edged. Specialists of the grande bourgeoisie, Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot note the practical issues they have come up against in their fieldwork and the sense of unease they have occasionally felt (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 1997; interview this volume). Two strategies can however prove to be particularly rewarding: the first consists of turning interviewees into informers, capable of judging their peers and assessing what matters in their world; the second strategy, which is costlier, entails primarily choosing atypical individuals, who are both insiders and outsiders, and as such have an original, critical perspective on their environment.

Observation is difficult for similar reasons. How can one be introduced into places whose access is, by definition, subject to strict control, and where confidentiality is often the rule? Still, ethnography has been fruitfully used in research on the grande bourgeoisie, its identity, its relationship to family or space (Le Wita 1994; Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 1989). Solemn occasions (funerals), festive events (such as award ceremonies) or intellectual gatherings (workshops or lectures) also remain open to the public, and may reveal practices and stakes. Beyond the study of fairly exclusive living environments and social venues, observation may occur in spaces where interactions between social classes play out. In spite of its seemingly casual atmosphere, the beach is, for instance, a stage for a very ordinary class struggle, in a spatialized form, specifying each participant's role and activities.

New Theoretical Concerns, New Objects?

Behind these methodological questions, there are more theoretical concerns. The contributions gathered in this volume do not all rely on the concept of 'field of power', even if they largely recognize themselves in Pierre Bourdieu's sociology. Two tools have occasionally been preferred: the interaction order and social class. The former has been used because investigation allows for the systematic reconstitution of a world of meaning and practices, based on historical material or in situ observation; the latter because, from the perspective of the Marxist (or Marxian) tradition, habitus is a focus of attention (effectively, Bourdieu explicitly links habitus and social class). The concept of 'field of power' is sometimes perceived as too extensive, attributing too much importance to the State and its high civil servants, emphasizing conflicts between individuals in preeminent positions rather than the unity that prevails at the top.

In this book, the power structure remains mainly explored through field theory/geometric data analysis. Either the agents under study are situated in a specific world (the artistic field, the space of central bankers…) or a national field of power is constructed. In the former case, thinking in terms of field does not only have a heuristic value for the researcher as the individuals under study may also be somewhat familiar with what can be described as their professional world. In the latter case, a far more theoretical space (a meta-field of sorts) is summoned. The field of power arguably exists more for the sociologist than it does for the agents who may

be a part of it. As Pierre Bourdieu remarked, "The notion of field reminds us that the true object of social science is not the individual, even though one cannot construct a field if not through individuals, since the information necessary for statistical analysis is generally attached to individuals or institutions" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 107).

The relations between various fields and the field of power are not systematically considered in this book. Is a celebrated writer, standing on top of the literary hierarchy, necessarily lower in the field of power than the CEO of a company that is listed on the stock exchange, but only thirtieth based on capitalization? Or, should the former's income derived from book sales be taken into account? What if the latter, a holder of multiple degrees, has also made himself known by publishing a few essays that tapped into the zeitgeist? The dominance of economic capital over cultural capital suggests that the relation of structural homology between the field of power, the space of higher education, and the social space established by Pierre Bourdieu should probably be called into question (Bourdieu 1996). As he began noting himself in the early 1980s, the opposition between economically dominant and culturally dominated positions on the one hand, and culturally dominant and economically dominated positions on the other faded "because intellectuals are richer in economic capital […] and especially because, at the dominant pole of the dominant class, ever more cultural capital is being accumulated" (Bourdieu 2015, p. 596.).

It is all the more difficult to grasp these transformations as analysis necessarily involves some delay. Whether relying on archives or biographical directories, or interviews of individuals currently in positions of power, we always tend to look at past elites. Thus, some recent trends may remain obscured. The contemporary literature points to at least three that deserve mention: internationalization, diversification, and feminization.

In the late 1990s, some works, mostly inspired by Marxism, heralded the emergence of a "transnational capitalist class" in the wake of globalization, without systematically documenting it empirically (for example, Van der Pijl 1998). Michael Hartmann's research proves that if we understand internationalization to mean that individuals with foreign citizenships are hired to lead organizations, this is a fiction; only in three countries worldwide (Australia, Great Britain and Switzerland) has such a form of internationalization been observed (Hartmann 2018). It hinges, indeed, on the existence of countries with identical languages, between which individuals circulate, and on state control over spheres of activity. Furthermore, several contributors to this book show that the internationalization of higher education has not necessarily led to the internationalization of executive positions. International capital, which is both a social and a cultural capital, only works in some social spaces, and its usefulness depends on an implicit hierarchy between states. It is likely more prized in worlds that are themselves internationalized, whether or not one admits that a "global field of power" (Lebaron 2008) exists.

While internationalization does little to renew the elites, we have to renounce the Western-centric view that sees the upper strata as white. This is clearly not the case in the global South. In these countries, according to their respective histories, "ethnic" or religious minorities and castes could remain crucial distinctions (Naudet

2018). In the North, successive waves of migration and the decline of segregative systems have, in instances, changed the recruitment of executives. In their book on diversity within the power elite, Richard Zweigenhaft and William Domhoff show that while diversity has grown significantly in the US, the class system, which sorts out individuals on the basis of their social origins, level of educational attainment, and income, still operates at full capacity (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2018 [2006]). Not to conclude, however, that the analysis of power does not stand to gain from taking into account phenomena such as skin color. On the one hand, African Americans and the darker-skinned Latinos encounter more discrimination than other visible minorities. On the other, their racialization may lead to specific practices that shed light on the experiences of the assignation of identity labels. In the overwhelmingly white world of the US Congress, James R. Jones shows that a trivial gesture, the "black nod", exchanged by black staffers, manifests the solidarity that unites them, beyond political cleavages and the distinct interests represented by their employers (Jones 2017).

Studies on gender also pave the way for new perspectives on power. The domestic role played by women, including within the ruling class, has often been stressed, as well as their contribution to maintaining the family's social and symbolic capital. In both respects, women are key to the reproduction of the lineage and heritage, and enable transfers of fortunes from one generation to the next (Glucksberg 2018). At the same time, a relative feminization of various types of power is observed (at least in the Western world), although their distribution remains just as unequal in terms of class origins. Women – often highly born – are more present in the media and in universities than in the past, and also access hubs of contemporary capitalism. In 2017, the boards of companies listed on the main French stock index (SBF 120) comprised of 41.5% women. Admittedly, legal provisions, as well as codes of conduct, provide incentives for this, and the women who benefit are rarely in executive positions. Similar observations can be made in other worlds, where the "glass ceiling" effect is still noticeable. Women do not seek out the most prestigious positions because the standards of male domination continue to prevail, especially regarding the most visible functions, such as those relating to politics. This is especially the case for women with children (Marry et al. 2017). Here, the interplay of gender and power showcases one of the key dimensions of male domination: the male monopoly over some executive and representative positions.

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