State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics

Hans Daalder

bron

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To the memory of Anneke Daalder-Neukircher, life-long companion
(† 2007)
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| acknowledgements

I am grateful to Peter Mair, who first proposed republishing a selection of my English-language writings more than two decades ago. He had a hand in the choice of chapters and the order in which they are presented, and helped earlier with the editing of some of them. He adds to the value of this book a challenging preface, in which he contrasts two different generations of scholars working in comparative politics and cross-national analysis - a gap which in his own work he has successfully bridged.

I have been privileged to have Dario Castiglione as editor of the ECPR Classics series, who assisted in bringing this book about with great courtesy and wisdom. The chapters, drawn from different books and journals which appeared over close to forty years, were originally scanned by Saskia Rademaker, and copy-edited by Theofanis Exadaktylos. I have admired the professional manner in which Mark Kench and his staff at ECPR Press have worked in the preparation of this and many other books.

In putting together the chapters for this collection I have been reminded of the good fortune I had, as a young scholar, to come in close contact and to collaborate with outstanding political scientists such as, in order of time, Carl Friedrich, Giovanni Sartori, Wilfrid Harrison, Val R. Lorwin, Otto Kirchheimer, S.E. Finer, Stein Rokkan, Robert A. Dahl, Edward Shils, Juan Linz, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Joseph LaPalombara, Arend Lijphart, Sidney Verba, Stanley Hoffmann and Mogens Pedersen and, not to forget, the stimulus I gained from younger scholars at Leiden and the European University Institute. I wish, finally, to thank the editors of the journals and books in which the original versions of the chapters appeared, and the publishers for granting permission to reprint them in this volume.

The Hague, The Netherlands.

Hans Daalder
The papers republished in this volume reflect the work of a comparative political scientist of a particular style, generation, and academic culture. The earliest paper included here dates back to 1966, and is a comparative treatment of political developments in Europe, focusing in particular on parties and their organizational and governing strategies. It has long been seen as one of the classic building blocks in the development of the discipline, and has often been reprinted. One of the most recent papers was drafted in the late 1980s, and was first published in English in 1995. It too looks at European political development, but in this case from the perspective of the growth of bureaucracies. Both papers are intellectually ambitious, far-reaching, and address very big questions, and this in particular sets them off from much of comparative political science today. It is not so much that contemporary comparative political science fails to produce papers and books that address big questions in meaningful ways - that still does happen - it's simply that this work is usually swamped by the volumes of more narrowly cast and specialised analyses that now flood the literature.

These two papers were neither the first nor the last that were published by Hans Daalder. There are earlier papers not included here that analyse different aspects of the politics of his own country, the Netherlands, as well as papers on Britain. For his generation, and for some time afterwards, the practice was usually to begin with analyzing the politics of a single country, often one's own, and only later, if at all, to venture further afield into genuine comparative analysis. There are also later papers, and a number of Dutch language books, some of which constitute part of the multi-volume biography of Willem Drees, the former Dutch prime minister. This can also be characteristic of this generation of comparativists, who sometimes return to a focus on themes relating to their own country in the later stages of their scholarly career or after their retirement.

In the middle of this span of papers is one which tries to get beyond a simple left-right dichotomisation of party identities and to identify the parameters within which it makes sense to speak of there being an autonomous ‘centre’ in European party systems. This is one of the few papers in this collection to have originally appeared in a journal, in this case the American Political Science Review in 1984, where it was bracketed between one paper on the ‘nationalization of the American electorate’ and another on ‘the constituency service basis of the personal vote for U.S. Representatives and British Members of Parliament.’ It was also Daalder's first and so far only publication in this leading review, and in his introduction to these essays he refers somewhat ironically to being ‘congratulated on this “feat” from various quarters, not least by ambitious younger colleagues.’

Few of these younger colleagues would have done work similar to that appearing in this volume. Indeed, many of the younger comparativists of today are not comparativists in the sense that Daalder would understand the term, but are
rather what he would have termed ‘cross-nationalists.’ That is, they are scholars who
don’t begin with countries, but with data; who don’t look in depth, but more widely;
who don’t generalise, but specify; and who place greater emphasis on method than
on understanding. In particular, and in sharp contrast to Daalder and to the other
leading comparativists of his generation, they rarely address big questions. As Richard
Snyder has noted, commenting on the work of the early US-based comparativists
that he and Gerardo Munck interviewed for their fascinating volume *Passion, Craft,
and Method in Comparative Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,
2007), and as is also visible in these essays, there was a passion for research that was
rooted in ‘the conviction that the questions they study are normatively important
and, hence, their work has implications for the “real world” of politics, policy and
public opinion.’

Contemporary comparativists are also more professional than older generations.
That is, they will have usually taken a basic degree in political science, and they are
likely to have received extensive graduate training in one of the many graduate
schools that have long flourished in the US and that are now spreading across Europe.
They will probably have received further training as postdocs, including training in
how to write journal articles - they must focus on one main point, have a clear
introduction, outline the theory behind your approach, apply it to data, and then
conclude - and how to submit them. Most young comparativists would aim to carry
out analyses which are ‘replicable’ by others, in contrast to Daalder's work, which
is not replicable, except with an awful lot of learning. Finally, most would likely aim
at the *APSR* or a comparable journal right from the off, and would probably try to
steer clear of book chapters. Daalder, on the other hand, as he states in his
Introduction, probably speaks for many others of his generation in stating that ‘I was
not used to, and still reject, the modern belief that publications in refereed journals
(themselves ranked in importance), “count” more in research assessments and are
regarded as more important than chapters in books, not to speak of books themselves.’

Indeed, it is from this last difference that many of the other inter-generational
differences stem - or at least it is there that these other differences are typified. For
example, for the contemporary generation of comparativists, it has become essential
to publish in journals. Indeed, it has become essential to publish in particular journals,
the ranking of which hardly differs from one country to another, or from one academic
setting to another, including the *APSR, World Politics, American Journal of Political
Science, European Journal of Political Research, and Comparative Political Studies*.
This inevitably results in common styles of analysis and presentation. Most of these
journals now operate a strict word limit for submissions of around 8,000 words; most
- the exception is probably *World Politics* - tend to favour quantitative cross-national
analyses; and most are likely to come to a decision on the acceptance or rejection of
a submission primarily on the grounds of method. The result is to encourage the
production of more or less standardised and normalised modes of analysis, a process
that leads to a pronounced degree of convergence in the themes, approaches and
outputs of contemporary scholarship. There is therefore little credit-worthy space
left available for
the more idiosyncratic, lengthy, exploratory and sometimes speculative writing that often marks Daalder's work in this volume and that of others of his generation in other books and essays, writing that was usually judged not on the basis of methodological considerations, but instead on the basis of the intrinsic interest and importance of the argument. Although Daalder has indeed published in a number of these top-ranking journals in the past, few of the papers in this present volume would match the criteria demanded by these journals today. The profession is worse off as a result. This is also what Juan Linz's concludes in the Munck and Snyder volume: ‘By becoming more impersonal and more bureaucratic, the field produces Standard, predictable products, but this standardization allows little room for mavericks and innovators.’ More's the pity.

Despite his misgivings about the rush to refereed journals, Daalder himself has always been a strong advocate of professionalisation, and when serving as the first Chair of the new Political and Social Sciences Department at the European University Institute in Florence, he did much to initiate an American-style PhD training programme. Later, he was the driving force behind the inter-university graduate school in political science that was established in the Netherlands in the late 1980s, and that was later absorbed into the larger and more successful research school, the Netherlands Institute of Government. He was also one of the founding fathers of the ECPR in the 1970s, emphasising always in this context the need for more professional training and greater internationalisation. Moreover, throughout his career, he collaborated exceptionally well with other colleagues, and was very active in promoting and sustaining research groups and collective projects. In this sense, his style was the opposite of that which used to favour the lonely scholar in the attic who would disappear for months or years and then return with a finished manuscript, and for this reason also, he would recognise and be recognised by the culture of the modern comparativist. But this is probably as far as mutual recognition would go.

Towards the end of his review of the interviews with the founding generation of comparative politics, Richard Snyder bemoans the professional amnesia that now characterises the field of comparative politics. ‘Graduate students,’ he notes, ‘are often discouraged from reading older works, which are routinely seen as “passé” or even “pre-scientific”.’ Although this tendency is probably not as pronounced in Europe as in the US, and although it is countered by the laudable efforts of the ECPR to republish and re-publicize classic texts, this is a problem that is becoming increasingly apparent. This is also a by-product of professionalism, of course, since an emphasis on training as such inevitably leads to an emphasis on training in methods above all else. Graduate students are busier than ever these days. They are obliged to follow training programmes, they are expected to publish, and they are under greater and greater pressure to complete their dissertations within three to four years. This leaves little time for reading (or writing) outside the box, and hence leaves little room for paying attention to the classics. This is regrettable in every sense, not least because, as Snyder also points out, these students are then robbed of ‘inspiring models of intellectual excellence.’

Hans Daalder offers one such model, and also for this reason, these essays re-
pay reading and study. But reading and studying such classics also serves a more practical purpose. It reminds us of the important questions that continue to face comparative politics, and it helps us to avoid re-inventing the wheel, generation after generation. Precisely because the papers republished in this volume reflect, as noted, the work of a comparative political scientist of a particular style, generation, and academic culture, they, and the papers of the earlier generations more generally, continue to offer immense added value.

Peter Mair
EUI, Fiesole.
chapter one | introduction - my life in comparative politics

The making of a political scientist

I was born in 1928, reason enough to make one turn to the discipline of political science. My first political memory is the Reichstag fire of 1933. I had an older brother with communist sympathies, who went to the Soviet Union in the early thirties, only to return five years later with a life-long fear of the GPU (the acronym for the Soviet secret police between 1922 and 1934) and its successors. Growing up in the shadow of totalitarianism and living in my teens for five years under German occupation in the Netherlands, I learned to fear arbitrary power; all the more reason to treasure the return of democratic institutions, yet also to keep a lasting awareness of their possible fragility. And to lead also to a life-long pre-occupation with issues like: how had democracy developed? Why did democracy persist, while it broke down in other states? What political systems did different countries have, and how did they function?

When I started as a university student in 1946, there was as yet no political Science in the Netherlands. I found it difficult to choose between law and history. But then I learnt that the University of Amsterdam was to establish a new Faculty of Political and Social Sciences. Both law and history were to be part of the curriculum, but also a host of other disciplines: economics, sociology, social psychology, media studies, international law, international relations. And: political science! A major problem became the lack of co-ordination between these different subjects. Professors in charge insisted that students should reach relatively advanced levels in their own discipline. Cumulative requirements meant that fewer than 10% of the more than three hundred students who enrolled in the opening year 1947 reached the final, still pre-doctoral degree. It took them an average of nine years.

I was one of those who got through and I eventually profited from the wide range of disciplines that the programme required. I was ahead of most students, having an initial year in history already behind me, and was lucky in landing an assistantship with the first Dutch Professor of Political Science in modern times, Jan Barents. He had a doctorate in law as well as philosophy, had been a journalist and was for a short time director of the research institute of the Dutch Labour Party. He had a sharp, critical mind, was extremely well-read, and focused not only on Dutch political life, but also on international politics. He was close to the founders of the International Political Science Association (IPSA), for which he organized the first International Congress in The Hague in 1952. There and then, I saw leading political scientists from many countries perform for the first time, including Raymond Aron, Carl Friedrich, Karl Loewenstein and many others. I was given the task to brief the press, which meant that I rapidly had to familiarize myself with the large number of papers presented.
The curriculum for political science - which I repeat was only one of the main subjects in the Amsterdam University programme - was modern. One had to study the great political thinkers, modern political theory, Dutch politics, the political systems of the major powers, and special subjects like political parties, electoral analysis and bureaucracies. Barents excelled in small seminars, forcing us to submit papers: seminar introductions, a shorter thesis analyzing the political system of another country, a full-fledged thesis at the end. I chose Britain for the country paper, and the problem of Marxism and nationality for the major thesis. Thinking of the possibility to elaborate the latter into a doctoral dissertation, I concentrated as far as possible on related subjects for equally compulsory theses in other disciplines: e.g. national self-determination for international law cum international relations and Marxist theories of imperialism for economics. I read Marx and later Marxists thoroughly, but decided eventually to drop the idea when Barents, my supervisor, demanded that I learned Russian, Polish and Yiddish in view of the important debates on nationality in Eastern Europe. Barents had earlier indicated that reading British biographies and autobiographies was one of the more agreeable ways to learn about politics. I had taken that to heart and decided on that basis to work on a dissertation on the organization and reforms of the British Cabinet since 1914.¹

Britain stood high for my generation. I had been an exchange student in England shortly after the liberation, a participant in a Special Course in Western Union at the University of Cambridge in the summer of 1950, and a British Council scholar at the London School of Economics during the calendar year 1954. There I came into contact with a much wider group of scholars than in Amsterdam. My supervisor was William A. Robson, Professor of Public Administration, a late Fabian, and also one of the first Presidents of IPSA. He took me with him to two conferences in 1954: the annual meeting of the British Political Studies Association and an IPSA Round Table on Comparative Government and Politics in Florence.

At the British Political Studies Association, the then editor of Political Studies Wilfrid Harrison asked me to recommend someone who could do a general article on the Dutch political system, as part of a series on the lesser known smaller European democracies. I offered to do it myself. Writing an article in English on one's own country for a readership whose understanding of politics is very much determined by the operative ideals and terminology of their own country, turned out to be one of the most intensive lessons in comparative study a young scholar might experience. It was published, after intense discussion with Harrison, in the early spring of 1955.²

Little did I foresee that this article alone was enough to bring me soon into contact with prominent scholars working on European politics: notably Val Lorwin, an American historian with a thorough knowledge of France who planned a study of Belgium; Stein Rokkan who did pioneering research work on Norway but was already on the way up to become the greatest Europeanist I have ever encountered; and that sceptical and original German exile in America, Otto Kirchheimer, then at the New School for Social Research in New York.

The IPSA Round Table in Florence brought together a number of older luminaries in the field of government studies including Carl Friedrich, Karl Loewenstein,
Robson, D.N. Chester, Max Beloff, Dolf Sternberger, Maurice Duverger and Léo Hamon with a small group of mostly younger American scholars (e.g. Roy Macridis, Samuel Beer, Robert Ward as well as that proverbial English maverick, the still young S.E. Finer) who after a meeting in 1952 had proclaimed the need for a less parochial, more scientific study in the field of comparative politics. In the discussions between the established older scholars and the younger upstarts tempers often ran high. One could not have hoped for a better introduction to the field. I befriended two younger men: Giovanni Sartori, then still an assistant, who was for all practical purposes the local organizer in Florence, and Serge Hurtig, then assistant to the Secretary General of IPSA, Jean Meynaud. Both were soon to become key figures in political science, in Italy and France respectively and beyond.

After a short period of research on the early history of the Dutch resistance newspaper Het Parool I returned to an assistantship with Barents. As a result of diabetes, he became blind. Relations became strained between us, which meant that I had to find another job. There were no academic positions in Dutch universities at the time, and I applied to some lectureships in Britain. On the recommendation of my LSE supervisor, Robson, I paradoxically landed a junior job in the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, a graduate training school directed towards mid-career civil servants from Third World countries. It forced me for a time to shift my academic interests to development studies rather than to Dutch or comparative European politics.

In 1960-1961 I spent a post-doctoral Rockefeller fellowship in the USA (1960-1961), when the famous Committee on Comparative Politics of the Social Science Research Council under the leadership of Gabriel Almond was very much in its hey-day. The fellowship, spent at Harvard and Berkeley, gave me a year of free reading time. It also brought me into close contact with a number of leading American scholars, an experience that has had a profound influence on my work ever since.

**Participant in three major international projects**

Even before I came to the USA that year, I had felt that I should re-work my Political Studies article into a much fuller book in English on the Dutch political system. I explored the possibility of a joint book with Robert L. Morlan of the University of Redlands who had been a Fulbright professor at Amsterdam in 1956-1957. But at the same time Lorwin and I began to think of a comparative volume on the Netherlands and Belgium. This soon developed into a more ambitious plan. One of the more influential volumes on European political systems was a collective volume on Britain, France, Germany and Russia, published in 1958 under the editorship of Samuel H. Beer and Adam B. Ulam. Why not think of a companion volume on the political systems of the Smaller European Democracies? Lorwin and I made a list of countries to cover: Austria, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden - ten in all, eleven if Iceland were included as we later decided to do. After all, did not Iceland claim Althingi as the oldest parliament in Europe? We drafted a detailed outline, which we circulated to a number of com-
parativists and to possible authors for the country chapters. We received highly encouraging comments from leading scholars in the field of comparative politics and favourable reactions from a number of possible publishers (both commercial and university presses), as well as promises for the individual chapters from experts like Kirchheimer on Austria, Rokkan on Norway, Basil Chubb on Ireland, Roland Ruffieux on Switzerland, Pär-Erik Back on Sweden, besides Lorwin on Belgium and myself on the Netherlands.

Two important developments intervened, however. Lorwin was a close friend of Robert Dahl. He made me meet Dahl when he was visiting the Berkeley department in the spring of 1961. Like so many, I had been greatly impressed by Dahl's *A preface to democratic theory* (Chicago, 1956). He told us that he intended to begin a new project, to analyze how the notion of opposition had developed as a legitimate institution, vital to functioning democracies. Not being as yet a scholar of comparative politics, he wanted to bring a group of country specialists together for a collective volume on Western democracies, later to be supplemented by a similar volume on opposition in non-democratic regimes. During an after-dinner walk in San Francisco he invited Lorwin and me to become members of the group on Western democracies, and write chapters on the two Low Countries. Others followed: Rokkan on Norway, Kirchheimer on Germany, Frederick Engelmann on Austria, Nils Stjernquist on Sweden, Alfred Grosser on France, Allen Potter on Britain, Samuel Barnes on Italy, Dahl himself on the United States. As convener and editor Dahl made it the most thorough analytical comparative project I have ever experienced. He arranged for a number of week-long conferences in the Rockefeller Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio on the borders of Lake Como, Italy. He prepared meetings with precise analytical questions, suggesting possible hypotheses to be criticized by the country specialists in writing before the meetings began. To see scholars like the all-knowing Europeanist Rokkan, the highly sceptical and tough Kirchheimer, the playful wit Lorwin, and the unique clarity of thought of Dahl himself was a unique experience. The eventual book *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (Yale University Press 1966) became a model of what can be achieved in comparative analysis by scholars of different countries under strong theoretical guidance. I regard my chapter ‘The Netherlands. Opposition in a Segmented Society’ as one of the best analyses of Dutch political developments I ever wrote.7 We asked Dahl to join us as one of the editors of the *Smaller European Democracies Project*, as we had also earlier asked Rokkan.

In the same year I published another article, ‘Parties, Elites and Political Developments in Western Europe’, in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner (eds.) *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1966), one volume in the series which issued from the work of the SSRC Committee on Comparative Politics (reprinted as chapter 5 in this book) The *parties* volume contains true classics by Kirchheimer, Sartori and Rokkan.8 My paper touched on a great many matters that were to preoccupy me in later work on comparative European politics. It stressed the importance of the earlier elite setting for the later development of parties, the nature of centralization in state formation, the timing of social and economic development, the degree to which
parties were able to reach and permeate the main springs of power, their role in integrating new population strata, the interaction between national and local politics, the politicization of social cleavages, and the manner in which these were to interact over time. Readers familiar with his work will have no difficulty to see Rokkan's influence. Towards the end, the paper confronts some of the then classical writings in the field of party studies: Michels' iron law of oligarchy which was to turn its author increasingly against parties and eventually to embrace fascism; Duverger's distinction between internally and externally created parties; and the relation of parties to other political actors, like interest groups, the media, the bureaucracy and so on. I treated such subjects in much greater detail in other chapters reprinted in this volume, including chapter 7 ‘Parties and Political Mobilization’ (written in 1982 as a think piece for a project on The Future of Party Government at the European University Institute, directed by Rudolf Wildenmann), and chapter 9 ‘Parties: Denied, Dismissed, or Redundant? A Critique’ which grew out of my Stein Rokkan Lecture, given on 9 April 1992 in the University of Bergen (Norway) under the title ‘A crisis of party’.

Things went less well with the SED (Smaller European Democracies) project, for a number of reasons. Dahl's Oppositions-project to some degree deflected the attention of the key-editors, even though the overlap also facilitated the formation and initial meetings of the SED group. Some of the original country authors fell away, notably Otto Kirchheimer who died in 1965. The project became much more ambitious. Rokkan persuaded us to plan not for one book with substantial country chapters, but to produce single volumes for each of the countries to be covered, to be concluded at the end with a book to be written by the four editors jointly. Our original outline, already a demanding one, was supplemented by an elaborate list of tables, divided between ‘musts’ and desirable ones, drawn up by Rokkan. One author, Basil Chubb, said bluntly that he could not possibly get all that material together for Ireland; in the end he was the only member of the group who did produce a substantial country volume for the planned series. We received a grant from the Ford Foundation, including some funds for incidental research assistance for country authors, which fell woefully short of the extensive original research needed to meet the outline and tables. And then, to some degree, we chose our often younger authors all too well. Many of us soon were appointed to often new chairs in political science (as I was in Leiden in 1963), at a time when student numbers rose rapidly.

This gave us many new tasks, and was compounded by the wave of student unrest in European university, including attempts at the politicization of curricula and of the gaining of power by what were basically activist minorities, which presented their demands under the guise of the ‘democratization’ of university government. This in turn was to lead to a rapidly increasing bureaucratization. Time that should have been spent on research was whittled away in bureaucratic procedures. I was asked by Edward Shils and Giovanni Sartori to take responsibility for a comparative project to analyze such developments, for which I called on SED colleagues for some of the countries. Eventually, we produced a substantial volume, Hans Daalder and Edward Shils (eds.), Universities, Politicians and
Bureaucrats. Europe and the United States, published with considerable delay by Cambridge University Press in 1982. It was small compensation at the expense of the SED-project planned with so much enthusiasm and intellectual input.

Yet, this picture does too little justice to the actual impact SED did have. Both the outline and the list of required tables were to lead to substantial research within countries. In the Leiden case, the indirect influence can be easily seen by the various projects initiated such as the study of important political elite groups, the rise of political parties, cabinet-parliament relations, coalition formation, the study of regional and local politics and so on. As editors, we did much more joint work than superficial observers may think. We worked together for half a year at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in the spring of 1967, covering mainly five major aspects: state- and nation-building; the presence of strong societal divisions and separate subcultures and the manner of their co-existence; the growth of mass politics and political parties; cabinet-parliament relations and the formation of cabinet coalitions; and a special study of the problem of size in democracies. We had wanted to produce a joint volume to be based on more extensive material later. When these came in scattered over subjects and time, we presented our work tentatively at two important IPSA meetings (the triennial congress of IPSA in Brussels in 1967 where I was asked to organize a meeting on typologies of political systems, and a special Round Table in Turin in 1969). Rather than in one volume, our work found its way in different media: a special book by Robert Dahl and Edward Tufte on Size and Democracy (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), Rokkan's Citizens, Elections, Parties. Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1970; reprinted in the ECPR classics series in 2009), and contributions to journals, e.g. V.R. Lorwin, ‘Segmented Pluralism, ‘Ideological Cleavages, and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies,’ Comparative Politics, 3, 1971, 141-175 and part of my own work ‘Cabinets and Party Systems in Ten Smaller European Democracies’, Acta Politica, 6 (1971), pp. 282-303, reprinted in this volume as Chapter 6. Of course, the empirical material presented in this paper on cabinet coalitions between 1918 and 1969 is very dated, but one should realize that it predated the work of most major coalition theorists, whilst it deliberately sought to bridge empirical work on cabinet-parliament relations and party systems with the more abstract newer coalition theories, which even today often go their separate ways.

The rise of the consociational model

During my year at the Center, I was asked by the University of California Press to review a new manuscript, written by Arend Lijphart, an American-trained scholar of Dutch origin whom I had met only once before, when he came to Holland to collect material for a dissertation with Gabriel Almond and Karl Deutsch entitled The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch & West New Guinea, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966. The new manuscript treated the Dutch political system as a deviant case in the light of Almonds well-known typology which regarded countries with ‘a heterogeneous political culture’ as fundamentally unstable. Lijphart
offered ‘an extended theoretical argument based on a single case of particular significance to pluralist theory’, given that a ‘Politics of Accommodation’ (the happy title of the book) could counteract conflicts provided elites followed certain rules. It was one of the most intelligent manuscripts I ever read. Although I disagreed with some of the arguments, I warmly recommended its publication. Fortunately, my advice prevailed over that of another reader (as it happens the late Samuel Eldersveld) who had sent in a negative report.

For all my admiration of the book, I did not foresee that it was to become the cornerstone for building the consociational model of democracy. As SED-editors, we were contacted during our year at the Center by two other young scholars: Gerhard Lehmlbruch who had finished a study on the basis of Switzerland and Austria he called Proporzdemokratie, and Jürg Steiner who treated Swiss democracy in opposition to the Westminster model of politics. The three (Lijphart, Lehmbrruch and Steiner) were unaware of each other's work, for all the similarity in their approach. As rapporteur for the Typologies Session of IPSA in Brussels in September 1967, I invited both Lehmbrruch and Lijphart to present their arguments. In a sense, this was the beginning of what was to become something like ‘a consociational democracy school’. I adopted the term ‘consociational’ myself for a paper I had written at the instigation of Rokkan which contained ‘a paired comparison’ of nation-building in the Netherlands and Switzerland (reprinted as Chapter 10 in this volume). I was later asked by the editors of World Politics to do an extensive review article of some six studies under the title ‘The Consociational Democracy Theme’ (see chapter 11 herein), a text that contains the fullest analysis on my part of this literature. In the meantime, we had been able at Leiden University to persuade Lijphart to fill a vacant chair for international relations. We were happy colleagues for a number of years, while we continued a polemic on the Dutch case for years to come (see also my second Harvard lecture in chapter 12 of this book). For all his theoretical contribution, I found that Lijphart attributed too little importance to long-term historical political processes. Before coming to Leiden, he had translated his The Politics of Accommodation into Dutch. The book (entitled Verzuiling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek, Amsterdam, De Bussy, 1968) had a great impact in the Netherlands. It was to go through as many as nine editions, and republished more recently as a Dutch classic!

The establishment of the European consortium for political research

Within a year of Lijphart's arrival at Leiden, he and I were to become actively involved in the founding of the European Consortium for Political Research. Prime movers were, in different ways, Jean Blondel, Serge Hurtig and Stein Rokkan, with important backing from Warren Miller, that stalwart organizer of the Interuniversity Consortium of Political Research at Ann Arbor, Michigan, then consultant to the Ford Foundation. The influential officer of the Ford Foundation, Peter de Janosi, visited us at Leiden on an exploratory tour. This led to a meeting of scholars from eight institutions: Bergen (Stein Rokkan, the natural chairman); Essex (Jean Blondel, the highly active first Executive Director), Nuffield College
(Norman Chester), Strathclyde (Richard Rose), the Fondation Nationale des Science Politique (Serge Hurtig), Mannheim (Rudolf Wildenmann), Gothenburg (Jørgen Westerståhl) and Leiden (myself, with Arend Lijphart who was soon to become the founding editor of the European Journal of Political Research). This is not the place to describe the rapid development of the ECPR, especially after the invention by Rudolf Wildenmann of the Joint Sessions of Workshops format. I was associated with the Consortium for the next eighteen years, as the first Chairman of the Workshop Committee, as Chairman following Rokkan from 1976 to 1979, and for another nine years as a member of the Executive Committee, mainly concerned with publications. These were exciting years, seeing the advance of political science in one European country after another, accompanied by the development of more and more collaborative projects across frontiers, both physical and intellectual.

Originally, the Consortium did not have any research projects of its own. This changed around 1976, when the substantial grant of the Ford Foundation began to run out. After thorough discussions, we decided to take responsibility for four large-scale research projects: Models of Governing: The Problems of Overload, directed by Richard Rose; Recent Changes in the West European Party Systems directed by Hans Daaldor, Mogens Pedersen and Rudolf Wildenmann; International Development, Regional Policies and Territorial Identities in West Europe led by Stein Rokkan and Derek Urwin, and Problems of West European Urban Government under the responsibility of Ken Newton. These projects were financed by a large grant from the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk, which included a substantial overhead for the ECPR Central Services. The Recent Changes project overlapped with my appointment as Professor and Head of the Department of Political and Social Sciences (1976-1979) at the European University Institute. It became my major research responsibility, soon reinforced by the appointment at this new Institute of two brilliant young assistant-professors, Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair. We could draw on a strong network of party specialists. Unlike the SED-project it was to produce both a general volume on outstanding problems in the literature on parties and a substantial number of country studies.

Rudolf Wildenmann was to move on with a new project of his own under the heading The Future of Party Government when he was appointed at the European University Institute in 1980. Two chapters reprinted in this book were directly related to these two projects. The paper on Parties and Political Mobilization (mentioned earlier and reprinted in this volume as chapter 7) was prepared for the Wildenmann project in which I was not to participate afterwards. The other is the present chapter 8 ‘In Search of the Center of European Party Systems’. This was a product of the EUI Seminar I directed in my last full year at the EUI (1978-1979), when we confronted the paradox that both ‘Left’ and ‘Right’ have received ample attention in the party literature, but that for all its use in common parlance only few scholars have looked theoretically at party systems from the perspective of their centre. I tried to summarize our extensive discussions in this paper, which we intended to place in the 1983 general volume West European Party Systems: Continuity and Change (London, Sage, 1983). But the publisher wished us to cut some fifty pages.
from the book which was running over 500 pages. As I had already an introductory
chapter in it which offered an overview of the literature on European parties and
party systems, we decided that the centre piece had to go. Somewhat absent-mindedly,
I sent it to the American Political Science Review which contrary to expectation not
only accepted it in record time, but also gave it priority placement. I was congratulated
on this ‘feat’ from various quarters, not least by ambitious younger colleagues. I was
not then used to, and still reject, the modern belief that publications in refereed
journals (themselves ranked in importance), ‘count’ more in research assessments
and are regarded as more important than chapters in books, not to speak of books
themselves. This may be true of some of the sciences, but remains a highly dubiously,
and definitely one-sided, measurement when applied to our discipline.

States, nations and bureaucracies

I have mentioned the paper (chapter 10 in this volume) in which at Rokkan’s behest
I had ventured to compare processes of state- and nation-building in the Netherlands
and Switzerland. To some degree this was a follow-up of the SED-project where
state and nation-building preoccupied both Rokkan and me. Rokkan pursued the
subject on a much wider scale under the auspices of Unesco’s Social Science Research
Council. My paper was first published in French and English in the International
Social Journal in 1971. It probably became better known when it appeared in the
impressive two volume collective work Building States and Nations (London, Sage,
1973, 14-31), edited by S.N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan. I had met Eisenstadt first
in 1963 at a meeting of the loose but influential network of scholars meeting as the
Committee of Political Sociology under the aegis of both the International Political
Science Association and the International Sociological Association, and our contacts
became close in the decades to come. He asked me to participate in a symposium
organized in 1985 in the context of the sixtieth anniversary of the Hebrew University
in Jerusalem on ‘Historical Traditions and Patterns of Modernization and
Development’ in May 1985. He told me to take care ‘only’ of Europe (with economic
and social developments to be treated by another author). I decided to approach this
assignment by focusing on differences in the formation of states in their relation to
groups and to individuals. It combined the widespread focus on development with
the comparative analysis at processes of democratization, in the nearest piece to
political theory that I have ever attempted. It was published in another two-volume
work edited by Eisenstadt, Patterns of Modernity (London: Frances Pinter, 1987)
vol. 1, 22-43 (reprinted in this volume as Chapter 4). The Jerusalem Conference led
participants to emphasize the need to follow-up with more detailed studies on narrower
subjects. One subject single out was a study of the different ways in which
bureaucracies were formed in the processes of state formation and modernization in
Europe. I was asked to submit a plan for a comparative project which could be
incorporated into a program of the European Science Foundation on Center-Periphery
Relations, directed by Walter Rüegg of the University of Bern. I drafted a substantial
paper and sought the collaboration of Vincent Wright (long-time fel-
low at Nuffield College), an outstanding specialist on French politics and administration, co-founder with Gordon Smith of the London School of Economics of the lively journal *West European Politics* and, for a few years, not long after I had left, professor at the European University Institute. We approached a number of scholars in different countries, e.g. Juan Linz (Spain), Yves Mény (France), Sabino Cassese (Italy), Pär-Erik Back (Sweden), Mogens Pedersen (Denmark), Peter Gerlich (Austria), with Rüegg committed to Switzerland and myself to the Netherlands. We organized a number of workshops (at Nuffield College, Oxford in 1985, Castelgandolfo in 1986, and Bern in 1989). I submitted the project to the European University Institute which held off. Again a combination of university problems and other research commitments prevented most authors to deliver their individual papers, while others died or moved out. I decided to publish a version of the project paper in Dutch in a *Festschrift* for a departing Leiden colleague in Public Administration in 1988, and in English in a similar publication to honour Juan Linz (the version printed as chapter 3 in this volume). In the meantime, within the context of the European Science Foundation, a group of historians organized a comparative study of the development of bureaucracies since the Middle Ages. I was asked to present our theoretical outline to a meeting organized in Rome in 1990. It was translated by one of the directors of the project in French. It was to be the last gasp of our own comparative project.

Before this, I had used the general theme in two treatments on the Dutch case. One was a paper presented at a special symposium for the retirement of the Dutch historian Ernst H. Kossmann, who had done path-breaking work on the political theories advanced in Dutch universities in the 17th century. Kossmann was inclined to see the few absolutist thinkers in the 17th century as also the precursors of individualism, and hence as predecessors of modern democracy. In contrast to his view, I stressed the strength of pluralist and accommodationist elements in the Dutch Republic for the peaceful transition towards what Dahl has called a polyarchy (as the nearest empirical system to the ideal of democracy). When I was invited to be the Erasmus Lecturer in Dutch history and Civilization at Harvard in the autumn of 1989, I returned to that debate in the first of three official lectures required of the holder of that Lectureship. It has so far only circulated as a Working Paper of the Harvard Center for European Studies. It is published in a more definite way, together with the two subsequent lectures, as chapter 12 of the present volume.

**The intellectual autobiography of comparative European politics**

My retirement from the Chair of Politics in 1993 coincided with the holding of the Joint Sessions of the ECPR at Leiden University. I organized a special workshop to which I invited a number of the colleagues I had met over more than thirty years, asking them to look back at their own life in comparative politics. This led to a large volume, misnamed under pressure from the publishers' marketing manager *Comparative European Politics. The Story of a Profession*, London/New York: Frances Pinter, 1997. It contained biographical chapters on four major fig-
ures who had died before or when the book was in preparation, (i.e. Carl Friedrich, Stein Rokkan, Rudolf Wildenman and Samuel Finer), and twenty-three autobiographical chapters by those then still alive. Each author was asked what made him turn to political science and share in the development of comparative politics; what were the major political problems they dealt with; what their most important contributions in empirical research and theory formation; and when they looked back, what about their achievements and what would they have done differently if starting all over again?


Other work since 1993

In a sense my work in modern political science ceased following my retirement from the Leiden chair in 1993, apart from putting together the autobiographies volume which includes a chapter on my own journey in comparative politics entitled ‘A smaller European's opening frontiers’. I wrote a substantially longer book of academic memoirs in Dutch entitled Universitair Panopticum. Herinneringen van een gewoon hoogleraar (Amsterdam, Arbeiderspers 1997), and younger colleagues brought together a volume of my writings in Dutch and English under the title Politiek en Historie (1990). I also published a collection of public lectures and other papers in Dutch entitled Van oude en nieuwe regenten. Politiek in Nederland (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker 1995).

Stopping working on modern political science did not mean giving up the study of politics altogether. The real task of my retirement years has been the writing of a multi-volume biography of the Dutch Socialist Willem Drees (1886-1988), whose active political life spanned almost the entire 20th century, culminating in the immediate post-1945 years when he served as a Cabinet Minister for three years, and as Prime Minister for more than ten. He was a man with a unique understanding of politics. I learnt a great deal from him in direct conversation until he was 99, and continue to do so from research in his extensive archive and other relevant sources. This work is done in collaboration with a younger historian and co-author Jelle H. Gaemers. It is a laborious job, not least because as a former parliamentary stenographer in the first two decades of the 20th century, he continued to use short hand in many of his papers ever since. So far, we have published three volumes of the biography itself and a special volume on Drees and the monarchy.

I interrupted work on the last volume to write a short book on the Dutch political system by way of dialogues with fictitious grand-children in the internet age. It was aimed at the 10-15 age-range, and I called it Het boek van Opa Politiek (Grandpa's book on Dutch politics: Amsterdam 2006). In my wilder moments I have thought of setting up a project for similar books on other European countries to be written by colleagues of good old times. But then old Drees looks frowning over my shoulders,
asking me from another world why I still have not finished the volume dealing with his later years.

Eindnoten:

5. For all its smallness, the department of political science at Redlands had the best graduate placement record west of the Rocky Mountains at that time.
10. See *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 15, 4, 1992, 269-288. One should note that there are two annual Stein Rokkan Lectures: one given at the Joint Sessions of Workshops of the ECPR by a scholar chosen by the local organizers, and one in the University of Bergen. I gave both. The earlier one presented at the Joint Sessions in Gothenburg under the title *Countries in Comparative Politics. Why Rokkan should not die or fade away* which appeared in the *European Journal of Political Research*, 15, 1, 1987, 3-21 is reprinted in this volume as chapter 2.
11. The electronic appendix of this book includes the original document Val Lorwin and I drew up in 1961 to sketch the possibility of one collective volume on the smaller European Democracies, the outline for the country volumes which issued from the first meeting of the group of participating authors in 1964, and the demanding list of required and desirable tables drawn up by Rokkan and circulated in 1965 (with examples of tables from his own work on Norway and available in existing literature in 1964).
13. Ibid., p. 29.
14. Hans Daalder and Peter Mair (eds), *Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change* (London: Sage, 1983) which brought together papers on unsolved issues in the study of party systems by a roster of prominent specialists on parties and party systems, as well as new research by young researchers of the European University Institute.
Mastropaolo after Farneti’s death in a car accident shortly before Farneti was to depart to All Souls College in Oxford to work with Finer on what was still only a rough first concept.) Further volumes followed two years later: Peter Mair, *The Changing Irish Party System. Organisation, Ideology and Electoral Competition* and Hans Daalder (ed.), *Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Belgium*, both published by Frances Pinter, London, 1987.


17. Their international orientation makes it difficult to list them by country: should Jean Blondel be placed under France or Britain, and Richard Rose under the USA or the UK, Juan Linz under Spain and Arend Lijphart under the Netherlands or both in the USA, Philippe Schmitter under the USA or a cosmopolite American with a strong European streak (his mother was at least French), and so forth. Even so, the number of Americans (with Gabriel Almond, Robert Dahl, Ted Gurr, Sidney Verba and Harold Wilensky, in addition to the debatable Carl Friedrich, Linz, Lijphart, Rose and Schmitter) is understandably large, as is the number of British (i.e.: S.E. Finer, Jack Hayward, Gordon Smith, Vincent Wright and expats Blondel and Rose) compared to the two French (Pierre Birnbaum and Guy Hermet), three Germans (Klaus von Beyme, Gerhard Lehmbruch and Rudolf Wildenmann), one Italian (Sartori who held prestigious American chairs), one Dutch (myself; or two if one includes Lijphart), one Austrian (Peter Gerlich), one Norwegian (Stein Rokkan), one Dane (Mogens Pedersen), one Finn (Erik Allardt), and one Israeli (Eisenstadt).

18. It would take another ten years before a somewhat similar book was published (e.g. Gerard L. Munck and Richard Snyder (eds.), *Passion, Craft and Method in Comparative Politics*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007). That book differs from the earlier volume in that it focuses exclusively on Americans or on scholars whose main work has been done in the USA (e.g. Linz and Lijphart), is based on lengthy interviews rather than (auto)biographical texts, and treats only fifteen scholars in all. Almond, Dahl, Lijphart, Linz and Schmitter appear in both books. The more recent Donatella Campus and Gianfranco Pasquino (eds.) *Masters of Political Science* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2009, based on their original Italian volume *Mastri della scienza politica*, Bologna: Il Mulino 2004) treats eleven scholars. It casts a wider net in that it deals with general political scientists irrespective of their special importance for comparative politics, and contains reviews of their work by other political scientists, rather than obituary or autobiographical texts. About half the chapters were written by Italians, the other half by authors from other countries. Only Dahl and Linz are covered in all three volumes, whilst there is an overlap of the *Masters of Political Science* and the Autobiographies volumes in three cases Finer, Verba and Sartori


Hans Daalder, *State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics*
I.
Comparative European politics: state formation and modernization
chapter two | countries in comparative european politics

Introduction

This chapter is about the development of comparative European politics, and on the enduring contribution to that line of enquiry of the first Chairman of the European Consortium of Political Research, the late Stein Rokkan. It focuses on the role which the comparative study of European countries has played and should play in our profession. It offers a general survey on the manner in which this field of study has developed in the past half century. And it discusses the relationship of country studies to cross-national studies, which are to some extent their corollary, and from another point of view their contrast. I shall deal with four different ways in which countries figure in the study of comparative politics: (1) as pattern states; (2) as stimuli for the extrapolation of the political experiences of specific countries into new models; (3) as laboratories for cross-national research; and (4) as variables in their own right. I shall end with an attempt to distill some ‘lessons’ which we might draw from this survey.

The paramountcy of pattern states

Some fifty years ago, the prevailing temper of comparative government studies both in Europe and the United States was heavily institutional, highly normative, and hardly comparative. Most scholars were concerned with their own country alone. If they treated other countries, they often practiced what my late teacher, William A. Robson, used to call the Cook’s Tour approach: individual countries were treated above all as discrete phenomena, hardly ever as parallel or comparable cases. Of course, the larger countries were best known, and their experiences were often appealed to, in positive or negative terms. Also particular institutions were treated, and sometimes borrowed eclectically, from one country to another. But then the crisis of the 1930s exploded the easy confidence in democratic institutions which had prevailed until that time. Except for one country, Britain.

Britannia rules

At the end of World War II the British model stood at its zenith. Britain had survived in this war, while (with the exception of a few neutral countries like Switzerland or Sweden) all other European countries had fallen to either native or foreign dictatorship. Britain had produced both a victorious Churchill and had proved simultaneously that it could replace such a paramount statesman in the

wake of victory by a prestigious Labour Party. The British model seemed more
enviable than ever before.

We all know the main characteristics of the British model, which many of us teach
in elementary comparative government classes to this day: a sovereign Mother of
Parliaments; both individual and collective ministerial responsibility which had
triumphed early; a decisive role for single member constituencies which supports a
two-party system; hence the certainty of single party majority government which
rests on a clear electoral mandate and guarantees truly accountable government; a
genuine civil service in which the best minds of a nation are ready to do the bidding
of whatever party finds itself in power; prestigious courts which respect the principle
of the sovereignty of Parliament (and hence do not engage in judicial review), and
yet remain sufficiently distant from the Executive to keep it from acting ultra vires,
while avoiding a formal system of Droit Administratif which might make government
its own judge.

Of course, such a model was an idealized one even in 1945. It did not lack domestic
critics then, e.g., those who wished to strengthen Parliament, for instance by
reinforcing parliamentary committees, so that Parliament would not fall completely
under the control of the Cabinet; or those who deemed the electoral system unfair
for third parties - with Labour and Liberals reversing their position since the beginning
of the early twentieth century; or those who began to criticize the dominance in the
civil service of the ‘amateur’ over experts and specialists; or those who wished to
tidy up the rather messy structure of administrative law in Britain, as in the writings
of W.A. Robson or W. Ivor Jennings, criticizing A.V. Dicey's Introduction to the
Study of the Law of the Constitution, etc. Yet, such criticisms remained for long the
province of the specialists, hardly affecting either the clarity or the prestige of the
model.

Cross-channel comparisons

The self-confident British model was traditionally reinforced by cross-Channel
comparisons. According to widespread impressions in England, there had been all
too many lingering vestiges of an absolutist state on the European continent. Did not
bureaucracies remain to a certain extent immune from democratic political control?
Was not the notion of the Rechtsstaat an instrument for congenial rule over subjects,
rather than a guarantee for individual citizens? Were political parties really able to
translate votes into power? Typically, so the Standard argument ran, electoral systems
on the continent tended to provide far better for the representation of disparate forces
than for enforcing the formation of definite democratic majorities. Divided forces
could only produce coalition governments which tended to be immobilist and
ineffective. Parties seemed in such circumstances to be mainly self-seeking.
Frenchmen spoke slightingly of a République des Camarades and Germans of a
Parteienstaat (or later Italians of a Partitocrazia or Belgians of a Particratie), which
threatened both the authority, the Obrigkeit, of the State and the free expression of
genuine popular will. Compared to British developments, parliamentary government
on the continent seemed inherently unstable, or even incomplete. Such developments as took place towards a more real parliamentary
system had (not unexpectedly) been nipped in the bud in the 1920s and 1930s, so the argument went, by provisions for emergency powers and outright defeat by autocratic forces.

Such views had met confirmation from critics in European countries who had measured their own systems (at the time, or post hoc) with British yardsticks. ‘Functionalist’ critics of proportional representation (PR) blamed such systems for making voters and parliaments ineffective. They therefore pleaded for ‘British’ reforms such as a single member plurality system, or the effective use of the right to dissolution to strengthen the hands of Cabinets over undisciplined followers. If parties were unable to ensure stable majority government, it might be necessary to resort to other institutional reforms. After World War II there was some hope in such measures as the investiture of the French Fourth Republic, and great trust in the constructive motion of non-confidence in the German Federal Republic. Whereas resentment against the role of Hindenburg led German constitution-makers to strengthen the office of Federal Chancellor, continuing disillusionment with French Gouvernement d'Assemblée was to turn not only General de Gaulle, but also many French experts of political science alias droit constitutionnel, into advocates of strengthening the hands of the President, over against a Parliament deliberately shorn of many of its powers and a Cabinet formally responsible to it. All in all, such ingenuity in institutional engineering would hardly persuade British observers that their views of the European continent had been wrong: surely the real secret of stable democratic government was not in constitutions and ad hoc institutional provisions, but in political evolution and traditions, which one might enjoy but could hardly adopt and enforce.

Cross-Atlantic comparisons

The paramount place of the British model was also fed by cross-Atlantic comparisons. From Bagehot (1867) and Bryce (1921) to Laski (1940) and Herman Finer (1960), comparisons between the American Presidency and the British system of Cabinet Government had usually been very much to the advantage of the latter. There was strong insistence on the value of the House of Commons as a testing ground of politicians forced to climb the ‘slippery pole to the top’, and strong emphasis on the merits of collective ministerial responsibility over the hazards of rule by a single Executive. Reformist elements in American political science and public administration habitually held up the British model as the one to follow, e.g., in matters like civil service reform or the need to adopt ‘a responsible party model.’ Contrasts between the USA and that other large democracy on the American continent which had a parliamentary system of government, Canada, tended to strengthen such views. They were also to inspire the very influential economic models of democracy, as elaborated by J.A. Schumpeter (1942) and Anthony Downs (1957). Their descriptions of political entrepreneurs seeking to win undivided mandates clearly had mainly the British system as its inspiration, with multiparty systems being an erring deviation from the preferred simplicity of the two-party norm.
The quaint smaller European democracies

In debates contrasting the larger countries the UK, France, Germany, or the US - the smaller European countries counted for little. There might be folkloristic reporting of their existence. But their development and working seemed largely irrelevant to pressing concerns of comparative European politics. If their experience with democratic government seemed by comparison to other European countries rather favorable, this could be attributed to the presence of special factors: happy institutions like a sober monarchy;\textsuperscript{14} special arrangements for a stable collegial executive as in Switzerland; advantages of small size making for close internal elite networks;\textsuperscript{15} a lesser load in international affairs which less fortunate larger states could not escape, etc. With this went the parallel assumption that smaller states were not really relevant, because both military and economic realities prevented them from being fully in control of either internal or external developments.\textsuperscript{16} Hence, their developments could not contain meaningful lessons for larger countries.

New country models

Soon, however, such parochial proclivities were to decline, permitting developments towards more genuine comparative understanding of a rather larger number of countries. Various factors were to contribute towards such developments.

The decline of the English model

From the late 1940s onwards the appeal of the once all-pervasive British model began to diminish. Various lines of criticism undermined what was once thought to be self-evident truth. Parliament in the British system, so the argument went, was much too weak to sustain the notion of a ‘sovereign’ representative body. Ministerial responsibility was an illusion, as the combined effects of a sovereign Parliament and of individually and collectively responsible ministers was to keep anonymous civil servants immune from genuinely democratic control. At the same time, a bureaucracy under the undisputed leadership of amateurs was hardly fit for a time of increasing government intervention and greatly complicated issues (e.g., the influential Fulton Report, 1968). With it, there came also increasing doubts of the virtues of the mechanics of alternating governments. In place of the existing dogma of the moderating effect of rival teams struggling for the floating vote at the centre, came the notion of ‘adversary politics’.\textsuperscript{17} Such ‘adversary politics’, far from guaranteeing continuity, led to sudden jolts in policy, proving false the assumption that front benches would ensure ‘Butskellite’ policies, whether a Butler or a Gaitskell was in control. Effective power tended to shift towards militant ideological wings whether in the case of the Labour Party or the Conservatives, with groups external to Parliament increasing their power.\textsuperscript{18} The hallowed notion of the electoral mandate became a dubious fig-leaf, resting not on actual consent given at the polls but on
minority votes being transformed into dubious majorities merely by an unrepresentative electoral system. If forces at the centre attempted to mobilize against the potential tyranny from either ideological wing, they proved to be insufficiently powerful within the existing parties; and if they tried to obtain representation through the formation of new parties, and attempted to enforce coalition
government, they were seen to be badly discriminated against by the very electoral system which had once been held to be the embodiment of British virtue.\textsuperscript{19} British political scientists moved in the forefront as critics of their own system, pointing to other European countries as doing in fact rather better than Britain, which seemed to slip to the bottom of the European league.

The American reversal

The presumed superiority of the British model had by that time already greatly suffered in American debate. This was of course due largely to the new prominent role of America in world politics. But it was powerfully reinforced by developments in political analysis. If the APSA had in 1950 still proclaimed the superior virtues of the British-inspired ‘responsible party model’, the much looser American party system was now proclaimed to be rather functional for a country the size of a continent, with a medley of disparate groups. The absence of strong ideological divisions between the parties clearly fostered a bargaining style of politics. For all its inequalities, the system was relatively open to new groups, and could thus figure as the archetype of a ‘polyarchy’.\textsuperscript{20} Cross-cutting cleavages made for moderation. If empirical research revealed considerable inequality in influence, this could be discounted by the comparative finding that America after all had rather a great ratio of ‘citizens’ to ‘subjects’ or ‘parochials’,\textsuperscript{21} while elites seemed more democratically inclined than fortunately apathetic masses. The time was ripe for Gabriel Almond’s influential article in which he sought to change the terminology of comparative politics and coined the famous distinction between an Anglo-American and a Continental-European model.\textsuperscript{22} In depicting the latter, he took over many of the stereotypes which had characterized the earlier cross-Channel dialogue. The European Continent was apparently mainly a mixture of Weimar Germany, pre-1940 and post-1944 France, and post-war Italy. Typically, other, smaller European countries were described at most as being mixed - which presumably meant that they had some Anglo-Saxon virtues in addition to undoubted continental - European vices.\textsuperscript{23}

The umbilical cord

In the late 1940s began the massive trek of young European political scientists to the United States, made possible by unparalleled generosity on the part of American universities and American foundations. Such young scholars were easily swayed by the sense of exhilaration and limitless energy of the American profession. Its impact was increased further by its level of specialization and its openness to other disciplines. This made American scholarship doubly attractive for younger men, pitted against senior faculty members in their own countries who were very much of another style and era. There was immediate desire to replicate American studies at home, and to engage in new collaborative ventures with American scholars. But there was also a clear sense of uneasiness. Did one's own country really fit the often hasty, and hazy,
American generalizations? At worst, the reactions of younger Europeans might take the form of what used to be known as the Zanzibar-ploy: whenever an exciting hypothesis or generalization was ut-
tered in international conferences, a petty voice might be heard saying: ‘But it isn't like that in Zanzibar...’ 24 More positively, it led to a clear wish on the part of younger European scholars of the day to bring one's own country onto the map of international political science. In order to do so, such studies had to be written in English. Their country had to be ‘translated’, as it were, into the terminology of political understanding developed from analyses of the British and/or American system. English also became the paramount language of communication within European countries, pushing aside both French and German which before World War II had held at least a similar place. At the same time, scholars from different European countries were rather differently motivated to engage in such ‘translation efforts’. Scholars in larger countries lived in a more self-sufficient environment than scholars in smaller countries. And within the larger countries there were clear differences between victors and losers of World War II, the latter possibly showing a greater openness as they had to recast their own systems and craved for a new international understanding. 25

Extrapolated models

There was, then, often an umbilical nexus between scholars in one European country and the American profession. In some of the best cases such contacts led to an attempt to fashion new models and typologies, in which knowledge of particular countries, which so far had not been taken adequately into consideration in English or American-derived generalizations, provided an important source of inspiration. I mention a few of the best-known and fruitful:

Italy and Sartori’s model of polarized pluralism: Italian developments, with a dominant Democrazia Cristiana facing what soon became the largest Communist party of Western Europe - albeit in a system with many other parties on the right, the centre and the left - undoubtedly provided the source of inspiration for Sartori's model of polarized pluralism. 26 Of course, Weimar Germany and the precarious situation of the French Fourth Republic - squeezed by Communists and Gaullists alike - were there for all to see. There is in Sartori's approaches some trace of Ferdinand Hermens, 27 i.e., in his notion of ‘ideological stretching’, as well as of Duverger, 28 i.e., their common distaste of a center. And Sartori would not have presented such a brilliant analysis if he had not been familiar with general approaches, notably those of Schumpeter, Downs and Dahl in elaborating what some have all too easily called the ‘economic model of democracy’. For all that, Sartori's typology of party systems is a magnificent example of what profound knowledge of one other country than those taken up into ‘Anglo-American’ comparative politics could contribute to a refinement of general models and typologies. If some fifteen years elapsed between Sartori's initial formulation of the model and his final analysis in Parties and Party Systems (1976), 29 this is not because Sartori lacked knowledge of general political science or of his own country, but because by that time the amount of available material on other European countries was so rich that it forced him to sit down and take note.
The consociational democracy model: The elaboration of the consociational democracy model is another example of the generation of a new general model from

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what began as a single case study. Apart, and sometimes before, Arend Lijphart's influential and well-known contribution, there had been pointers to this model, which were also influenced by the knowledge of specific countries, e.g. some of my own work on the Netherlands, Gerhard Lehbruch's elaboration of the model of Proporzdemokratie on the basis of Austria and Switzerland, Jürg Steiner's attempt to bring Swiss experience into modern political science, or more generally Val Lorwin's analysis of segmented pluralism which was powerfully influenced by Lorwin's studies of France and Belgium, but also a clear product of an attempt at comparative understanding in the context of a research project on Political Oppositions and one on Smaller European Democracies. Yet Lijphart's book The Politics of Accommodation (1968) presented the best known attempt at what he himself called 'an extended theoretical argument based on a single case of particular significance to pluralist theory', i.e., the Netherlands. Lijphart consciously addressed Almond's typology, and amended Almond's version of the 'Continental European system', by adding the variable of competitive, i.e. coalescent, elite behavior to Almond's distinction of countries with a homogeneous versus a heterogeneous political culture. Stressing that democracy was possible in ideologically divided societies, provided elites were aware of the danger to the system and deliberately acted to contain these divisions, Lijphart coined both an empirical and a normative model. From it he was to deduce operating rules applicable to apparently such unpromising cases as Northern Ireland, South Africa and many Third World countries. He later elaborated the empirical argument into a continuum in which the Westminster Model figures on one end, and what he terms (somewhat wistfully) the Consensus Model of Democracy on the other. Or to make the same point differently, he moves from what was originally a single country extrapolation to a deliberate reversal of the once dominant Westminster model, holding that his consensus model is more frequently found in actual democratic politics, while questioning the normative biases which underlie earlier extrapolations from the British case. I cannot go into the merit of the debate on the consociational democracy model, or Lijphart's later generalizations for that matter. Suffice it to say that some country experts have criticized the model's applicability to countries which Lijphart regards as consociational, while others maintain with considerable vigour that consociational practices are in fact found in many countries not in Lijphart's consociational box, or even near the 'consensus' side of his continuum. I only raise the model as one example of the far-reaching results which bringing one new country on to the map of comparative politics can have on prevalent paradigms which until then rested almost exclusively on the experiences of some of the larger countries alone. The inspiration from Norway. Of course, Stein Rokkan's work starting from issues important in Norway is probably the most convincing example of all. But I shall postpone that clinching example to the end of this chapter when I shall turn to the lessons Rokkan's work holds for all of us in comparative politics.
Countries as laboratories

Cross-national studies

Roughly at the same time that more and more countries were brought on to the map of comparative politics, another trend became manifest. More and more countries came to serve as laboratories for cross-cultural, often behaviourally-oriented, studies. More and more aggregate data became available, due to the efforts not only of social scientists, but also of governments and a growing number of intergovernmental organizations. Such material presented opportunities not so much for specific country studies, but for analyses aiming at cross-national generalizations. The availability of more and more cases was important to test general propositions, while at the same time many studies aimed at levels of analysis which were thought to be comparable, and even similar, across countries. One can easily single out at least three different examples of such cross-national research efforts.

In the first place there were general studies on the basis of relatively easily available data on actual elections, and the political composition of parliaments and cabinets. I am alluding to the kind of work by Douglas Rae on electoral systems, on turnout, on trends in aggregate electoral volatility, on electoral support for particular types of political parties, or of the total Left, on relations between political fragmentation or the presence of anti-system parties to cabinet stability, and the wide-spread attempt to test formal coalition theories.

Less general, but at least as penetrating and influential was, secondly, the massive growth of survey analysis. Europeans should remain conscious of the immense debt all of us owe to the inspiration from the Michigan studies which were replicated and inspired further analysis in one European country after another. Also some other major studies were the product of American inspiration, or at a minimum American-European collaboration. I am thinking of the work of Almond and Verba (1963) on political culture; Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) on modes of political participation; and Inglehart (1977) and Barnes and Kaase (1979) on value change, unconventional political behavior, and so forth.

Thirdly, cross-national analysis is found in studies based on social indicator data. The most powerful example is the work by Peter Flora and others on political modernization, the growth of the welfare state and comparative policy analysis. Tellingly, it is the area in which the two first winners of the Rokkan Prize, Manfred Schmidt and Jens Alber, made their substantial contributions.

In all such studies (whether on elections, parliaments, cabinets, mass surveys, or social indicators), countries tend to be not so much the object of study, but a source of data to be analyzed for the sake of general theorizing.

Macro-theories

If most of such studies still proceeded from within-nation perspectives, there were of course also studies which had a more general sweep. Ever since the 1930s there has been a concern with the rather different strength fascism gained in different
European countries, a field of many beliefs but few definite studies. The Cold War added a somewhat similar concern with the difference in strength of communist
and other anti-system parties in different European systems. From the 1950s other macro-theories abounded, notably propositions about ‘The End of Ideology;’ its reversal in new propositions on post-materialism, and later the wave of neo-corporatism. Here again, one can point to particular countries as the source of inspiration: e.g., Germany for Kirchheimer's early concern with the waning of opposition and the rise of catch-all parties; France and Germany in the late 1960s for the development of Inglehart's Silent Revolution; or initially Latin America and Portugal for an inspiration of the study of neo-corporatism which flourishes particularly in a German and Austrian environment, even though some of the best empirical work has been done in Scandinavia. All such studies led to cross-country analysis, pervaded by almost cosmological convictions. One should note, however, that many of its practitioners and protagonists were satisfied with general conclusions, without a strong concern with the possible effect of country-specific factors. Such factors would presumably reveal themselves in the data, or would at most provide a source of irritating ‘noise,’ to be eliminated from analysis, rather than meriting study for their own intrinsic importance. Such general trends were greatly reinforced by the trend towards increasing specialization and professionalization in the discipline which often caused an innocent neglect of the importance of the country-environment in which data were collected, and which - just possibly - might explain particular findings. In such developments Rokkan's first lesson - that data should be interpreted within the context in which they are collected - is apt to be forgotten.

Countries as variables

Stein Rokkan's Werdegang

Rokkan was concerned with cross-national studies from an early period in his professional life. In the late 1940s and early 1950s he had the opportunity to study in England and the United States, where he immersed himself in all manner of disciplines and approaches. This made him turn away from his original literary studies and political theory to more empirical modes of research. His first two projects were cross-national, i.e. a survey of the cross-cultural meaning of the concept of democracy, and a study of the political attitudes of teachers in different countries. Apart from these cross-national projects, he (with Henry Valen) also pioneered electoral studies in Norway, in close cooperation with American scholars. Working on partly American-inspired survey questions put to Norwegian voters, Rokkan was made forcefully aware of the specific Norwegian factors which had to be taken into account to explain particular findings. Among these, the nature of political cleavages, and their ecological variation were most crucial. This led him to the vital question of how particular social cleavages had, or had not, been politicized. This forced him back into an analysis of geographically differentiated historical processes. It made him turn towards the lasting importance of initial mass mobilization processes, and hence into a search of how responsible government and franchise extension had brought
different social groups in the official political arena. This forced him back further and further into history, into analyses.
of processes of state formation itself.

In Rokkan's work there are therefore clear signs of what I earlier called 'the umbilical nexus': 'American'-type research induced him to bring factors into account which deviated from American 'generalizations'. He thus brought certain concepts into comparative politics which were peculiarly Norwegian in inspiration: e.g., the emphasis on centre-periphery conflicts, the crucial importance of counter-cultural protest, the lasting importance of political alignments which had been characteristic for the first period of mass mobilization, concern with the manner of institutional change (notably the introduction of responsible government and suffrage extension), and with the peculiar processes of state formation which seemed to differentiate Norway from its immediate Scandinavian neighbours.66

In what way, then, was Rokkan different from others who were moved to extrapolate from the experiences of their own country? The essence of his work, I suggest, is his combination of developmental work and comparative country studies (or to say the same in a more resounding terminology, of 'diachronic' and 'synchronic' comparisons). He not only went back into the history of his own country, but also concerned himself with the study of virtually all European countries. He was profoundly aware of differences, as well as similarities, in their contemporary politics and in their historical development. Countries thus became to him very much variables in their own right. He attempted to analyze how states had historically been formed, and was concerned as much with cases of states that eventually did not form as with those which had emerged successfully. But in doing so, he also remained constantly aware of the interaction of within-state political processes with processes in the making of states - crossing the borderline so artificially drawn into our profession between subnational, national and international developments.

Rokkan was himself an extremely generous man, showing unparalleled openness to the work of others, whether young or old, of whatever country, or whatever discipline. It gave him more building blocks than any of us. Yet, for all his magnanimity he disliked three sins, frequently committed in our profession: (1) he had little patience for those who took the particular outcome of history at a particular time or place as 'given', as if the status quo itself did not need explanation; (2) he could be caustic about superficial typologies which were 'based' on a few (usually large) countries only; and (3) he despised what he once termed 'numerological nonsense', i.e., the indiscriminate use of quantitative data drawn from different countries and 'interpreted' without adequate contextual knowledge.

Rokkan's own ultimate ambition was to construct what he called his 'topological-typological map', or 'macro-model of Europe'. To this end, he devised innumerable 'grids' and 'schemata', seeking to account for numerous variations and complex sequential processes in what was yet as parsimonious a manner as possible. Understanding his work is not always easy. Many of us hardly begin to understand the very diverse situations and developments with which Rokkan sought to grapple. He was never really 'ready' and seemed as animated by his search as by his tentative conclusions. He never consolidated his work into one book, even though he collected his best papers until 1970 in one hard-cover vol-
ume entitled *Citizens, Elections, Parties* (republished Colchester: ECPR Press, 2009). One must hope for a speedy publication of a volume incorporating his many writings since 1970. In the meantime, one should gratefully acknowledge the elegant manner in which Rokkan's learned associate, Derek Urwin, finalized their joint research project within the ECPR on *Economy, Territory and Identity*, which was to be Rokkan's last.61.

### Some lessons

I have at one time been nicknamed, by one of my godless (or at least swearing Scandinavian friends) ‘the bishop’. Let me therefore summarize this rapid survey in a few general ‘lessons’:

1. The study of single countries is a rewarding venture by itself. Configurative analysis is always fascinating, as it forces one to take note of the complex interaction of many variables, and brings one at least in close contact with real politics in the process.

2. One can improve insights in one country greatly by immersing oneself in at least one other country, and by seeking to explain the one country in the terminology and hidden assumptions of the latter.

3. Most of us feel inclined to extrapolate (generally positively, but sometimes negatively and critically) the insights obtained from one's own country. Such a venture may increase the store of our knowledge. The macro-map of Europe, to use Rokkan's ambitious term, has to be built from single ‘bloes’, and only a ‘topological-typological’ approach can do justice to the full complexity of so many developments of so many different countries and their constituent parts. Yet, the difference between the ‘Zanzibar-ploy’ and a true contribution to learning is in the modesty of one's country-specific message, and one's willingness to interpret it through borrowing insight from a genuine understanding of other countries.

4. The rich resources of Scandinavian scholarship - so insufficiently known, although so visibly present in Gothenburg where I had the privilege to give this Rokkan lecture - is there to remind us that we should not fall for the easy assumption that the only important countries for comparative analysis are either large countries, or our own country. Rokkan has taught us what nuggets the professional mining of information on smaller lands may bring us!

5. Certain issues (e.g., those on the level of macro-theories, or those near to universal psychological of sociological factors) may lend themselves to more abstract and general approaches, as well as to more concrete quantitative approaches. But there is always the likelihood and danger that country-specific factors interfere with the findings. Inadequate awareness of such country-specific factors may indeed lead to vacuous theorizing on the one hand and ‘numerological nonsense’ on the other - which makes for a terrible ‘brew’ indeed.

6. Countries should not be treated as static phenomena. One should analyze not only the contemporary conditions, but also the longer-term develop-
mental processes of countries.

7. General understanding cannot be reached in any short-cut manner. It demands a level of erudition few of us have. The demand for greater learning often sits uneasily with a simultaneous pressure for specialization and professionalization. Perhaps, then, we should veer back to seeking greater erudition, now that we are becoming so professional?

8. Given the enormous demand which acquiring a genuine knowledge of other countries (both in their contemporary state and developmental characteristics) makes on us, we should continue to promote joint research projects by teams of country specialists. All too often, however, these result in the juxtaposition of loose country-descriptions - of little or large Zanzibars - rather than a genuine comparison. Both in the planning and in the finalizing of such collaborative ventures, the true task - to raise general questions which a systematic comparison of countries could help us answer - is apt to be treated in too cavalier a spirit.

9. Rokkan has shown how much profit can be had from a crossing of disciplinary boundary lines. Such a crossing must be encouraged - most notably with history, economics and sociology - provided it does not lead to a new verbiage, and provided it remains anchored in an increased understanding of real political developments and conditions.

10. Rokkan did more than anyone I know in promoting the infrastructure of international scholarship. We have the proud legacy of the European Consortium to support us. Let us use it with the sense of imagination and commitment, the systematic effort coupled to an eclectic common sense, which were so characteristic of the man whom we so rightly honor by having an annual Rokkan-lecture.

Eindnoten:

1. Of course, one should not make light of the qualities of scholarship which go into the study of single countries - whether one's own country or another. One has only to think of the magnificent quality of studies in Britain on France - from Dennis Brogan to Philip Williams and Vincent Wright - to realize how much our insight into the working of politics has been enriched, and is being enriched, by traditions such as these. The effect of such a tradition is clearly present in a number of often highly readable journals, such as Parliamentary Affairs, Government and Opposition and West European Politics.

2. Again, such categorical statements do not really do justice to great treatises on (comparative) constitutional law, Allgemeine Staatslehre, etc., which have been published again and again in France, Germany and other continental European countries. Of course, the tradition of Manuels and Grundrisse has left traces as well in English language scholarship. I am thinking notably of the massive contributions of A. Lawrence Lowell (1896), Governments and Parties in Continental Europe, London: Longman; James Bryce (1921), Modern Democracies, 2 vols. London: Macmillan; Herman Finer (1932), The Theory and Practice of Modern Governments, 2 vols., New York: MacVeagh and Carl J. Friedrich (1937), Constitutional Government and Democracy, New York: Harper & Row. Am I wrong in thinking that we have now lost that tradition, notwithstanding the magna opera of Jean Blondel (1969) Introduction to Comparative Politics.
24. We used this expression often in the 1960s in the Oppositions group (see Dahl, R.A. (ed.) (1966) "Political Oppositions in Western Democracies," reprinted in this volume in chapter 5.

25. The traumatic break in continuity of the political system in Germany has probably made for two notable features in German political science: a comparatively heavy accent on the role of institutions (which were the chief elements of political reconstruction), and a strong emphasis on professionalism in a younger generation often trained partly in the USA. German scholarship has tended to be comparatively open to foreign influences. At the same time, it could also fall

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back on strong autochthonous traditions of social science, of which Max Weber was only the most conspicuous.


56. Inglehart (1977), op. cit.


62. I plead guilty to serving out similar ‘lessons’ in my talk at the end of my three years as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the European Consortium of Political Research in Brussels, 1979. This talk has been published in somewhat revised form in a Festschrift for S.E. Finer, see Kavanagh, D. and Peele, G. (eds.) (1984) Comparative Government and Politics: Essays in Honour of S.E. Finer, pp. 159-168, London: Heinemann. See also the electronic appendix 1 to this book.

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chapter three | paths towards state formation in europe: democratization, bureaucratization, and politicization

Introduction

For someone in the same generation as Juan Linz the realities of totalitarian dictatorship and autocracy were the fundamental existential experience one grew up with. Even though one may have lived in a stable democratic regime ever since, such regimes remained somehow preciously fragile, persistently regarded with a sense of wonder and fear of transience. Democracy rather than autocracy seemed to be in need of explanation. In such a depressing mood one could not easily bring oneself to share Linz's prophetic belief in the passing nature of dictatorship in Spain. From our earliest intellectual encounters in the 1960s onwards, he might argue persuasively that the practice of interpreting Spain under Franco with categories derived from the world of totalitarianism was truly wrong. But this did not mean that one could easily accept his confident assertion that democracy was bound to return to Spain. One tended to discount his analysis with the impression that here was a scholar who loved Spain too much to face inevitable realities. How wrong one was, and how insightful this genuine scholar!1

There was a second intellectual encounter that caused one to sit down and marvel. In 1966-1967 it was my good fortune to be a fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto. Some colleagues in different disciplines at Stanford University had invited Juan Linz to spend a period with them. They brought some of us ‘down the hill’ to share in what turned out to be one of the most impressive ‘staff seminars’ I ever attended. In it Juan Linz took ‘Spain’ apart with all the learning, the astounding knowledge of detail, and the variety of disciplinary approaches he had. If ever one doubted the value of a ‘single-country’ study for political analysis, one was proved utterly wrong. How rich the study of comparative European politics would be if we had his peers for all European countries!

There was one further lasting impression from this seminar, moreover: it became clear from Linz’s presentations how important the early development of a

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1. This chapter was first published in a volume of tribute to Juan Linz, Chehab, H.E. and Stepan, A. (eds.) (1995) Politics, Society and Democracy: Essays in Honor of Juan J. Linz, Boulder Col.: Westview Press. It had been in the making for a long time. It betrays a search for clarity and raises questions of research as much as it presents real findings. Earlier versions appeared in Dutch and in French, on the basis of various conference discussions. An English version was given as a public lecture at the Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones in Madrid, which published this lecture as a Working Paper 1991/20 June 1991.
central state was to Spanish experience and yet how complex the relationship of such
a state to the great variety of regions and communities over which it claimed
sovereignty. The contrast between the early central state in Spain and the very late
arrival of such a state in the Low Countries was obvious, yet the interaction between
central government and regional realities provided a fundamental theme for the
analysis of all manner of state formation processes.

What follows is an attempt to marry these two ‘Linzian’ concerns: a comparative
analysis of the rather different paths toward state formation in Europe and the USA
and their effect on the development of stable democracies. The chapter will argue
first that our understanding of state building is marred by a ruling paradigm that on
closer inspection is mainly derived from the case of France. After a short overview
of the formation of the French state, it discusses other cases of state formation in
Europe that fit this paradigm. Attention then shifts to a review of states in Western
Europe and the United States that have followed rather different paths of state
formation. Once the variety of these routes to the modern state is charted, their impact
is traced on the two major challenges that face European societies to this day - as
they do states worldwide - the political role of bureaucracies and the stability of
democratic political life.

France: the ruling paradigm

The basic premise of this chapter is the following: writings on the development of
the state, are generally couched in terms of a dominant paradigm that on closer look
is clearly derived from a stylized analysis of the French case.

In that paradigm feudal society slowly fell to kings who invoked the idea of absolute
sovereignty. To give substance to that claim, kings needed instruments of power with
which to ward off the rival claims of both internal and external enemies. All-important
was military strength, which presupposed the availability of adequate resources.
These were found in Colbertist mercantilist policies on the one hand and the securing
of independent tax income from a mainly rural population on the other. In this process
the older principles of estate representation gave way to more direct forms of
independent royal power, including bureaucratic agencies. Admittedly, such
bureaucracies remained tied to diversities of stratification (the noblesse de robe and
the noblesse d'épée retaining at least some semblance of an older status order) and
of region (as in the sale of offices to local dignitaries, the persistence of parlements,
and even the turning of the royal offices of intendants into bastions of local power
for leading regional families). But at the same time the system laid the foundation
for an alliance between the king and a rising bourgeoisie, until the latter became
powerful enough to destroy kingship itself and fashion during the French Revolution
a bourgeois polity and society. Only through the French Revolution and its Napoleonic
aftermath did a really powerful center emerge. Paris became the unchallengeable
geographic locus of state power; it developed the instruments of a powerful
bureaucracy and judiciary and established direct ties to individual citizens in a nation
une et indivisible. Thus, the basis was laid for that perennial tension between ‘Paris’
and ‘L’État’ on the one hand, and the various peripheries, which might at most send
deputies to plead particularist
interests, on the other hand. In this state of affairs conflicts persisted between rival doctrines of unified power (resting either on the state as a transcendental reality or on the people as the immanent, undivided sovereign) and between either of these and claims on behalf of diverse social and regional groupings. Such conflicts caused continuing problems of political legitimacy but left little doubt about the presence of an unmistakable, highly centralized state.

The paradigm ‘confirmed’: English and Prussian contrasts

The dominant paradigm, as developed at the hand of the French case, is thought to find indirect confirmation from the contrast provided by two other cases, England and Prussia.

In the English case centralized statehood developed early, earlier in fact and with less tension, than in France. This was due partly to factors of geography. Compared to France - let alone the later land mass of Mitteleuropa - the British Isles formed a distinct and relatively coherent unit. As long as naval forces could defend these islands against foreign invasion, a strong standing army was not required. Was not, in Lord Esher's famous words, the navy 'a constitutional force', unlike the army, which was by nature 'a Royal Force'? Internal Communications - much of it by sea and rivers - were relatively easy. Hence, the establishment of central governing power met with less stubborn resistance from regional forces, the King's courts representing early and effective instruments of central authority. At the same time, a clear condominium developed between successive Kings and Lords Temporal and Spiritual, with representatives of the Commons soon joining the ranks of advisers to the Crown. Admittedly, a considerable toughening and tightening of governmental structures took place under the Tudors, and French absolutist kings did find emulators in the absolutist adventures of the first Stuart kings in the seventeenth century. English kings equally sought to have their own sources of finance, free from parliamentary control. They, too, wished control of independent armed power and attempted to prevail in law if need be by establishing their own special courts. Yet, absolutist ventures in England foundered in the end on the rock of entrenched powers. Parliament (unlike the French États Généraux) proved not only strong enough to persist and to thwart royal demands but also to raise an army of its own. Eventually an alliance between Commons and common law judges proved powerful enough to subjugate kings, one king being decapitated and another being sent into exile following the triumphant Glorious Revolution of 1688 that Consolidated the supremacy of parliament and the independence of the judiciary. New kings lived henceforth in a condominium with pluralist social forces and pluralist institutions. From them the principle of ministerial responsibility and cabinet government gradually developed in the eighteenth century. This process was further consolidated when parliament obtained a more representative basis in a series of nineteenth century reform bills that expanded the suffrage and augured the era of mass parties.

In the English case there was never any real doubt where the central government was located. But it also became clear early on that the king was not the exclusive fountain of authority. English localities were never as strong and in-
dependent from the center as their French counterparts, but at the same time the
center itself remained politically divided. A national bureaucracy developed very
late - long after other political institutions had found a firm place in the center from
what were once disparate boards. It typically became a civil service rather than an
embodiment of statehood, remaining securely under political control and hardly
forming a unified separate power in the state.

The English case, then, represented a happy deviation from the ‘normal’ pattern
on the continent: a center forming early, but never becoming the locus of absolute
power, a pluralist order evolving slowly, legitimacy remaining strong, and ‘responsible
government’ and ‘the rule of law’ being a more natural shorthand description for
political beliefs than any reference to an abstract state. But England was also regarded
widely (by Englishmen as a matter of course, by others in awe) as the exceptional
case due eventually to inspire others but not charting a course that others could easily
follow, given the absence of comparable favorable circumstances.

If the English case deviated from the dominant paradigm (as developed from a
reading of the French record), the Prussian case seemed to confirm it, only more so.
In Prussia royal absolutism also developed from the seventeenth century onward.
But from the outset the central authority was stronger and more dominant that in
pre-revolutionary France. This was due mainly to the early development of the twin
instruments of the military and the bureaucracy, both being the faithful servants of
royal power at Potsdam. The king gained adequate independent resources, through
depriving the earlier estates of any semblance of power in controlling taxation and
through the development of an active economic base in a market-oriented
Agrarwirtschaft. In the process a conglomerate developed around the king, consisting
of the large landowners (Junkers), the military, and a growing class of officials
steeped in the doctrines of Kameralistik as an ancient form of ‘development
administration’. Law was emphasized, mainly to ensure the regularity of
administration from above. The notion of a Rechtsstaat did not conflict, therefore,
with the view that the state represented a ‘higher’ social organization, an Obrigkeit
facing Untertanen, not providing groups or individuals with prior claims to rights.
The Hegelian reification of the state as being above and beyond society with its
particularist divisions reinforced that view. It provided a ready instrument for later
authoritarian rulers like Bismarck, and for collectivist ‘state socialists’ (of whom
Lassalle was only the most colorful) to expand the role of the state further and to
seek to integrate all social orders under the aegis of an omnipresent central state. In
such notions parliament remained, at most, a forum to represent groups with state
authorities, to remonstrate on their behalf, rather than a body that was itself part of
government authority.

Even the 1918 revolution did not entirely change that situation. Weimar created
an admirable democratic constitution, but it could not ensure the loyalty to it of those
(in the military, the bureaucracy, or even the judiciary) who thought of the state as
being above parliament, parties, and the people. Whereas the Weimar politicians
failed to break the old moulds of the military and the bureaucracy, only the National
Socialists were effectively to do so - not least because they both rep-
resented a nationalist and an authoritarian, as well as a revolutionary force.

If in post-1945 Germany bureaucrats or the military no longer represent such autonomous, preferential, and independently powerful manifestations of a higher state, this was due to their submission to Hitler first and to their total transformation after 1945. ‘Bonn is not Weimar’ became true not only in a political but even in a geographic respect. The bureaucracy of the Federal German Republic was consciously split up in relatively small offices at the center and more massive executive organs of the Länder. The role of an independent judiciary was powerfully strengthened, not least by the establishment of the Bundesverfassungsgericht, which may be seized by citizens directly if individual rights are at stake. And political parties came to represent independent, powerful agencies, much more so than they did in the years when many theorists of the state spoke disparagingly of the danger of a Parteienstaat.

Prussia, then, resembled the French-derived paradigm in illustrating the long-lasting importance of the building of centers under authoritarian auspices, with a bureaucracy coming early, law being an instrument of the state rather than of citizens, and the state itself being heralded as representing a higher social order. At the same time, the Prussian case diverged from the French one in that neither the ‘bourgeoisie’ nor the ‘people’ gained a strong position of their own. They remained largely under the control of the state until such time as the latter was effectively broken by internal revolution and outside defeat.

The dominant paradigm: what other cases fit?

France and Prussia are not, of course, the only examples of countries where centralized statehood developed under royal auspices, with bureaucracies being an essential part of state-building processes.

One inevitably thinks of Spain as a definite example of an early dynastic, centralizing state. Both military and bureaucratic agencies developed early, as did authoritarian theories of the state and a pervasive legalism. For all its checkered development, Spain was an earlier, more established central state than Germany was, even with the formation of the Kaiserreich after 1870. But at the same time the effective hold on society by the central state remained more precarious than it was in Prussia or Germany, with revolutions from both richer and poorer peripheries representing constant threats and challenges to the legitimacy of the Spanish state. Also, Spain resembled the French case in that revolutionary democratic traditions enjoyed a degree of legitimacy not found in nineteenth-century Germany, where revolutions remained a matter of rhetoric rather than action or living memory. As with France, Spain therefore showed strong legitimacy conflicts and frequent regime changes, with Madrid being the unmistakable political center but the Spanish state being less strong then the French state in both its institutional apparatus and its claim to obedience.

What about Scandinavia? Both Denmark and Sweden represent cases of many centuries of dynastic rule. Denmark even has the oldest unbroken dynastic lineage in Western Europe, and represents a true monocephalous case, i.e., a country with one dominant city: Copenhagen was at least as powerful in relation to the rest of
the country as Paris or Berlin. The late Norwegian scholar Stein Rokkan used to portray Denmark as the most ‘Prussian’ of the Scandinavian countries, with the state and its officials exercising a powerful historical claim and responsible government only coming late. If in Norway a mobilization of the periphery eventually triumphed, similar movements did not fully break the hold of the Copenhagen establishment on Denmark. Even after the advent of responsible government and full scale democracy, conceptions of ‘stateness’ and ‘legalism’ retained a certain hold. Rokkan, as a peripheral citizen of a state that had been under Danish rule for centuries, may have exaggerated the role of Copenhagen as a center and made too much of it being the most Prussian of Scandinavian states. If his analysis is true, the question should at a minimum be answered how and why such a near-Prussian case could develop so easily into one of the more stable democratic societies in Western Europe, with relatively little legitimacy conflict, let alone revolutions or regime upheavals.

Sweden similarly represents a puzzle. At one time Sweden clearly represented a case of dynastic state-building of almost imperial dimensions, with extensive military adventures. As in Denmark, the Swedish kings tended to occupy a very powerful position. Bureaucratic agencies developed early and strongly, and again responsible democratic government came relatively late. Why then does Sweden seem to resemble the case of Britain more than that of France or Prussia? Is it the persistence of a relatively independent nobility or the maintenance - much more so than in many European countries - of older estate principles? Have consular and collegial forms of rule been lastingly stronger? Or should one emphasize the peculiar character of Swedish administration, with its separation of policy-making boards from executive agencies?

What can the other major Scandinavian countries (Norway and Finland) teach us? The presence of imposed centers in Norway is a key element in the analysis of center-periphery conflicts in the structuring of Norwegian society, as is the very special relationship of Finland first to Sweden, later to Russia. The massive mobilization of the peripheries in Norway and Finland played a highly important role in enforcing responsible government in these countries against largely alien and imposed centers. The success of peripheral mobilizations implied, moreover, that centers now came to be divided in themselves so that the decisive cleavages came to run, not between centers and peripheries, but across both (as the 1972 Norwegian referendum on the EC was clearly to prove). Also, in Finland the state might to some extent be embodied in a highly dominant Helsinki (continuing to represent the trappings of modernized rule), but at the same time the role of revolutions and wars of independence destroyed much of the center-periphery distinction that would otherwise seem to have been characteristic for the Finnish case.

States in Europe's city-belt

How very different were the processes of center formation and state-building in the area that Rokkan described as the ‘central trading-belt’ of ‘city-state Europe’, i.e., the area running from northern Italy via Switzerland along the Rhine and its tributary rivers to both the North Sea and the Baltic. Once the Burgundians had

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failed to establish a definite state in that area (although, not unimportant for developments in the Low Countries, they left some semblances of early state institutions), only two ways remained for establishing political centers as the core of new states: confederation or conquest.

Switzerland represents the most typical and enduring characteristic of a process of confederal, or what some of us prefer to call consociational state formation: free association by erstwhile independent units establishing loose confederal authorities between them, the absence of a strong Capital, collegial, and accommodationist rule, a weak articulation of a federal bureaucracy, etc. Much of this was true of the Dutch Republic until 1795, but then the principle of a unitary state triumphed, and with it the beginnings of a central bureaucracy. But even then accommodationist principles persisted in the Netherlands, facilitating there as in Switzerland the early arrival of responsible government as well as the further development of an organized pluralist society, based not so much on territorial autonomy as on an effective autonomy of different ideological groupings. Not only in the manner of establishment of the state but also in the further sharing of state power by parts of government and organized social groupings the Netherlands could thus become the archetype for Arend Lijphart's formal model of ‘consociational democracy’, to which Belgium could be joined as well. In the Belgian case, too, there was a clear link between local traditions, and later political pluralism. But state formation was influenced to a greater extent by sustained periods of alien sovereignty, and eventually by rebellion against external dominance. This gave Belgian politics in the nineteenth century a more radical format initially than those of either Switzerland or the Netherlands but may have caused the position of Brussels to be more clearly that of a separate center than is true for either Berne or The Hague. With the additional proviso that Brussels became to some degree a tertium in a country divided by many cleavages, the linguistic cleavage eventually became so dominant as to give birth to a system that Lijphart has termed ‘corporate federalism’. Of the three consociational cases, Switzerland and the Netherlands represent, therefore, the more gradualist and accommodationist ones, and Belgium the more divided case with greater problems of legitimacy and struggle for power. However, though Brussels did become a very dominant political and economic center, it never developed as the unquestioned core. This is illustrated decisively in the inability of the major state institutions to develop a strong power of their own. Effective political parties also developed early in Belgium, and they were sufficiently powerful to penetrate and politicize the Brussels bureaucracy in a manner that did not (or did only recently) occur in France or in Germany.

If consociationalism is an apt term to characterize developments in Switzerland and the Low Countries, conquest was to determine the establishment of states in the remainder of the city belt, with Prussia and Piedmont as examples of the ability of erstwhile peripheries to enforce statehood on what were once proud independent cities and regions. In the Italian case the new state remained a more artificial creation than the German Reich. It also faced far greater legitimacy conflicts, as it was contested by the church, regionalist forces, and numerous disparate social groupings. The Italian case remains, therefore, a very different one from either
the French or the Spanish case. Though similar statist doctrines developed and bureaucratic agencies waxed, there has never been a similarly strong conception of statehood in Italy. Also, the position of the bureaucracy and the many semi-public bodies that Italians call *sottogoverno* has proved far more susceptible to party penetration than has tended to be true of the other major Latin countries. Italy has therefore retained a number of features clearly reminiscent of some of the consociational cases, including a comparable strong sense of local autonomy and accommodationist practices on all levels, with the state remaining to some degree an alien element in social life.

In that respect Germany represented a rather different development. Like the Italian state, the German *Reich* was the result of conquest. In both countries a new state was imposed on territories with very distinct traditions. In either case nationalism and dictatorial rule were the eventual result. But in Germany the geographical and political importance of Prussia was far more important than Piedmont could ever be. Social modernization proceeded in Germany at much greater pace. Hence, one could not speak to the same extent as in Italy of an artificial state or a synthetic and passing nationalism. The later change, of a deliberate break-up of the German state and bureaucracy in favor of a living federalism, was not really the result of the reassertion of identities of older regions. It came about rather as the outcome of a lost war that led on the one hand to a geographical breakup of the German *Reich* (with its center shifting from the Prussian heartland to the Rhineland) and on the other to the founding of a new West German state born under the close control of occupying powers. This does not gainsay the rather profound transformation which took place as a result - a move in the direction of pluriform bureaucratic structures, a new vitality for independent state institutions, and a much enhanced importance of political parties (as mentioned earlier).

The case of the United States

Finally, how are American political developments to be characterized? The special features of the USA have been the object of many propositions, including daring analyses that portray America as representing what Huntington called a ‘Tudor Constitution’, what Lipset characterized as ‘the First New Nation’, or being a society that profoundly differed from Europe in not being a product of the reaction against a feudal society. All such explanations tend to emphasize, above all, that America is different. Possible comparisons with the development of some of the consociational countries in Europe are rarely made; for all the emphasis on the role of the Founding Fathers, little weight is given to the specific European experiences (notably those of England, France, and the Dutch Republic) that possibly helped shape the convictions of these Founders, and may have influenced the construction of the new American institutions. Be that as it may, there is little doubt that the American case is first and foremost an offshoot of English political traditions, whittling down the royal powers of colonial days in favor of elected chief executives at federal and state levels, giving greater weight to representative principles, creating
institutional checks and balances both in central institutions and in the federal make-up of the new polity, and providing a greater role for popular control and election.
The establishment of the new America confirmed the possibility of creating a
government from the people through mutually checking institutions in which there
was place neither for a transcendental sovereign nor for bureaucratic agencies claiming
to embody a state beyond and above the people. Many observers have maintained
that one cannot really speak of an American state (as one generally can speak of
European states), holding that one should rather speak of congeries of authorities
deriving their powers from popular consent, and in principle being open to any citizen.
Hence, the long predominance in America of elective over appointive principles in
filling the higher posts of government, the strong emphasis on the ability of the
common man rather than career or merit appointments, and the absence of legally
recognized estates or formally distinct classes. In that situation, first elaborated in
the relatively uncomplicated conditions of a thinly populated mercantile and rural
America and then reinforced by the traditions of the frontier, the idea that government
might need the services of professionals faced tenacious resistance. The slow build
up of a permanent bureaucracy could therefore result only from an uphill fight in
which reformers had to battle entrenched political forces that regarded the supremacy
of politics and patronage as a matter of course. Such career bureaucracies as did
originate were modelled on the British civil service rather than resembling French
*haute fonctionnaires* or Prussian bureaucrats. Career bureaucrats in the United States
have therefore always remained clearly subordinate to the occupants of elected
political offices, however political their actions might be.

Some provisional conclusions

These thumbnail sketches of different ways toward state formation in Europe and
the United States suggest a great variety of cases that cannot satisfactorily be
understood in terms of the prevailing (French-inspired) paradigm and mere deviant
analysis. One should distinguish at least five paths in state formation:

1. State formation through absolutist kingships that obtained independent power
   through the build up of armies and bureaucracies solely responsible to monarchs
   (France and Prussia representing the chief examples).

2. State formation in which kings did have a considerable importance but faced
   judges and representative bodies (and within them eventually political parties)
   that developed sufficient strength to become independent powers. Insofar as
   such powers established themselves earlier and more strongly than central
   bureaucratic agencies, a later civil service could develop that served the Crown,
   but then a Crown that was itself accountable to representative bodies enforcing
   the principle of ministerial responsibility. England is the clearest example of
   such processes, but some Scandinavian countries show similar features.

3. State formation from below, through confederation and federation. Due to the
   maintenance of effective autonomy for the constituent states and a general
   emphasis on an enduring division of powers within the center through
   institutional checks and balances, including collegial decision

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making, there was hardly an opportunity for the development of a centralized hierarchical bureaucracy. Insofar as such a bureaucracy eventually did develop, it retained so many pluralist features that it hardly met the canons of the Weberian model. Examples: the Netherlands and Switzerland.

(4) State formation through conquest as exemplified in both German and Italian unification. In analyzing the resulting bureaucracies one should look for clues in the preceding Prussian and Piedmontese state structures as well as into the manner in which the distinct traditions of other constituent states were introduced in the new all-German or all-Italian state.

(5) State formation in what from a specifically European perspective one might term new states; the main examples are Belgium, Norway, Finland, and Ireland. For a true understanding of the role of bureaucracies in their political systems one should take account of both the continuities with the political and administrative systems of the countries from which they seceded and of the effects of nationalist and partisan forces that came to control the new governing centers in the states concerned.

Against the background of these five different paths of state formation one may specify at least four different situations as regards the political role of bureaucracies of European countries and the United States and the role of party-political factors in their functioning:

(1) Systems in which authoritarian traditions dominated the processes of state formation to such an extent that, bureaucracies came to be identified with the very core of the notion of state. This could lead to a persistent antidemocratic outlook among higher officials who regarded themselves as custodians of the state, if need be against parties and party-dominated representative organs. To the extent that the latter eventually gained the upper hand, the loyalty of bureaucrats and the bureaucracy remained an important political problem. This might lead to the deliberate insertion of party-political appointees in the higher ranks of the bureaucracy or to the establishment of partisan organs such as ministerial cabinets or both.

(2) Systems in which a bureaucracy developed only after independent judicial and representative organs had firmly established themselves. The idea that a bureaucracy had to be, above all, a service, subordinate to the political authority of election-based, party-selected rulers, implied a belief in bureaucratic loyalty to changing partisan rulers, and thus the acceptance of a certain degree of neutrality.

(3) Systems in which pluralist forces retained such strength in processes of state formation that the very concepts of ‘undivided loyalty’ or ‘unitarian central actor’ were inapplicable. Even though in such cases, too, the expansion of modern government tasks forced the introduction of bureaucratic agencies, a clear pluralism was maintained in the recruitment of government personnel as well as the practices of decision making. Thus, no clear separation...
or demarcation between (party) politics and civil servants developed as occurred in the systems mentioned above.

(4) Systems in which parties contested one another over state control, using the weapon of political appointments to safeguard and maximize their position in the state. This might occur sequentially (with parties alternating in office and ensuring their spoils as long as they controlled the state, as in the USA) or concurrently through a deliberate distribution of party-controlled fiefs among different parties (as in Italy or Belgium).

How to validate the analysis presented?

Obviously, the argument so far is exceedingly global. What should one do to validate it further? A great deal, calling for substantial further study on the following lines:

(1) The starting point should be to focus on initial processes of the formation of a political center in the process of state building. That raises two sub-issues. First, can one speak of a clearly defined, single center in a particular country or should one rather allow for the simultaneous development and possible rivalry of different centers? In Rokkan's terminology, are we in the presence of monocephalous or polycephalous cases? Second, what agencies went into the making of different centers? A substantial variety of possible candidates must be considered, e.g., institutions - kings, but also, courts, representative assemblies, bureaucratic agencies, and the military - and different social groups - the role of the nobility and other formal estates, of incipient classes, of urban and rural interests, of pressure groups, and of political parties. Ease or complexity of communication networks at different points of historical time represents important additional factors.

(2) A second; major area of concern should be the notion of state in any given society. One should focus, in a comparative perspective, on the extent to which doctrines of absolutist sovereignty were developed and, if so, on behalf of what actors. Whenever such doctrines did develop, attention should be paid to the manner in which such notions of sovereignty were eventually transferred from particular persons (like *droit divin* kings) to more abstract systems of rule, as in the development of the notion of ‘state’, ‘authority’, ‘authorities’, ‘magistrates’, etc. In all cases it is necessary to investigate assumptions about transcendental claims as exercised by state authorities setting themselves up as the embodiment of what the Germans call the *Obrigkeit*. An important point would be to establish to what extent those representing higher authority were thought to be exempt or not from any superior authority, whether hierarchical superiors, judicial oversight, or moral command only. More specifically, the relations between rulers and judges are of paramount importance, as is the issue of whether judges were conceived as representatives of a transcendental moral or legal order or as persons entrusted with ensuring the regularity of actions of government. Also, due attention should be given to the issue of whether state and/or law

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were regarded as originating beyond the grasp of parliament (which was therefore mainly to represent interests with the true holders of state authority) or whether parliament was thought to be a constituent of state and law. A renewed attention to different notions of the rule of law or Rechtsstaat traditions seems a matter of high priority.

(3) Following this an inquiry should be made into the extent to which pluralist doctrines have or have not been maintained in the development of states. Both in droit divin traditions and Rousseauist popular sovereignty conceptions ‘partial associations’ have been decried echoing Hobbes’s concept that they are like ‘worms in the entrayles of natural man’. In other traditions the notion of undivided authority has been specifically resisted, whether in doctrines justifying the right of groups (and later individuals) to remain free from state encroachment (on penalty of a right of resistance to those illegally overstepping that boundary) or in more institutional arrangements of a confederal, federal, or Trias Politica nature. In that context, again, the specific role of judges and judicial review is important, as are doctrines that seek to resist notions of indivisible sovereignty in the name of prior rights. We should return, I suggest, to a study of the many traditions that together make up the doctrine of political pluralism.

(4) Another matter of considerable importance is the respective timing of the build up of the chief power instrument of a state and its organs of representation. Some have argued that representative bodies can logically originate only when there is a prior agent with whom they can represent others. Such a statement (which might meet the British, French, or Prussian case) does not do justice to the circumstance that in a number of countries states arose from meetings of confederal bodies, which, while not themselves being parliaments, nevertheless partook of the nature of representative assemblies and eventually developed into such institutions, as did the Dutch Estates-General, the Swiss Nationalrat, or, in a rather different vein, any constitutional congress, constituante, or convention. There is, indeed, a world of difference between such cases and those where, clearly and visibly, the chief state builders were kings, armies, and bureaucrats, with representative bodies being added only later and slowly, as in Prussia or in absolutist France. The respective timing of the establishment of and the relative strength of developing representative assemblies on the one hand and bureaucratic agencies on the other would thus seem a highly characteristic and lastingly important factor in the build up of modern societies.

(5) Yet another factor of major importance is the specific relationship between central organs of government and bodies at regional and local levels. By definition the possible tension between incipient centers of rule and realities of local communities is a major variable in any analysis of state building. It is clear that in most of the older political systems the practical autonomy of localities was very great, as it is clear also that processes of

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modernization result indeed in a drastic enmeshing of central and local processes. But not only does the intensity of such interactive processes differ from country to country, from time period to time period, and from locality to locality, but it also remains one dimension in which different states can and must be compared. Thus, it is a matter of not negligible importance whether local units of government are thought of as bodies that initially helped to construct centers (as in any confederal mode of state building) or whether they are thought to have acquired political existence only when and where they are formally constituted by a central state not deriving its existence from any accommodation of pre-existing lower units. There is also great importance in specific institutional provisions as to the appointment of political personnel (e.g., mayors appointed by and from local government units or by central state authority), powers of lawmaking under higher control or not, effective independent financial means, etc.

A further important variable concerns the specific role played by parties and other mass movements in shaping modern political systems. In the 1960s Robert Dahl, Otto Kirchheimer, Stein Rokkan and others forming the Political Oppositions Project tried to analyze the different roles played by developing party systems in terms of the specific sequence of three distinct processes: the establishment of responsible government, the advent of general suffrage, and the processes of modern industrialization and urbanization (see Table 3.1).16

### Table 3.1: Different Patterns in the Development of Inclusive Polyarchies

<table>
<thead>
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<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Prussia</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
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<td>Arrival of responsible government</td>
<td>early</td>
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<td>Introduction of General suffrage</td>
<td>early</td>
<td>gradually</td>
<td>early</td>
<td>gradually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern industrialization and urbanization</td>
<td>later</td>
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<td>later</td>
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**Source: Author**

In the case of the United States responsible government and a wide general suffrage came long before the advent of industrialization. Hence parties developed early and proved strong enough to integrate new proletarian masses (notably many new immigrants) into a system that never gave scope to an ideological movement like modern socialism.

In the British case responsible government also came early, but industrialization and an expansion of the electorate tended to develop *pari passu*.  

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This led to a politicization of mass politics in which a reformist Labour movement eventually pushed aside the earlier Liberal party as the major alternative to Conservative mass politics. In contrast, in the case of Prussia and the German Reich industrialization and a wide suffrage came first, before the advent of responsible government, which only arrived in a revolution in the wake of a lost war (1918). If the German Reich provided therefore the conditions of the early development of a socialist mass party, it also condemned that party to far going isolation; the absence of responsible government did not provide the means with which to affect or control government policies, leading it to assume the highly ideological stance of what was in practice a Ghetto-partei.

The relevance of such differences lies not only in the specific pattern of party alignments, and the historical presence and strength of particular parties, but also in the extent to which the rise of mass parties contributed to strengthening what by that time was a pluralist political system or an authoritarian type of government. It suggests that the existence of some measure of pluralist and accountable government before the advent of mass politics is a major determining factor in ensuring a gradual transition toward stable polyarchical rule, unlike the earlier existence of an autocratic or absolutist type of government that can only evolve toward democratic rule through revolutionary ruptures, often the harbinger of long-standing legitimacy conflicts.

Yet another dimension to investigate comparatively and empirically is the actual degree of party penetration into the centers of effective power, including the bureaucracy. Politicization of the bureaucracy has been a major factor in such different systems as those of as the USA or Italy, Austria or Belgium. In other cases such penetration has not really been attempted. Yet in the latter circumstances one must clearly differentiate between cases in which parties did not seek such penetration because a civil service was regarded as sufficiently neutral and accountable (e.g., Britain) or the very different cases in which the entrenched, virtually autonomous position of the bureaucracy left parties powerless in the first place, as tended to be the case in Germany before the Nazis broke older bastions of autocratic, bureaucratic power.

On closer view the seven factors mentioned above add up to one issue of overriding importance: the relation between older types of pluralism and modern forms of polyarchy. It is hypothesized that pluralist democracy has been likely to develop more gradually and effectively when an older pluralism (however elitist) proved susceptible to transform itself into what Robert A. Dahl has termed `inclusive polyarchies'. To the extent that a direct link exists between these two conditions, the manner of early state building is of profound importance. Whenever state building proceeded in a monoecephalous, autocratic manner, the chances of a gradual development of such states into stable democracies was affected adversely. The coming about of an inclusive polyarchy required the effective mobilization of mass parties.
that proved powerful enough to wrest power from entrenched autocratic centralized ruling groups. The likely outcome was both a conflict of legitimacy and a seizure of power by parties deliberately seeking to attain not only executive power but also power within the bureaucratic apparatuses of the executive. Such parties may in the end subjugate what was once uncontrolled autocratic power. Whether this also leads to stable democratic rule depends on whether the party system itself remains pluralist with entrenched parties checking each other.

How can one make good on these many open-ended questions? Perhaps one Juan Linz could do it. But amongst ordinary mortals one should hope for the joining of forces of scholars of many disciplines: experts of what we once called *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, constitutional and legal historians, specialists on comparative sociology and political development, and students of public administration.

Eindnoten:

5. Mogens N. Pedersen has made the excellent point that lawyers who had been prominent in political life earlier disappeared from active politics in Denmark after the arrival of full mass democracy, in stark contrast to developments in the USA. See Mogens N. Pedersen (1972) ‘Lawyers in Politics: The Danish Folketing and American Legislatures’, in Samuel C. Patterson and John C. Wahlke, (eds.) *Comparative Legislative Behavior: Frontiers of Research*, New York: Wiley: 25-64.
6. The strong presence of conflicts between modern centers and traditional peripheries in Norway became an important heuristic element in the development of models of European political development in the work of Stein Rokkan, as it did in the analysis of world economic relations by that other well-known Norwegian scholar, Johan Galtung.
8. The term *consociationes* was used by the pluralist thinker Johannes Althusius in the early seventeenth century to base public authority on the free association of independent social groups, transferring only limited authority onto higher levels of government in which they shared. The term was reminted in the political development and comparative politics literature of the 1960s, notably by David E. Apter and Arend Lijphart. For further details see Hans Daalder (1973)


chapter four | european political traditions and processes of modernization: groups, the individual and the state

I. Introduction

When S.N. Eisenstadt gave me his position paper Historical Traditions, Modernization and Development to read, I could not help commenting: ‘You're only asking us to treat the universe’! His comment, characteristically, was: ‘I'll only give you Europe, with economic and social developments going to other authors!’ Such restrictions are small: the topic is daunting.¹ In approaching it, I cannot help thinking of Winston Churchill visiting Strasbourg shortly after World War II. To the assembled crowd he put the rhetorical question in his (easily imitable) accent: ‘Voulez-vous que moi, je parle français?’ When the crowd roared its approval, he continued with ‘Alors ce serez-vous qui serez responsable!’

The following paper treats no less than: the rise of the state (Section II); the development of the notion of the individual as a political actor (Section III); the importance of groups in the European political tradition (Section IV), and finally, after a short analytical interlude (Section V), some issues in which the relation of individuals, groups and the state are at stake: i.e. processes of democratization; the manner of economic modernization; state and nation; and the debate (recently revived) on the role of corporatism in modern European societies (Section VI).

II. The rise of the state

In any review of European processes of modernization, the rise of the ‘state’ must undoubtedly rank high. The world has known other and earlier forms of political organization, varying from oriental despotisms to city ‘states’, from the Roman Empire to feudal arrangements, and many others. Yet, there is substance in the argument that not only the word ‘state’ (lo stato, in the words of Machiavelli) is of relatively recent origin, but also the concept of state and the particular phenomena for which the concept of state stands.² Bookcases have been filled by the notion of the ‘state’. The matter, moreover, is complicated because the shorthand concept of ‘state’ is used in reference to many different historical forms of state.³ However, with the advantage of hindsight, certain characteristic features of the modern ‘state’ can be isolated.

1. The separation of ‘temporal’ and ‘spiritual’ powers

Both the biblical injunction (‘Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's’) and in

Christian doctrine, notably in the Middle Ages, ‘spiritual’ and ‘temporal’ power were undoubtedly distinct. But the actual notion of ‘state’ only began to crystallize when the old doctrine of Pope Gelasius about the ‘two swords’ came to be reinterpreted in the sense that worldly powers derived their position, not from the Pope, as intermediary between the eternal God and merely passing worldly rulers, but directly enjoyed their place by God's grace. Even then, many different positions remained possible in the relation between ‘temporal’ powers and religion, from those close to theocracy in which the temporal Lord saw it as his mission to impose religious doctrine and observance on the ruled, to one in which the specific religion seemed rather to become one of convenience (as in the famous cuius regio, eius religio-doctrine of the Augsburg Peace of 1555). Even then, the importance of religion as one of the most essential props of political authority was readily recognized, as in the dictum of James I: ‘No bishops, no Kings’. Yet, for all this the trend was increasingly towards secular power per se, with religion eventually becoming a matter of secondary political importance or even a matter of private concern alone, rather than the source and end of all existing authority. In that light it is no accident that the theorist of modern doctrines of sovereignty par excellence, Jean Bodin (one of les politiques), was also one of the first to regard religion as a matter to be left alone - peace being best preserved when worldly power kept religious differences at a distance.

2. The concept of sovereignty

The concept of sovereignty developed along two dimensions: externally, in the insistence that no other power than the sovereign had any right to take decisions in a given territory, and internally, in the claim that within that territory no other actor than the sovereign one had ultimate authority. The archetype is the French doctrine of droit divin for an absolute monarch. But the doctrine also developed in England: although power at the center was less unified in England than in France; the assumption that the King's writ was universally law - and the later claim on behalf of the King-in-Parliament to be the supreme lawgiver of the land - became unchallenged doctrine. One might even argue that in actual practice sovereignty came to be more securely established in Britain than in France, where the claim of absolute rule was one more of eventual aspiration than of actual practice. Was the British judiciary not far more present and effective than any French counterpart, and were not the twin forces of Parliament and the Common Law Courts a clear match in the expression of the will of central government, compared to the French bureaucratic authorities or Intendants prior to 1789?

3. Direct rule

In the development of the state, the idea of direct rule became an indispensable principle. Even though elements of indirect rule might persist for some time, and
even though the total role of central government in the periphery might remain distinctly marginal, the assumption that the lawful commands of government were valid anywhere in the realm was an essential feature of the concept of the modern state. With the development of this principle, the people became subjects, who
might then develop into citizens. By itself, the idea of citizenship was not new (it was known in Greek city-states, in the city of Rome, and later in the Roman Imperium.) But only in the (modern) state were effective direct links forged between governments and subjects over large geographical areas.

4. The separation between public and private

A further step in the development of the modern state came in the increasing separation between the public and private affairs of the sovereign - a process that often took a very long time. After all, the very notion of sovereign authority was initially intimately tied up with the view that authority was a matter of absolute discretion. That view was also held among lower ranks - offices being largely regarded as private affairs - for purchase in themselves, and their holders deriving an income in exchange for services charged for private gain rather than rendered as public service. But in the development of the state, exchequers and treasuries attained an increasingly independent status, and one means of enforcing central government control became the establishment of Courts of Account which were to oversee the regularities of expenditure. Increasingly, ‘public’ authorities were brought under some closer form of control and supervision, although only a few attained the full paraphernalia of an ideal Weberian-type bureaucracy at a relatively early period in time.

5. The new importance of law

Again, both the concepts of law and of legitimate authority were not unknown before the advent of the ‘modern state’ at the end of the Middle Ages. Distinctions between ‘positive’ and ‘natural’ law or ius civile and ius gentium, had an ancient pedigree. What was new, however, was the reception of Roman law in a number of West European countries at the end of the Middle Ages as an instrument of the new temporal power of the state. In a more revolutionary way, law came to be identified with the formal expression of sovereign will - which meant that it could also become an instrument of purposive change, rather than earlier law which had to be ‘found’. Such claims did not of course go unchallenged. Early modern times are replete with rebellions in the name of ancient rights and privileges. The assumption that the King could make law, and thus be himself above the law, was countered by the claim that the King himself was subject to the law. If in Britain this eventually resulted in the successful imposition of the supremacy of Parliament and the Common Law over the King, it did not gainsay the actual arrival of sovereign powers as a characteristic of the state (though represented by the King-in-Parliament rather than the King alone). Together with it, arbitrary power also came to be circumscribed: what was once regarded merely as possibly immoral became first illegitimate, and then illegal.
6. An increasing number of state agencies and instruments of government

The development of the modern state was also accompanied by an increasing differentiation of governing agencies. A process of differentiation from what was once *the* Court resulted in the establishment of many judicial agencies, executive
and/or advisory councils, institutionalized forms of representation, royal inspectors, both central and local bureaucracies, new armed forces, etc. Regrettably, the analysis of such developments has remained largely the preserve of legal historians. For all the insistence on the role of centers - for example in the seminal work of Stein Rokkan\(^4\) - the process of center-formation is too often taken for granted rather than subjected to analysis. The exact nature of the processes of institutional differentiation, the various powers of different agencies in relation to one another, the sequence of their respective developments, requires more study if the precise nature of political development is to be understood.

Developing states also created increasingly varied instruments of control; for example the development of different systems of law, new forms of central/local interaction, the development of state taxation, the establishment of forms of government enterprise and/or the encouragement of private enterprise by government (through charters, régies, subsidies, government orders, and so on).

7. The state and growing intervention in social and economic matters

Eventually the state was to become an important equalizer of standards; thus, one might note that in classical political economy (whether in its Liberal or Marxist version) the state had to provide, at a minimum, for basic security through the enforcement of standards in contracts and markets. From that minimal concept, clamour for removal of evident abuses would easily follow. But, in some European societies, the role of the state became far wider. The need (or wish) to expand state power, against both foreign and domestic enemies, made for extensive government intervention early on. It is no accident that ‘political arithmetic’ blossomed as a result of the desire on the part of sovereign rulers to assess resources of power (whether in people or wealth). It is also no accident that governments which pursued an active policy of territorial security (let alone expansion) became the most interventionist and bureaucratic: witness developments in France and Prussia, as distinct from Britain or the Dutch Republic.\(^5\) The latter remained relatively free from the danger of invasion and concentrated more on the development of naval power, which was much closer to commercial than state-bureaucratic activity. Clearly, the rather different feedback of experience in overseas colonial rule to domestic government and political developments in Britain and Holland differed considerably from the effects of landlocked expansionism, as in Prussia.\(^6\)

The greater ‘weight’ of the state in some European countries than in others was also to influence later developments: one might note the resemblance, in principle, between older traditions of Kameralistik in Prussia and the pioneering of social insurance - both being part of an effort to mobilize people and resources for the further development of a strong state. In that light, both Hegelian philosophy and Rechtsstaat doctrines contributed to the assumption that the state was the great integrator and dispenser of political good, in a collectivist spirit which was eventually also to be exported to Britain - through the work of Hegelian philosophers such as Bosanquet and Thomas Hill Green, who in turn influenced the Fabians and the
so-called social-imperialists. Similar, though less drastic, developments should be noted for France. There, the rise of a new *nation une et indivisible*, and
of Napoleon who was to reap the fruits of the French Revolution, was to create the effective instruments of central government to which absolutist kings had only aspired. But, at the same time in France both the opposing forces of traditionalism on the one hand and republicanism on the other remained powerful rival inspirations which were to blunt the full force of the French state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as compared to Prussia and the German Reich.

8. State and society

In the development of the modern state the separate spheres of ‘state’ and ‘society’ came to be consciously distinguished in a way not found in earlier societies. Paradoxically, that recognition is also present in later analyses which seek to trace the increasing interpenetration of state and society in the present century, variously denoted by metaphors like: osmosis, the _Vergesellschaftlichung des Staates_ and _Verstaatlichung der Gesellschaft_, neo-corporatism, and similar concepts. Once we have surveyed the rise of individuals as political actors, and the role of groups in relation to state and individual, we shall return to such issues.

The eight points noted in the development of the concept of the state do little justice to the many variations in the processes of the formation of states in Europe, and in fact offer a telescoped picture, as if the dimensions of time and geography were of no importance. They should serve, however, to make the case that the development of the concept of the state was, at the least, a major factor to note in analyzing the role of European political traditions in processes of modernization.

III. The individual as a political subject

Singling out the rise of the individual as a political subject, in an analysis of the role of European political traditions in processes of modernization, smacks of considerable arrogance: as if ‘men’ have not lived, loved, worked, thought and suffered throughout history and in all societies. Yet, an analysis of the manner in which individuals have been regarded as independent political actors is too powerful a characteristic of European development for us to stop at that ready recognition.

1. Old traditions of citizenship

In any mention of the role of individuals in politics, the important recognition of the idea of citizenship in classical antiquity should receive first place. Both the role of the individual ‘citizen’ and the rights of the ‘many’ were readily acknowledged in classical Athens, and with it the idea of equality developed easily. But, as has often been noted, the individual was conceived as living _in_ and _through_ the _polis_, inevitably a _zoon politikon_, and not yet an independent actor who had rights against the _polis_ as well as participating in it.
2. The separation of individual and society

A clear step in the recognition of individuals as distinct from the society in which they lived only came when the ‘autonomy’ (in the literal sense of the word) of the polis was broken up and the polis itself was absorbed into parts of larger political
organizations (for example Macedonia and the Hellenistic World first, and then later Rome. Then, a distinct role for the individual, set apart from his own society, but part of a newly recognized ‘cosmic order’, was seen to exist. For a time this implied more a ‘privatization’ of the individual than the attribution to him of individual roles in a larger world. Yet, the Stoa, with its emphasis on rational and natural man, was to exert a powerful influence, and this was revived in the Renaissance, which put man in the center of the stage, and fostered rationality and secularism as challenges to the Thomistic world system.

3. The individual as a believer

Similarly, the advent of new theological currents, ending with the formal Reformation, loosened the link between individuals and the inherited order of thought and things, postulating instead a direct link between the believer and his God. Calvinist doctrine notably gave individuals a more independent role, emphasizing independent prayer and work, and providing for forms of church organization in which hierarchical authority was to some extent replaced by the free association of like-minded believers. In the final analysis this could mean the disentanglement of the individual from any formal bond (even though, in practice, Calvinist, let alone Lutheran, versions of church organization might remain a massive regulatory presence).

4. Resistance and consent

The breakdown of universal religion also created new problems in the relationship between individuals and authority. Both Calvinist Monarchomachs and ultramontane Catholics developed doctrines about the right to resist heretical rulers. Initially, such rights to resist were given to groups and magistrates, rather than to individual believers, but, in the process, the idea of a social contract began to be elaborated, making allegiance to rulers dependent on the fulfillment of the conditions on which authority had been granted. Such views logically led both to the concept of consent as a condition of legitimate authority, and to the construct of the demarcation of rights against worldly rulers. If the basis for such rights was originally one of groups, rather than of individuals, the transition from the one to the other came about naturally.

5. Secularization and a new interpretation of natural law

Again, the loss of a common belief strengthened the development of more secular views of political authority. Thus, older concepts of natural law were disentangled from the great Thomistic synthesis, strengthening the concept of natural man as a secular and rational agent. New systems of philosophy worked in the same direction, with scientific ways of reasoning replacing older religious doctrines. The transition is neatly seen in the work of Thomas Hobbes, which is still full of religious discussion,
yet makes the revolutionary step of deriving political authority from the rational calculations of individuals motivated by self interest. If Hobbes himself was to conclude from this that only one individual right could really be claimed against the effective political authority of the Leviathan (i.e. the right to
life); others - most notably John Locke - were soon to expand the concept of natural rights into a much wider sphere.

6. The link between absolutism and individualism

Somewhat anachronistically, later observers have often missed the link which in the last seventeenth and eighteenth century was seen clearly to exist between absolutist rule on the one hand, and individualism on the other. During the French Enlightenment that connection was readily made, both absolute rulers and individuals having every interest in seeking to destroy the vested interests of different estates and regional authorities, which were thought to make for inequality and privilege. We shall see later (Section IV.3; Section V.1; and Section VI.1) how different systems of thought developed during the Enlightenment between pluralist preferences as exemplified by Montesquieu on the one hand and more individualistic preoccupations shared by proponents of absolutist rule and ‘totalitarian’ democrats alike on the other.

7. Proclamations of individual rights

If the concept of ‘rights’ took some few centuries to develop, the clamour for rights became a movement of massive proportions from the late eighteenth century onwards. The various Declarations and Bills of Rights of the American Revolution, the Déclaration des Droits de l’Homme of the French Revolution, and similar statements in country after country, until the eventual adoption of supranational declarations by the United Nations (1948) and in the Rome Convention (1950), became an almost inevitable ingredient of modern political discourse - even if wide differences have remained in the actual implementation and enforceability of human rights in different parts of the world.

8. The individual as a unit of measurement

One later development of the theories of natural rights is represented by utilitarianism, where the individual became both the goal of political action and the unit of measurement by which to judge it. The adoption of the principle of ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number’ potentially heralded a new conception of rights, validating reforms and positive state action. If it was held that true reasoning proved non-intervention by the state in the economy to be in the best interests of all, the new yardstick was soon to assist the elaboration of new forms of cooperative and collective action (as developed by John Stuart Mill, the proponents of the theory of positive freedom, and later reformist socialists alike). One can construe a logical sequence, leading from the idea that individuals had inalienable rights which must be upheld against both the state and other individuals, to the view that the actual enjoyment of rights might depend on the provision of minimal collective provisions through
common action, to the view that rights must be effectively claimed and guaranteed through state action.

9. **The expansion of citizenship**

Initially, it was held that only those who were socially and materially independ-
ent possessed the basic requirements for independent judgment which citizenship assumed, that is, heads of families with sufficient property; this excluded both women and those with insufficient personal means. Such reasoning is clearly seen in the work of John Locke - accused by Harold Laski of regarding the state as little more than a limited company of property owners. The same view was evident among many who regarded the Tiers État as equivalent to the Nation in the French Revolution, or among those who regarded the later extension of citizenship to non-property owning groups as leading to tyranny rather than to a free society. The idea that a good state demanded ‘independent’ citizens who had a proper stake in public order and careful rule was extended far into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. But, in the longer run, the force of individualism and human rights was such that the burden of proof came to rest, not on those who pleaded for the inclusion of all, but on those who continued to advocate the exclusion of some. Thus, the concept of citizenship was freed from any necessity for proof of capacity or suitability, and regarded as one inalienable human right amongst others.

10. The expansion of rights

Not least due to the acceptance, and the weight of, universal suffrage, the notion of individual rights came to be widely expanded. The state was no longer held to have the duty to respect individual rights alone, but also to provide for the common good of all, and eventually to take responsibility for the general well-being of citizens. With this duty, the notion of rights increasingly assumed a dimension of revendication - individuals claiming performance and provisions as of right. This not only implied a change from the Liberal State to the Welfare State, but also an increasing emphasis on equality of access to services and justice. A new definition was given to political participation, in terms of the ‘subjective competence’ to obtain recognition of individual problems. Also, new forms of judicial appeal were instituted, by changes in the application of civil law on the one hand, and by the elaboration of a wide range of administrative law procedures on the other. If these developments led to what Robert Dahl has called the new democratic Leviathan, that Monstrum theoretically rests, nevertheless, as much as the old one of Thomas Hobbes, on the basis of individual interest.

IV. Groups

Although groups are here treated last, logically they come first, being in comparison to ‘state’ and ‘individuals’ the more accepted and general variable in political discourse. Groups were the undisputed starting-point, as in Aristotle's view of balanced government, for example; in the conceptualization of different ‘orders’ in ancient Rome or the Middle Ages; in the ‘organic’ conceptualizations of both absolutist kings and the romanticist anti-individual reactions of the nineteenth century; in what
has been termed ‘ethical’ as well as in the ‘analytical’ pluralism of more recent days. Groups provide a fairly constant Leitmotiv against the claims of state and individuals alike. One can distinguish the following developments in the concept of groups in European political traditions.
1. Groups in the ancient ‘polis’

As emphasized earlier, classical political thought held individuals to exist only in and through groups. The *polis*, as distinct from other *poleis*, could be regarded in itself as the most fundamental group of all - the usual translation of ‘city-state’ being really a misnomer by definition. But, more importantly, politics was also seen in ancient times in terms of the struggle between different groups, the ‘rich’ and the ‘poor’ being the most obvious ones that prompted Aristotle to seek a balancing role for the ‘middle state’ - men who ‘will neither covet what belongs to others, as the poor do [...] nor will others covet what is theirs’, they themselves not being rich enough to arouse envy.

2. Groups in the ‘organic’ reading of history

From time immemorial, society has been represented as an organism, with different parts fulfilling different functions - all essential to the well-being of the whole. One finds this image in ancient Rome, as well as in the Thomistic system, in the reasoning of absolutist kings, as well as among schools of natural law (being understood as the fundamental reflection in the social order of eternal and divine law on the one hand, the nature of man on the other). Later, a revival of organic theories was to occur in protest against the ruptures of the French Revolution, and the extreme individualism of *laissez-faire* doctrines.

3. A contractual version of the formation of the state

Contractual theories about the origin of political communities initially also had a group base, rather than an individualist one (which it mainly acquired through the twist that Hobbes, and later Locke, gave to theories of a social contract). As we saw, contractual theories were put forward to safeguard religious minorities against sovereigns of a different faith. The right to resist infringements of religious rights was thought initially to belong to groups rather than individuals. Interestingly, in a somewhat later version, Althusius developed a contractual theory which derived the establishment of sovereign rule from below, with fundamental groups delegating the right to make decisions to common authorities (consociationes), formed among themselves for the resolution of issues which could not be treated lower down, and for those issues alone. At the base were the most elementary groups of the extended family and small village communities, and at the top confederal authorities which looked after issues such as defense, but always with due respect for inherent rights, and in full conciliar patterns of decision-making (it is a moot point whether a system of public authorities formed in this way can really be described as meeting the criteria of statehood which were singled out in Section II).
4. Montesquieu's insistence on corps intermédiaires

The literature on the French Enlightenment often suggests far greater unanimity among the Philosophes than really existed. In fact, no greater difference could be found between the reasoning of the Comte de Montesquieu on the one hand, and both the Enlightenment individualists and a J.J. Rousseau on the other. The individualists abhorred the intervention in the body politic of intermediate groups,
echoing Hobbes’ dictum that private societies were ‘like worms in the entrayles of natural man’, whereas Rousseau regarded partial societies as by definition conflicting with his notion of a general will. Montesquieu, on the other hand saw in the destruction of *corps intermédiaires* the essence of despotism. If the individualists embraced absolutism, and Rousseau argued in similarly absolutist terms for popular sovereignty - undivided and fundamentally at one - Montesquieu sought to preserve pluralist traditions. His writings in fact served as an inspiration for very different schools which were to follow in the nineteenth century: institutionalists, thinkers of the *Restauration*, socialists and modern pluralists (i.e., points 5-8 which follow).

5. The new institutionalism

Both in the elaboration of the American Constitution, and in the writings of post-revolutionary thinkers such as Benjamin Constant, Guizot and others, Montesquieu's writings could serve to propagate doctrines of the need for a clear separation of powers and a modern constitutionalism. From then on, a verbal allegiance at least to institutional guarantees against a concentration of powers was to reverberate throughout the modern world, whatever the realities behind the institutional façades might be.

6. The restoration and the conservative reaction

But Montesquieu's teachings could also be put to more conservative uses. His insistence that social groups should be balanced as much as constitutional powers was not fundamentally different from organicist arguments which again became popular in nineteenth-century political thought. An abhorrence for revolutionary turmoil could equally base itself on Montesquieu's emphasis on the close relationship between traditional rights and natural pluralism. Montesquieu's respect for corporate forms of social organization could inspire all those who sought to resist both modern individualism and collectivism, whether in the writings of the traditionalists of the German *Historische Rechtsschule*; sympathizers of the Hegelian attempt to synthesize the traditions of primary group life on the one hand, and the extreme individualism of *laissez-faire* on the other in a higher form of community called ‘state’; or *Kathedersozialisten*; or Catholic thinkers, pleading for a new solidarism rather than liberal individualism or collectivist socialism, as set out in great encyclicals like *Rerum Novarum* (1891), etc.

7. Socialist doctrines

The desire to preserve the forces of group life against the onslaught of individualist modernization also formed a notable feature of developing socialist thought. One powerful impetus of socialism was rebellion against modernization, in a desire to
preserve existing social bonds and pre-industrial skills. Projects for communitarian forms of social organization often reflected such sentiments; being Utopian in the belief that mankind could contract out of the realities of modern social life rather than develop with the modernist tide. For all Marx's adherence to the tenets of classical political economy and materialist historical determinism, his teachings
did not neglect group traditions, whether in stipulating the inexorable development of class (that is: group) conflict, or in his idealization of post-revolutionary communism. Again, group elements could be found in a variety even of statist socialist teachings, whether of Lassalle, Eduard Bernstein, or Fabian gradualist collectivism.

8. Theories of pluralism proper

But, above all, groups were to be the key variable in the theories of pluralism proper.\textsuperscript{16} The \textit{locus classicus} is Madison's \textit{Federalist X}, in which he argues the case for the inevitability of factionalism, whatever advocates of popular sovereignty and direct rule might hold. From this Madison concluded the reverse of Rousseau: if Rousseau wanted small communities to obviate the adverse effect of factional strife which would conflict with the \textit{volonté générale}, Madison concluded that a large territory would make for a greater spread and lessened danger from individual factions. American experiences inspired de Tocqueville who concluded from them that the future was inexorably towards mass democracy, but who also saw in the tendency of people to join together freely in associations the best means to combat the leveling tendencies of mass societies. Pluralist doctrines were also elaborated elsewhere. Thus, Otto von Gierke found inspiration in Althusius to formulate alternative theories of law and sovereignty to both \textit{laissez-faire} and statist collectivism in his famous multi-volume work: \textit{Das Deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht} (1913).\textsuperscript{17} Study of the experiences of the Dutch Republic was also to inspire J.N. Figgis and F.W. Maitland to reject the axioms underlying prevailing doctrines of unified sovereignty. Following in their wake, the younger Harold Laski was to argue in similar terms, also being inspired by the constitutionalist writings of Léon Duguit which he and his wife translated into English.\textsuperscript{18} At about the same time, French syndicalism and English guild socialism provided comparable inspiration, to combat widespread collectivist teachings in the socialist orbit.

All such writings were later to be subsumed under the label ‘ethical pluralism’, to distinguish them from so-called analytical pluralism, as elaborated by Arthur F. Bentley, David B. Truman, Robert A. Dahl, William Kornhauser and others, in a variety of analytical theorems which came to form the gist of social science writing on contemporary society since the 1940s.\textsuperscript{19} As that literature has gone into the common fund of writings on the development and working of modern political systems, no further elaboration is necessary in the context of this paper. Suffice it to say that we owe to that literature such various contributions as the group approach in political analysis, most writings on political development, the emphasis on intermediate groups as the major factor preventing mass society from falling into the hands of totalitarian leaders, the concept of polyarchy, considerations on the feasibility of democracy in plural societies, including the consociational democracy literature, etc.
V. Groups, individuals and the state: compatibility or conflict?

If one surveys the many trends and traditions treated in the introduction to this paper, one is struck by the many combinations which are theoretically possible. Thus, one can analyze pairs: state and individuals; state and groups; groups and individuals. But one must also elaborate the triad, since the relations between each pair is bound to be greatly affected by the third element.

1. Paired relations: the state and the individual

In this category one finds both the theories of absolutist rule and theories of popular sovereignty. Both theories insist on the need to secure direct access for authority and individual alike. Both reject the claims of intermediate groups, which are written off as ‘private interests’ likely to thwart the interest of the whole. From either side one may arrive at the concept of equality: equality of subjects, leading to equality before the law in absolutist reasoning; equality of participation in Rousseau's theory of the general will. We must pay tribute to the late J.L. Talmon for his elaboration of the concept of totalitarian democracy, and should point to the many similar examples of political ideologies and practices, whether in totalitarian doctrines of fascism, National Socialism, soviet communism, or in the weaker forms of populism and many embryonic ideologies in the new states.

2. Paired relations: the state and groups

In this dyad one might place theories which emphasize the special relations which connect certain groups, rather than others, to states. One early example is Aristotle's description of ‘oligarchies’. Closely related to this, are those theories of the ‘mixed state’ which seek to balance social groups. Another case is that of traditional medieval doctrine, which argues in terms of different estates and groups, each having its own appointed station in life under God's plan. The idea is also found in more modern versions, for example in conceptions of politics in terms of ‘interests’, which is a normal feature of conservative doctrine, but also in those theories of political development which lay particular stress on the alliances of particular groups (such as landed or commercial interests, aristocracies or peasants, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat) with state power in processes of social change. That approach is given a more formal elaboration in both traditional corporatist views of society and in the analysis of authors on neo-corporatism or countervailing powers, and so forth.

3. Paired relations: individuals and groups

This pair mirrors much of what has been said above. On the one hand, there is the argument that freedom of individuals as well as freedom of groups, against the state is intimately connected. Where there is only freedom for individuals, and not for the
groups they associate in, such freedom is not likely to be real. Conversely, when there is only some measure of freedom for groups, but not for individuals, individuals too are likely to fall prey to control by state and groups alike, in a
highly arbitrary manner. One could therefore argue that individual freedoms and group freedoms are logically complementary. But one cannot reverse this argument and claim that individuals are free when groups are free. For groups might be potentially repressive themselves, and individuals are only secure against such repression if they have a clear chance of exit and association with other groups.

4. The triad: groups, the individual and the state

One can only speak of such triangular relations when the idea of ‘state’ and the concept of ‘individual political actors’ had sufficiently crystallized in order to deny the all-inclusive claim of groups to being the sole real actors in politics. Hence, the more significant alternatives are arrangements of modern politics rather than traditional or transitional ones. One could distinguish three possible alternatives, depending on the degree of relative independence which the state, the individual and groups enjoy:

(a) **The polyarchical model:** In this model groups are given a paramount place, though without absorbing the individual, who retains his freedom against any particular group, precisely because there are many specialized groups catering for specific interests only. The model presupposes the freedom to establish associations, but also the presence of a partisan-electoral channel next to a corporate-pluralist channel, so as to give the state an independent basis on the one hand and the individual a guarantee that he can escape groups through political and judicial action on the other. In this view, politics is very much the result of group action, but at the same time the degree of independence which the state and the individual enjoy prevents political systems from being entirely dependent on the interaction of groups alone. Perhaps the most idealized picture of such a polyarchy is that of Gabriel Almond's concept of the Anglo-American system, which he contrasts with the continental European system. Almond sees as the major differences between his two models that in the latter case groups are not strongly differentiated, but form parts of ideological subcultures which encapsulate the individual rather than freeing him. He also concludes that political decision-making in such systems is likely to be heavily ideological and immobilist, signaling the possible advent of a ‘Caesaristic breakthrough’ in the form of synthetic ‘nationalist’ leaders, as a substitute for the much more homogeneous political culture of Anglo-American political systems. Almond's analysis was, of course, the starting point of Arend Lijphart's rebuttal which led to the elaboration of the consociational democracy model. But it should be noted that Lijphart retains many features of Almond's reasoning even when he speaks of ‘plural’ societies (that is, societies consisting largely of mutually exclusive groups), rather than ‘pluralist’ societies (that is, societies with many interwoven group allegiances).

(b) **The corporatist model:** In this model, as elaborated notably by writers in the neo-corporatist school, the emphasis is on mutual penetration between state and group, with private interests given public powers, and groups
given an established position, verging on a monopoly of representation for given interests. In this analysis, little is left of the freedom of the individual, or of the autonomy of the state, though a plurality of groups is maintained.

(c) The totalitarian model: In this model there is room neither for independent groups nor for free individuals, both being mobilized in a system of unified control, possessing all the panoplies of state power. We know, of course, that this model is also of an ideal type. Even the most influential framer of the model, Carl J. Friedrich, recognized the existence of what he termed ‘islands of separateness’ in totalitarian systems (including to some degree the family, the army, churches and universities). 25. We have also been taught early on that there are many ‘cracks in the monolith’ 26 and have witnessed attempts to apply group analysis to the study of totalitarian political systems. Yet, the model of totalitarian rule remains - almost by definition the clearest example of the subjugation of groups and individuals to the state in modern times.

VI. Groups, the state and the individual in modernization: some great debates

Using the three categories - groups, the state and the individual - in a developmental perspective, one arrives at some of the great debates in modernization literature. I shall treat these (as elsewhere in this chapter!) in barest outline.

1. The manner of democratization

In the literature on processes of democratization 27 one finds two opposing schools, which one might term the ‘Whig’ School and the ‘Jacobin’ School respectively. The latter school reads somewhat as follows: democracy requires the direct participation of every individual in the formation of the general will. For this, equality is an important element. The ground on which modern democracy can develop was the rise of the bourgeoisie who demanded increasing rights in a society in which inequality was ingrained, owing to the heritage of feudal times. In attacking the remnants of feudalism, absolutist kings fulfilled a historically necessary role. Once absolutist kings had established the principle of a universalist state it was up to the bourgeoisie, as the historically indicated class, to topple absolute monarchs and to establish a new republican rule on the basis of equal rights for citizens. Although some parts of the bourgeoisie might then seek to occupy new, exclusive positions of privilege, revolutionary momentum should secure the extension of civic and political rights to all members of the political community. As the Jacobins were the true democrats in the time of the French Revolution, so only radicals and, later, socialists could be depended on to bring about a genuine democratic republic on the basis of equal rights and popular sovereignty. Emphasis should also be constantly given to the need to secure widespread political participation, which is both a condition for the formation of
of a genuine popular will and a good in itself. Democracy should therefore be defined above all in terms of constant individual emancipation. For intermediate groups there is little space. At
most they might represent a prototype and a training ground for full participation in
the larger democratic community.

Against such reasoning, a ‘Whig’ School argues rather as follows. If one surveys
modern democracies, systems which show greatest democratic stability are those in
which democracy developed only gradually, without many revolutionary upheavals,
but also with no reversals. The roots of modern democracy in these societies should
be sought in earlier pluralist traditions. In certain European countries (e.g. Britain,
Holland, to some extent Sweden) the attempts by kings to establish absolutist rule
was thwarted by entrenched social groups (including the remnants of feudal groups,
but also by representatives of the new moneyed classes). As a result, oligarchical
rule persisted for a long time, though without power becoming concentrated in the
hands of one particular body. On the contrary, the struggle between holders of
different institutional powers (king, ministers, parliaments, judges) came to
supplement social and economic struggle. From that base, the advent of the industrial
revolution (with its concomitant processes of urbanization, increased social mobility,
new policy challenges, etc.) led to increased competition amongst elites, and to new
claims for influence and power among strata as yet excluded from the pays légal.
These reciprocal competitive processes eventually led to democratic reforms, including
responsible parliamentary government, changes in the electoral system, expansion
in suffrage, the formation of modern mass parties, the introduction of merit
appointments to bureaucratic positions, and eventually the spectrum of state provisions
which is now dubbed the welfare state.

If one compares this Whig reading of the historical record with the Jacobin one,
the major difference is in the emphasis on the importance of early pluralist traditions.
Rather than being an impediment to the development of later democracy (as the
‘Jacobins’ were to argue), they were the crucible from which later democracy could
develop. The ‘Whig’ theory is both much less ‘statist’ and less ‘individualist’ than
its ‘Jacobin’ counterpart, laying greater stress on institutional guarantees than on the
need for participation, and trusting the market-place more than the pedagogue. Clearly,
then, the two different theories read the empirical record differently, but they also
continue to differ in certain normative aspects. Of the two, groups loom larger in the
‘Whig’ theory; whereas, ‘collectivist’ assumptions, centering on the state and the
direct role of the individual in it, in the ‘Jacobin’ view.

2. The manner of economic modernization

European societies have also differed greatly in the role that the state has played in
processes of economic modernization (and the political theories which have
accompanied it). The assumption that in some countries there was at one time only
a ‘night watchman-state’ is in many ways a fiction. Even guaranteeing the free
working of the market (including on the one hand the breaking of local monopolies
and guild-like interests, providing on the other for the necessary guarantees for
standards and contracts) required substantial action by public authority, and states
stepped in with further regulatory measures as soon as evident abuses appeared in
the wake of massive urbanization, health hazards and the like. Even so, the
role of the state in promoting economic development was much greater in some European societies than others. This had a powerful effect on such factors as: the type of bourgeoisie that developed, the outlook of state officials, the status of different social strata, the role of the peasantry, the position of the working class (or of certain parts of it) in relation to the state, etc. To the extent that the state was the prime mover, a close network developed between state authorities and certain social groups, which was to have a powerful effect on the specific chances of political parties and on the character of democratization processes.

3. The state and the nation

Perhaps the most powerful influence of European modernization processes has been the forging of the concept of ‘nation’. Coupled with the notions of ‘state’ and of ‘sovereignty’, it came to provide the dominant formula of ‘national self-determination’, which was a powerful factor both in decolonization processes and in the refusal of new ‘nation states’ to accept any intervention in their internal affairs (even when groups or individuals were victimized). One great problem has always been, however, that concepts like ‘nation’ or ‘nationalism’ have stood for rather different things.28

First, there is the concept of ‘political nationality’, comprising all those living in a given territory under one sovereign regime. Second, there is any number of ‘objective’ definitions of nationhood, including definitions based on race, colour, language, religion, etc. Finally, there is the emphasis on ‘subjective’ definitions of nation, arguing that the only factor which counts is the constantly reaffirmed sense of allegiance, given freely by citizens whatever their ‘objective’ characteristics. Whenever the ‘political’ and the ‘objective’ criteria of nationhood are lumped together there are bound to arise problems for minority groups. They are at best given the position of second-rate citizens, and at worst made the victims of genocide. Only the subjective definition permits free individual choice, and the possibility of free association of different ‘objective’ groups in one state. Yet, the famous dictum of Ernest Renan that a nation should be a ‘plébiscite de tous les jours’29 is more a rhetorical than an analytical success, assuming as it does the possibility of constant free choice which is hardly a reality except for the few individuals who have a real option to leave the territory of a given state.

The problem is raised as one of the great debates on the relations between groups, the individual and the state since, as great differences have occurred in the actual historical development of European societies. On the whole, the slow development of statehood in most countries in Western Europe has allowed the welding together of different groups in states which are either definite nation-states, or at least states which have permitted the coexistence of different ‘objective’ groups without too much tension. To that extent, state, group and individual are not in conflict with one another. (Even here, however, an area which has its problems in Northern Ireland, the Basque and Catalan territories, Corsican nationalism, tensions between Flemings and Walloons, and a new world of massive immigration of new minority groups in
recent years, should not be too self-satisfied.) Historically, the situation was already very different in Germany, where
state, Volk, language, and eventually fictitious race (for the ‘Aryan’ masters, that is), coagulated into a heinous amalgam. Even more complicated has been the situation of Eastern Europe which arguably fell asunder when neither multinational empires, nor new nation-states, proved feasible alternatives in a period in which democracy was pushing for self-determination, but the intermingling of groups was such that national self-determination threatened in fact to become what C.A. Macartney has rightly called ‘national determinism’. We have the (mainly Jewish-inspired) attempt at post-1918 ‘protection of minorities’ treaties under the auspices of the League of Nations as eloquent - and eventually portentous - evidence of the feeble defense which both individuals and minority groups could exert against the notion of ‘one and indivisible’ nation-states.

4. Parliamentary democracy and neo-corporatism

As a final example of a possibly great debate in terms of the relationship between the groups, state and the individual, we should return to the concept of corporatism and neo-corporatism. One major question to be posed is which societies historically showed the greatest trend towards corporatist processes of decision-making. It would seem that rather different hypotheses can be put forward: that is, those societies in which the state loomed largest in initial economic development; those societies which had a distinctly plural group structure rather than one of crosscutting pluralist group structures; small states which need to engage in accommodationist practices if they are to compete successfully on the world market; large states with a strong ‘military-industrial’ complex, etc.

A second problem is the actual measurement of the degree of corporatist decision-making. It would seem that there are not only great differences between countries, but also between different sectors of societies - agriculture showing a very different picture from commerce or industry, social services being a rather different field from the defense sector, etc.

A third issue is the extent to which the network of corporate decision-making really pre-empts the influence of what Rokkan used to term the ‘partisan-electoral channel’.

VII. Groups, individuals and the state: their importance in European political traditions

If one seeks to summarize the preceding sections, two contradictory sentiments may be felt. Clearly, the categories used are overly general: they lack specificity in content, and are used in dimensions of time and space which do far too little justice to actual
conditions and processes in European history. At the same time, both the concepts of state, and the rise of the individual as an independent political actor, are among the most important innovations in European modernization. The way in which older groups related to processes of state-formation and a growing individualism, and the way in which newer groups formed themselves in interac-
tion with developing states and increasingly emancipated individuals, go far to
determine the specific outcomes of modernization processes in different European
countries. The foregoing pages offer little more than a listing or an inventory of
possible factors at work. But they are not irrelevant. Problems such as: the arrival
and the working of democracy, the manner of economic development and the role
in it of the state and different social groups, the relationship between individuals,
national groups and the state; and the role of partisan-electoral processes over against
the realities of corporate decision-making are among the most important features of
European modernization processes. Both empirical explanations, and normative
assessments, will make little headway until one disentangles the way in which states,
groups and individuals have interacted in the past, and do interact to this day.

**Eindnoten:**

1. One should really have the learning of an A.D. Lindsay (1932) *Modern Democratic State*,
   editions; or more recently of a Quentin Skinner (1978) *The Foundations of Modern Political
   Thought*, Cambridge to do justice to the theme. I distinctly lack that erudition.
3. As I deal with concepts and traditions, more than with actual forms of state-formation, I can
   only refer the reader to major works, such as the volume of Charles Tilly (1975) (ed.) *The
   Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton: Princeton University Press (see in
   particular the chapters by Tilly himself and the chapter by Stein Rokkan). See also S.N. Eisenstadt
   & Stein Rokkan (1973) (eds.) *Building States and Nations: Models and Data Resources*, Beverly
   Hills, 2 vols. (volume 1 contains a very elaborate bibliography).
   Political Research*, 7 pp. 337-55; and the very important survey of Rokkan's work by Peter
   Scienza Politica*, 10, pp. 369-436.
5. Among the many surveys, I have always regarded Herman Finer's (1932) *Theory and Practice
   of Modern Government*, as one of the most impressive and stimulating.
6. Am I right in thinking that this is a subject which has been somewhat neglected, falling into a
   rather empty space between analysts of domestic government on the one hand, and imperial
   expansion on the other?
7. See for an interesting study Bernard Semmel (1960) *Imperialism and Social Reform: English
   Social Imperial Thought*, 1895-1914, London.
8. Skinner (1978) has shown that such ideas about contract and constitutionalism were already
   around well before the Reformation split the universal Church, notably among Italian thinkers
   who denied any legitimate claim to superior rule on the part of the Emperor.
9. See for this section and the following one T.H. Marshall (1964) *Class, Citizenship and Social
   Development*, Garden City, N.Y.
    which is much more ‘radical’ in tone than Laski's earlier (1922) *Political Thought in England:
    Locke to Bentham*, London (and many later reprints).
    New York.


17. Part of this volume was translated and introduced by Sir Ernest Barker and published as Otto Gierke (1934) *Natural Law and the Theory of Society* 1500 to 1800, Cambridge, 2 vols.; reprinted in one volume 1950.


21. See the elaboration of this concept in Dahl’s various works; for Dahl’s own sketch of the development of his thinking, see his Stein Rokkan Lecture, quoted in note 16.


II.
Political parties
chapter five | parties, elites, and political developments in western europe

Introduction

This chapter is in many ways an exercise in the impossible. It treats exceedingly complex social phenomena that are tacitly reduced to a common denominator by the use of deceptively simple concepts such as ‘party’, ‘elite’ and ‘political development’. It threatens to fall victim to what someone once called the ‘propinquity fallacy’: because Europe is one geographic area, it is supposed that its political experiences can be lumped together in one general treatment. This study deals, not with one political system at a given time, but with widely different systems through time - a somewhat strange exercise for one who is thoroughly skeptical of such over-general constructs as the ‘European continental political system,’ or of the superficial assumption that European societies followed a similar political course. The addition of the s after ‘political development’ in the title is therefore deliberate. It is my profound conviction that true analysis will pay detailed attention to variation in political developments between European states as well as within each of them.

At the same time, this recognition makes the task for a single political scientist well nigh hopeless. He has intimate knowledge of a few systems of government at the most, and is likely to read his own rather than true conclusions into those systems he does not know so well. What follows here consists therefore mainly of a series of eclectic remarks - usually termed hypotheses, but more honestly called impressions. At the outset of the journey I seek refuge in that excellent, if worn-out, defense that it is up to those who really know the individual political systems concerned to test, prove, or more likely to disprove, my generalizations.

The starting point of this chapter is the proposition that European states fall prima facie into at least three distinct groups: (1) countries which developed slowly from oligarchies into consistently stable democracies: e.g. Britain, the Scandinavian countries, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland; (2) countries which have undergone serious reversals in political regime, whereby democratic constitutions have given way to autocratic or even totalitarian systems of government: e.g. France, Germany, Austria, and Italy; and (3) countries with authoritarian regimes of a somewhat traditional nature, in which democratic groups tend to form at most an underground or exiled opposition: i.e. Spain and Portugal.

It is much easier to say what factors are not responsible for these differences

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in political development than to indicate their actual causes. Obviously there is no immediate relationship to differences in stages of economic development. In the group of stable democracies there are countries that underwent the industrial revolution relatively early (Britain, Belgium) and countries which entered the modern industrial era late (e.g. Norway and The Netherlands). Similarly, German industrial development came relatively early and in full force; yet here the lapse into totalitarian dictatorship was the most gruesome ever. Moreover rapid economic development did not save the French Fourth Republic, nor does it stabilize political conditions in Italy.

Consequently it will be necessary to probe deeper and to seek for other factors that are often of an historical nature. The main variables on which this paper will center are: (1) the importance of the earlier elite setting; (2) the degree of coincidence or disparity between political and economic developments; (3) the ‘reach’ or ‘permeation’ of (democratic) parties as against other power holders in various European societies; and (4) the cleavage lines of the party system itself.

It is not suggested that these factors are sufficient to give a satisfactory explanation of the very complex and diverse processes of development which European countries underwent, whether generally or individually. They have been selected primarily because of their interest for comparative purposes in accordance with the terms of reference set for the papers in this volume.

The importance of the earlier elite setting

Differences in political development before the Nineteenth Century

The great complexity of the relationships among various social classes and status groups in European society, as that between state and society generally, has tended to be confused by the cliché assumption (found typically in college textbooks as well as the Communist Manifesto) that there was a ‘natural’ evolution in Europe from feudalism through absolutism and bourgeois revolution toward modern democracy. This view is an egregious simplification for a variety of reasons.

First, it pays far too little attention to the fact that the term ‘feudalism’ is used to describe fundamentally different structures in medieval Europe. The political relationships among king, aristocracy, clergy, cities, and peasantry as well as the economic relationships among landowners, burghers, artisans, peasants, and serfs showed great variation. If the starting point differs how one can expect linear or even parallel developments afterwards?

Second, present-day European states originated in very different ways. Roughly speaking, one can divide these states, according to the manner in which political unification came about, into four groups: (1) those in which effective centralization came early and with relatively little tension (e.g. Britain, Sweden); (2) those in which centralization came early but against considerable resistance (e.g. France); (3) those in which centralization came late but fairly gradually (e.g. The Netherlands, Switzerland); and finally (4) those in which central political power was established only as a consequence of considerable political violence in the nineteenth century (Germany, Italy).
Of these four groups (1) and (3) had eventually rather similar characteristics. There was at no time a violent clash between political and social realities. Central power enmeshed itself gradually into the social system, and both regional and social groupings in turn achieved a growing influence on the center, thus making for a society which was both truly integrated and fairly pluralistic in nature.

Things were different in France, Germany, and Italy. There central control tended to be imposed by military and bureaucratic power. Hence the state came to some degree to hover above the society; the ruled came to feel themselves subjects rather than citizens, and to regard authority with a mixture of deference and distrust rather than as a responsive and responsible agency in which they had a share.

Third, differences in the manner of social and economic development, even before the nineteenth century, tended to strengthen this contrast. In Britain and The Netherlands economic development ever since the middle ages was relatively free from state intervention. Autonomous economic development tended to make the newly rising bourgeoisie a much more powerful challenger of the powers that were than equivalent groupings could be in, say, Colbertist France or Cameralist Prussia. In the latter countries the state took a much more active hand in economic development, and in the process bureaucrats tended to become more managerial while the bourgeoisie tended to become more officialized than was true in Britain or the Low Countries. In the latter case, civil freedoms and a measure of responsible government preceded the establishment of a powerful central bureaucracy; in France the new social forces were eventually powerful enough to revolt, but in the process they succeeded only in building up safeguards against the bureaucracy rather than absorbing it or making it fully accountable; in the German Reich, finally, liberal groups failed to seize power and fell prey to the stronger hold of the Polizei- or Beamtenstaat.

Finally, European societies experienced different effects from the religious wars and their aftermath. In some countries the religious composition of the population remained homogeneous (whether Roman Catholic or Lutheran). There the church often remained for long an appendage of the upper classes; if this assisted them in their bid for the support of more traditionally oriented lower-class elements, it also tended eventually to provoke both fundamentalist and anticlerical protest. In other countries (notably in Switzerland, The Netherlands, Britain, and parts of Germany) various religious groups contested with one another until they finally reached some measure of tolerance or accommodation. In this way religious pluralism and religious dissent often provided the spearhead of political resistance against entrenched elites, ultimately forcing recognition of the limits of state power and of the justice of individual and corporate rights.

The transition to modern democratic politics

Through such factors (and others such as the incidents of geography and war) some political systems in Europe had hardened along autocratic lines by the eighteenth century, while others had maintained or even strengthened a pluralist setting that, however oligarchical, allowed a measure of political influence to a variety of political and social groups. This vital difference was to affect the establishment of
political parties during the nineteenth century in at least two respects: in the ease
with which they became a recognized part of the political system, and in the role
which they came to assume within it.

In Britain, the Low Countries, Switzerland, and Sweden, conciliar forms of
government, whether in cities or in the center, had a long and honorable tradition.
The style of politics tended to be one of careful adjustment, of shared responsibility,
of due respect for ancient privileges. Attempts at absolute kingship eventually broke
on the concerted strength of particularist interests, whether corporative, regional, or
social. As the political order was in a very real sense built upon parts, the idea that
men could reasonably be partisans found ready recognition even before the age of
formalized party politics. There never was a ‘monochromatic, unicentric world,’ in
Sartori’s sense, to form an obstacle to the formation of parties.⁶

In these countries the view that government was somehow a trust toward the
governed had old roots, however elitist actual systems tended to be until late in the
nineteenth century. Intra-elite competition, being a recognized and even
institutionalized phenomenon, made it easier to weather the ‘crisis of participation’.
Conflicts between towns, between town and country, or among various religious
groups created certain links between clashing oligarchies and sub-political groups
below them. Competing elites sometimes sought lower-class support to strengthen
their position, thus granting the lesser orders a political title and whetting their political
appetites. Conversely, new claimants could exercise some influence on an oligarchical
system simply by the threat of potential support to one or other side within it. Once
some social groups were granted a measure of influence, this tended to provoke
further demands from those yet further down until, finally, the burden of proof in
the suffrage debate came to rest on those who defended restriction rather than on
those who advocated extension of suffrage. Some upper-class groups came to doubt
their own title, while most came to realize that fighting democracy might be more
dangerous to their social position than democracy itself. Thus both pressures from
competing élites downward and concomitant pressures from sub-élites upward made
for a competitive gradual extension of democratic rights.

This process was facilitated by the circumstance that it came about in slow,
evolutionary ways. Neither in political theory nor in actual behavior was there an
abrupt transition from elite politics to mass politicization. Political newcomers were
slowly accommodated. At any one time they tended to be given at most only
part-power enough to give them a sense of involvement and political efficacy but
not enough to completely overthrow the evolving society. Older political styles that
had been developed to guarantee the rights of aristocrats or hauts bourgeois were
thus more easily transferred. The ‘political domain’, to use Neumann's term,⁷
expanded only slowly. Since at any one time the political stakes were relatively
modest, the upper classes were less afraid and the lower classes less threatening.
Older and newer elites were thus held more easily within the bounds of one
constitutional, if changing, political system that neither alienated the one into
reactionary nor the other into revolutionary onslaughts on it. In time, however, the
over-all political order could thus become more truly responsive to the demands

Hans Daalder, State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics
of a wide variety of political groups within it. In 1867 Bagehot thought ‘dignified parts of government’ necessary to keep the masses from interfering with the ‘efficient government’ of the few; a century later the many were efficiently using those very same ‘dignified parts of government’ to secure substantial concessions to themselves."

Developments were very different in those societies where power was heavily concentrated by the end of the eighteenth century. In France royal absolutism provoked truly revolutionary resistance of a much more drastic and upsetting character than appeared in the English Civil War of the seventeenth century, let alone in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. If the king called on the droit divin to claim absolute power, so did liberal thinkers of the Enlightenment on the basis of the nation or the people. From the outset a leading strand of French democratic thought became therefore ‘totalitarian’ in Talmor's sense, becoming highly suspicious, for instance, of corps intermédiaires between the individual and the state. If in the countries described earlier pluralism seemed the natural corollary of liberty, in the latter it was often regarded as the prolongation of inequality and privilege. The traumas of the French Revolution created lasting and bitter divisions in French society. Articulate political groups continued to harbor fears and suspicions of one another, doubting one another's intentions and having different views of the legitimacy of past regimes and present institutions. Paradoxically, in that European country where popular sovereignty was proclaimed first and most explicitly no governmental system ever rested on a universal basis of popular support and respect. Traditionalist groups continued to be politically strong, and the newer bourgeoisie and the rising working classes came to be divided in their respective allegiances. Democratic regimes met with a continuous threat from the right. Democratic groups suspected the state even when they were nominally in control of it. This in turn made it more difficult for successive regimes to achieve their goals or to capitalize on their positive achievements and to gain legitimacy and lasting adherence throughout the nation.

In Prussia, and later in the German Reich, the bureaucratization and militarization of the society had gone much further than in France before the existing power division was challenged. In France democratizing forces generally triumphed, however precariously. In Germany the Kaiser-Junker-Army-Bureaucracy complex was for a long time strong enough to manipulate the new social forces rather than to have to adjust to them. From the outset large sections of the new industrial capitalist classes were drawn into the existing power cluster; this left the fate of German liberalism to the faltering hands of mainly professional and intellectual groups rather than to a strongly unified economic class. In most European countries bourgeois elements had triumphed sufficiently to occupy key positions in the political system before the real onslaught of the working classes was felt. In Germany, on the other hand, the existing power groups were powerful enough to maintain themselves against both, even offsetting bourgeois demands for responsible parliamentary government with a careful weaning and manipulation of the new working classes. Typically, a democratic breakthrough came not of its own strength but only in the aftermath of lost wars. The explicit democratic articles of
the Weimar Constitution were to become the hallmark of success of democratic forms on paper at the expense of social substance.

**The Different Role of Parties**

The role of parties in European countries varied considerably with such substantial differences in actual political development. In countries where modern mass democracy evolved slowly from a pre-existing pluralist society, various regional, social, and ideological groupings tended to form what might be called ‘protoparties’ at a rather early stage. Consisting of informal groupings seeking to obtain preferential treatment for themselves and the definite interests which they represented, they tended to fill certain functions of the modern political party (such as interest aggregation and to a lesser extent political recruitment), but not others (such as political socialization and political mobilization). As the increasing power of parliamentary assemblies tended to bring such groupings nearer to the effective decision-making centers, organization came to be at a premium. Similarly, when new social claimants came to exert pressure for representation, organization outside the parliament became not only profitable but essential for political survival. The process of party formation tended to spread therefore from existing competing elites downwards, but this veiy process also facilitated a reciprocal movement. Party organization itself created many new elite-posts even if only at sub-parliamentary levels. Second-rung leaders who provided an essential link with important elements in the expanding electorate had to be accommodated, and some in time fought their way to the top. Party competition for various groups in the electorate made some existing parties more responsive to new demands, while new social groupings came to imitate and expand existing forms of party organization.

In countries where autocratic regimes prevailed longer the development of parties showed different characteristics. Autocracy in its more explicit forms was incompatible with free party organization. Instead factionalism and a limited measure of interest representation tended to predominate. Democratic stirrings could take form only in intellectual protest movements or outright conspiratorial activity. Thus even some of the earlier democratizing movements, both on the liberal and on the socialist side, showed strong influences of secret societies. In the more limited autocracies that the constitutional lawyers of another day used to call constitutional monarchies (as distinct from parliamentary monarchies) a measure of party organization could come about more easily. Even traditionalist political forces had eventually to resort to at least nominal electoral processes; but in their case parties were not so much the cause as a symptom of effective political power. Certain bourgeois and professional groups sought to use the parliamentary benches for a measure of oppositional politics that was often ineffective for lack of courage and organization. Further to the left, certain *Weltanschauungsparteien* showed tighter organizational forms and ideological programs; their verbal fervor tended to be symptomatic, however, of their weak position in the present. They made up for their lack of current influence with the vista of an utopian future, and could be ‘wholistic’
in their ideological claims precisely because they had little chance ever to be confronted with the compromises that partial power entails;

Hans Daalder, State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics
only a more basic political and social revolution could change their role in a
fundamental fashion.

Finally, under conditions of more democratic rule the political role of parties
became more important. But often past divorce from active political power continued
to hinder them in the exercise of their nominal functions, while at the same time their
somewhat timid hold on governmental power was endangered by the hidden sabotage
or open competition from anti-democratic groups. We shall return to this point when
we shall discuss the ‘reach’ or ‘permeation’ of democratic party-systems.

Coincidence or disparity between political and socio-economic development

The complex processes which we have come to denote in shorthand as the Industrial
Revolution exercised a massive influence on political developments throughout
Western Europe. Everywhere the self-contained political life of separate small
communities was broken up, a development which freed the individual from older
political bonds, allowed for the growth of wider, if often less compendious, political
loyalties. Social and economic changes created considerable turmoil, which furnished
the raw material for new political alignments. State and society grew more closely
together as the scope of central power expanded, while simultaneously many new
social forces came to exercise strong pressures for specific government action. In
the process, many new links were forged between the state and its citizens through
the expansion of administration and the establishment of a great number of new
political groups. The modern political party itself can be described with little
exaggeration as the child of the Industrial Revolution.

It would be a mistake, however, to draw conclusions too easily about specific
causal determination, for in practice socio-economic changes differed greatly from
one country to another and within different regions of a single country. Furthermore
the political effects of seemingly similar socio-economic changes varied according
to the specific political settings in which they made themselves felt.\textsuperscript{12} It seems useful
therefore to consider the effects of economic development according to at least three
criteria. When did economic development start? How fast did it come? What political
effects did it have on various social strata? The criteria of time and tempo give four
logical possibilities according to the following scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Early</th>
<th>Late</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>Gradual</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>IV</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Figure 5.1: Modes of socio-economic development}
Of these four possibilities, II is not a real one; early European economic development germinated slowly. I is more representative for European experience. Without further proof it may generally be postulated that political strains were comparatively easy to cope with in this case: the very slowness of the process of socio-economic change gave the political system considerable leeway in meeting social and economic changes and in adjusting itself to them; these changes themselves were at any one moment also less drastic, hence less upsetting.

Somewhat similar considerations apply to III, but here a new factor enters. While in I social, economic, and political changes tended to move concurrently, a certain disparity between political and socio-economic changes could arise in countries in which economic change came late. Once new political ideas, new institutions, and new political techniques had developed in certain countries (like the United States or Great Britain), they could not but influence similar groupings in economically less developed societies as well. Political factors could therefore acquire a much greater autonomous momentum in the latter case. Thus the attempt was made to transfer certain institutional devices long before social realities showed corresponding changes. Ruling elites might deliberately concede the forms rather than the substance of democratic institutions to divert political unrest and maintain their own positions virtually intact. An elected parliament might be allowed, but not responsible government. Or a wide franchise might be granted, but only after adequate care was taken that this conveyed little power - the weighting of votes, the refusal of the private ballot, and slated apportionment of seats being particularly useful expedients in this respect. Rather than providing an effective lever in the hands of the masses, such ‘democratic’ reforms could paradoxically develop into a measure of plebiscitary control over them. This could result in an enduring alienation of sizable sections of the population rather than in their permanent integration in an effectively responsive political system.

France provides the classic case in Western Europe of such a disparity between political and socio-economic changes. At a very early moment the country was caught in the Whirlpool of mass politics. The principle of popular sovereignty was recognized long before a politically articulate people could make its will felt. Hence almost a century after the French Revolution the country could still live up to Laboulaye's description of France as ‘a tranquil people with agitated legislators’. Agitation in the Carrousel de Paris, not being very meaningful in terms of a large number of social and economic variables in France, could not but prematurely disillusion French citizens with politics as such. To quote Philip Williams' description of the situation that prevailed in France until quite recently, 'her atomized, small-scale structure promotes political individualism, strong local loyalties, and a political psychology more adapted to resistance than to positive construction. It reinforces the old tendency to incivisme, the lack of civic consciousness which makes so many Frenchmen regard the state as an enemy personified in the tax-collector and the recruiting sergeant.' But this in turn meant also a lack of sufficient incentive for political change. To quote Williams again, ‘It was because there was no majority for action in the country that there was no pressure strong enough to overcome the resistance which found so many points of advantage in the
constitutional framework.' When finally massive social and economic changes did come, these were consequently not easily channeled along earlier established institutional and political lines.

Finally, IV, in which economic changes are both fast and late, offers the greatest political difficulties of all; all the problems of III are repeated and compounded by the state of insecurity and flux which is inherent in rapid social and economic development itself. In Europe such conditions are found only in certain regions and usually within the bounds of a more comprehensive, stable, articulated political system. Not so in the developing countries, where politicization far outstrips socio-economic changes, and where these social and economic changes themselves, if forthcoming at all, only add to the discomfort of a body politic already weakened in other ways.

Social classes and economic development

What were the political consequences of economic development (or the lack of it) for the various social classes in Europe? Obviously such a question can in the context of this paper be answered only in the most general, that is misleading, terms. Even the concepts we use, such as aristocracy, bourgeoisie, peasantry, middle classes, working classes, are not really satisfactory; they are indefensible (but necessary) simplifications of social categories and social divisions that are in reality very complex. The following discussion contains therefore, only a very rough sketch, and a highly impressionistic one at that.

First then, the effect of economic development on the nobility: In certain countries (e.g. The Netherlands and Switzerland) the position of the nobility as against that of burghers and independent peasants tended always to be weak and to grow weaker as capitalism expanded. In other countries, notably in Britain, and to a more limited extent Germany, old aristocracies adapted themselves relatively successfully to the new facts of industrialization. This assisted them in their bid for continued political influence (even though other factors made for different attitudes toward democracy). A positive stance in favor of economic development and a paternalistic rejection of the extremes of Manchester Liberalism by both Tory squires and Prussian Junkers made it easier for the conservatives of both countries to maintain a measure of liaison with a significant section of the rising working classes (as well as to retain considerable rural support), which in turn facilitated the establishment of conservative mass movements in both countries.

In contrast, French and Italian aristocracies did not excel in economic initiatives and so tended to be anachronistic, their remaining political power resting more exclusively on traditional resources like their hold on the church, the land, the military, or administration. The gap between them and the rising bourgeoisie tended to grow wider than in either England or Germany. Or, to be more precise, the continued influence of the aristocracy divided the new bourgeoisie into those who adjusted themselves to the style of living of their continuing ‘betters’ and another section that sought to fight such influences. The bourgeoisie as a whole was therefore less easily credited with political ability or economic skills than were their Dutch or Swiss or English counterparts.
This fact influenced the political reactions of other groups in the population. For one thing, it helps to explain the large influence of professional and intellectual groups in these societies (considered by some observers to have been the outstanding characteristic of the politics of the French Third Republic) which could not but strengthen the tendency toward the highly ideologized politics that seems typical of political societies in which political claims outstrip underlying socio-economic realities.

It also had an unfavorable effect on the relations between bourgeois and worker. In the Latin countries the patriarchal family firm long remained the characteristic form of economic enterprise. The Patron was a far cry from the revolutionary bourgeois of the ‘Communist Manifesto’. A low esteem for his economic qualities reinforced the defeatist outlook of the proletariat, already skeptical of politics for reasons which we discussed earlier. A vast gap tended to develop not only between employer and worker but also between the professional socialist politicians who took part in the parliamentary game and the generally syndicalist masses who rejected all party action. This weakened both. It eventually assisted the Communist encadrement of the French and Italian working classes; and it goes far to explain the checkered results of both democratic institutions and social reform policies in France and Italy.

The evolution of working-class politics in most other European countries stands in considerable contrast. There the industrial revolution generally developed more thoroughly and effectively. At the earlier stages, social dislocations tended to produce a ‘hump of radicalism’. But the rapid growth of large-scale industries and urbanization soon laid the foundation for well-organized trade unionism and concurrent social-democratic action, quickly shifting from empty revolutionary phraseology to more immediate short-term goals within the existing socio-economic systems. If this strengthened democracy in systems which were already democratizing themselves, it weakened the incipient stirrings of democracy in those societies in which modernization took place largely under continued autocratic auspices (as in Germany).

Somewhat similar factors influenced the political position of the peasantry. In all European countries the relative importance of the agricultural sector declined as economic development proceeded; but whereas in some countries this process caused relatively little political tension, in others it provoked violent conflict. In some countries strong protectionist policies both symbolized and maintained the power of certain agricultural groups; whether these were large landowners (as the Prussian Junkers) or a large mass of generally inefficient small farmers (as in France) depended on earlier developments in land tenure and social organization generally. In other countries the reduction of the agricultural sector went on at a much faster pace. But simultaneously foreign competition, self-help, and government policies facilitated modernization. Thus Danish and Dutch farmers managed well. Typically, Scandinavian agrarians often cooperated with socialist parties, in contrast to France, where sizable blocs of peasant votes turned to rightist or Communist extremists; their mood was mainly one of apolitical malaise instead of one of definite expectation of positive action.

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Speaking more generally, economic development has caused the decline of some groups and the rise of others. The specific nature of the complex underlying processes has often been confused by the facile use of the hazy notion of the ‘middle classes’. One should at least distinguish between more traditional elements, like the artisanat, the retail traders, and small-scale employers who form the residue of social and economic developments, and the ‘new’ middle classes of technical, managerial, administrative, and professional people, who are rather their result. Political attitudes have tended to differ correspondingly. While in France, for instance, Poujadism tended to find its main support among the earlier groups, Gaullism has tended to appeal more strongly to the ‘new’ middle class. The rise of the latter has tended to make for a new dimension in the political controversy between right and left also in other countries, forcing both traditional socialists and traditional conservatives to take note.

The ‘reach’ or ‘permeation’ of the party system

Partly as a consequence of historical factors European parties have differed greatly in the extent to which they have permeated and enveloped other political elites. In some countries the role of parties has become all-pervasive; in others the parties have penetrated far less successfully to the mainsprings of political power. Substantial differences are also encountered in the extent to which parties have become true integrating agencies between political elites on the national and on the local scene. In this section the ‘reach’ of a party system is briefly analyzed along the following three dimensions: the extent of involvement of traditional political elites in the party system; the measure of absorption of new political claimants; and the degree of ‘homogenization’ which parties provide between national and local political elites.

Party systems and traditional elites

In European societies the relationship of traditionally powerful political elites and the party system seems to have taken one of three forms: they have participated from the outset, slowly learning to share power with newer groups; they have participated in the party system but only half-heartedly and with reactionary intentions; or they have stayed outside altogether, seeking to maintain their influence through other power structures (notably the military, the bureaucracy, business, or the church). The precise developments depended greatly on the way parties originated and the specific nature and extent of the democratizing process.

As we have noted some European parties were in many ways the outcome of earlier institutionalized conflict on the elite level; factions hardened increasingly into substantial political organizations as these conflicts spread from the elites downward into an ever widening circle of political actors. Though older elites were eventually confronted with new parties outside their control, they never came in immediate
conflict with the party system. This facilitated the transition from oligarchical to polyarchical forms of government.

In other European countries parties were first established in opposition to autocratic regimes that forbade or at least restricted the scope of party conflict.
Eventually in these countries too older elites found it necessary to participate in electoral processes. But parties established under their auspices tended to remain little more than outward appearances, democratic fig leaves, so to speak, for entrenched power positions that had their real basis elsewhere. Consequently right-wing parties in various European countries came to assume basically different attitudes toward the rules of the game of democratic party-politics. The acceptance of the substance of democratic ideals and practices is still the clearest criterion with which to distinguish Scandinavian or British Conservatives from, say the right in France, Weimar Germany or present-day Italy.22.

In the latter the constant presence of potentially or actually antidemocratic parties within the party system has hindered the effective working of democratic politics; it has narrowed the range of democratic rule; it has caused disillusionment to spread to other potentially more democratic groups; and it finally eroded the very existence of democratic regimes.

The ‘reach’ of the party system over against other traditional political elites is revealed most clearly in its relation to the permanent bureaucracy. Bureaucracies have been far more responsive to the party system in some countries than in others. Much has depended on historical relations and the specific characteristics of the ensuing party system.

Thus it was of profound significance whether an articulated party system developed before, after, or concurrently with the rise of a bureaucracy. In France and Germany powerful bureaucracies were built up as social control-mechanisms long before non-bureaucratic social groups had learned to use the weapon of political organization to secure influence. Ever since, parties have had difficulty in obtaining full control and, to this day, bureaucracies have tended to enjoy a distinct political existence.23. In Britain, on the other hand, the build-up of a modern civil service occurred after non-official social groups were securely in political control; ever since, the civil service has loyalty accepted control by party ministers. Many other European countries would seem to fall between these two cases. State bureaucracies developed earlier than in Britain, but non-state groups were strong enough to make their weight felt simultaneously and ultimately to prevent them from becoming uncontrollable elements in the body politics. To use a somewhat simple metaphor, the British Civil Service was from the outset below party; the French and German bureaucracies were to a very real extent above it; in other cases parties and bureaucracies tended to be on one line. In systems where certain parties tended for long to have a hegemonic position they often staffed the bureaucracies after their own image; thus Liberal dominance made the Dutch bureaucracy long a Liberal perquisite, and in somewhat similar fashion the Democrazia Cristiana is at present heavily represented in the Italian bureaucracy. Alternation between parties could lead to an attempt to take the bureaucracy out of politics (as in Britain), but also to competitive politicization by rival parties. Coalition politics has often led to a careful distribution of administrative ‘fiefs’ to rival parties, as in present-day Austria and Belgium, or to balanced appointments of rival partisans not only at the ministerial level but also in cabinets du ministre, or even in established administrative posts.24

Generally speaking, bureaucratic
traditions, fortified by political and legal doctrines, have prevented such devices from degenerating into the full excesses of the American nineteenth-century spoils system. Contrary to traditional belief, they have worked not too badly in those systems in which the party system itself was reasonably cohesive and effective. In a segmented society like the Netherlands, carefully balanced political appointments would even seem to have smoothed the relations among the parties and between politicians and bureaucrats. They have given parties the certainty that their views were taken into consideration at the beginnings of policy formation and in the details of policy execution; they have provided officials with a new avenue by which to obtain political support for administrative concerns; they have thus acted as brokers between officials and politicians and between various parties, softening political conflict in the process.

The party system and new claimants

As in their relation toward older elites, party systems have differed in their responsiveness to the claims of new groups seeking political representation. In European history the outs at the lower end of the scale have been either lower-class groups (notably the working classes and the peasantry) or religious protesters (e.g. Dutch Calvinists and Catholics, English Non-Conformists, the Norwegian Left). Again, the relation between these new claimants and the party system took any of three forms: their absorption into a preexisting party system which gradually came to widen its appeal; the formation of special parties; or their continued exclusion from the party system.

Robert Dahl has suggested in the case of the United States that the non-appearance of a special working-class party was due to a considerable extent to the fact that representative government and a wide franchise were introduced before an urbanized proletariat came to exert new demands on the system. Hence parties and political techniques suitable to the operation of parties were evolved in time to grapple with this new challenge and to accommodate labor in the existing system. In contrast, in Britain representative government came early, the urban proletariat next, and general suffrage only at the end. While developments were such as to keep new rising groups within the constitutional order, the existing parties were not elastic enough to accommodate the rising demands of the working classes. In Germany, urbanization and the general suffrage preceded representative government, thus sterilizing political party activity into necessarily ineffective attitudes. With somewhat similar ideas in mind, Stein Rokkan has asked for further study of the interesting relationship between franchise extension, special electoral arrangements (such as weighting of votes, privatization of electoral preferences, proportional representation versus other electoral systems), and the mobilization of new groups into the political system. These studies must then be further related, I suggest, to such factors as the earlier elite-setting, and the extent of disparity between political and social and economic development (also in their regional variations) to account for the measure of actual involvement of the out-groups in one political framework.

Generally speaking, then, not the establishment of special parties representa-
tive of the lesser groups of society but only their psychological identification with
the political order and the responsiveness of that order, in turn, to new demands can
serve as the true measure of the relation between the party system and new claimants.
A responsive political order may ensure an effective political participation of new
claimants without the establishment of special parties. Special parties, on the other
hand, can both integrate and isolate according to the reaction of other parts of a party
system. Thus Dutch Calvinists and Catholics established highly segmented political
and social organizations but jointly rose to power and in the process ensured the
integration of their clienteles into the political system, actually making it more
integrated, responsive, and democratized. The same cannot be said, it seems to me,
of the Norwegian Christians or of various parties composed of nationality interests
in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The uncritical use of the term ‘fragmentation’,
then, does not bring the analysis much further if attention is not paid at the same
time to the question whether a division of a political system into a number of quite distinct
spiritual and political groups ultimately means the break-up of one society, or rather
the growing of roots of very different groupings in one constitutional order. To use
Sartori’s terms, seemingly fragmented systems can in practice be centrifugal or
centripetal, and only exact sociological analysis can reveal which is ultimately the
case.

Just as older elites in certain cases stayed outside (if not above) the party system,
so various groups of society remained outside or below it even after the general
franchise was introduced. As suggested earlier, one cause may have been a disparity
between a strong politicization of the working classes and the granting to them of
the means of effective political action. In the Latin countries anarchism and
syndicalism were strengthened by the acute feeling that party and parliamentary
activity could achieve little in practice. Vested interests may so continue to dominate
the parliamentary scene that even their nominal voters may feel manipulated rather
than active participants. This has been for long true of Italy, for instance, and still is
to a lesser extent of most European countries.

If we combine the first and the second paragraph of this section, the ‘reach’ of a
party system in relation to various groups in the society might be visualized as follows.
Most removed (though not necessarily antagonistic) would be those political groups
which are outside or below the system altogether; by definition they are politically
unorganized. Following them are conscious anti-system groups that reject the existing
political order but have some measure of group identification (e.g. the syndicalists,
even though they rejected party organization and put their trust in spontaneous rather
than institutional leaders). A somewhat closer participation is found among those
who organize in political anti-system parties but with the deliberate aim of
participating in order to destroy; in practice, however, the very act of participation
tends to create certain vested interests in the system (cf. Robert de Jouvenel's famous
dictum that there is more in common between two deputies one of whom is a
revolutionary than between two revolutionaries one of whom is a deputy). Anti-system
parties may therefore show a wide range between outright rejection and
near-acceptance, and their influence may become so great that their presence becomes
a significant variable within the system. Somewhat further on

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The area of effective democratic party government is restricted to that of the Government and loyal opposition parties - hence the ‘reach’ of a democratic party system is measured by its total proportion of the political pyramid. This proportion is very different in various European societies: while in some it is nearly coterminous with the whole (England, Sweden) in others it occupies only a relatively small area (present-day Italy, Weimar Germany, and French Fourth Republic). Proportions are far from stable moreover. On the one hand, isolationist and anti-system parties may gradually be domesticated into the system (e.g. the Nenni Socialists). On the other hand, increasing opposition to the system (as measured by a proportionate increase in the strength of anti-systems groups and anti-system parties), and mounting indifference (as apparent in an increase of subsystem groups) may narrow the area of democratic politics. Anti-system parties may seek deliberate involvement to discredit democratic politics and thus to increase both anti-system and subsystem groups. This is the reasoning behind traditional Communist tactics and seems to reflect fairly accurately the situation in France before 1958, when anti-system parties, anti-system groups, and political malaise made the area of democratic politics shrink to such an extent as to make it practically ineffective.

Figure 5.2: Governing elites

The road to involvement are those isolationist parties that have no chance to gain even part-power but continue to organize definite subcultural groups that wish their voices to be heard (even if with little chance of their being taken into account). Next in the scale would come opposition parties that effectively compete for office, proximity to power being the criterion with which to measure real involvement. Here again there is considerable scope for variation; whereas some are natural ‘outs,’ others are semi-government supporters. Finally some governing parties, tied most closely to the existing system, the extent of their dominance being the measure of their effective control. A simplified representation of this scheme is given in Figure 5.2.
Party Systems: the center and local realities

The central-local axis provides yet another dimension by which to measure the permeation of party systems. Increased interaction between the center and the localities greatly affected the formation and organization of parties. Generally speaking, a two-way process took place: political forces in the center sought to extend their political bases by mobilizing political support over wider geographic areas, while political groups in the periphery organized to promote regional interests with the center.

This two-way movement resulted in very different situations. In some cases, a fundamental nationalization of politics led to a far-reaching ‘homogenization’ between politics at the center and in regional areas; such a movement was facilitated by the absence of strong economic or cultural regional cleavages, by good communications, and by the entry of issues that helped to nationalize politics (e.g. class). In other cases, ethnic, linguistic, religious, or geographic barriers prevented such osmosis from taking place. Politicization tended to strengthen centrifugal rather than centripetal tendencies (separatist political movements like that of the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain or of nationality groupings in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, forming their logical extreme). In yet different cases, politics at the center and in the localities tended to remain in highly differentiated spheres, with only minimal linkages between them. Although this did not threaten national existence, it complicated national politics. Again, a comparison between Britain and France offers an instructive contrast.

In Britain, leaders and labels penetrated relatively early from the center into the constituencies, thus drawing national and local elites into one reasonably unified system. Although certain regional sentiments and interests continued to have some importance, to this day providing British parties with distinct pockets of regional strength, they were not such as to fragment the decision-making process at the center. The essence of British politics is therefore national politics, and British parties are above all national political organizations. In France, on the other hand, local concerns long continued to dominate the choice of national parliamentary personnel. This caused a curious paradox: provided the local representative showed due respect for local sensitivities and interests, he was, on the national scene, as far as his constituents were concerned to a considerable extent a free agent. The French Chamber became therefore very much ‘La Maison sans Fenêtres’, a meeting place of local interests and individual personalities rather than of cohesive, integrated national political parties. Nationalization of politics occurred therefore more easily on the level of ideological debate than of political will, of political oratory rather than of effective national political organization. For the rest, the French Chamber tended to be more highly sensitive to interest groups (pressuring MPs in their local base) than to issues of more national importance. This accentuated the cleavage between the French bureaucracy (feeling itself the self-appointed guardian of France in a truly Parisian way) and the Chamber, stronger in resisting the executive than in dominating it, more ready to veto than to formulate national policies.

The ‘homogenization’ of politics between the center and the localities is therefore an important factor in the politics of both. An effective linkage helps to le-
gitimize the national political order. Where links are absent, alienation is likely to ensue. The character of the party system is an important variable in this process. Parties can be agencies of both integration and disintegration. They assist national integration if they serve as genuine brokers between disparate regional or social interests (without losing their national existence in the process). They are likely to strengthen centrifugal forces, on the other hand, if they become the passive tools of sectional interests. Paradoxically, synthetic unifiers who seek to identify their own sectional interests with that of the one and indivisible nation can contribute as much to such disintegrating tendencies as those who deny the existence of one political community from over-particularistic concerns.

The cleavage lines of the party system

European countries reveal considerable differences according to the character and the intensity of the cleavage lines that form the basis for political conflict and political organization. These differences are partly due to objective differences in social structure; certain social cleavages did exist in some countries but not in others (e.g. ethnic diversity). They depend further on the circumstance of whether and to what extent particular cleavages were effectively politicized; factors such as religion or class have been much more exploited in some political systems than in others. Finally, considerable variations also exist in the persistence of cleavage lines in the party system. Whereas some issues have been of only passing importance and have subsequently fallen out of the political domain, others have remained characteristic dividing lines long after their original raisons d’être has been forgotten. In this way the particular history of past political controversy has continued to exercise a substantial influence on political loyalties and on the way in which new issues are focused and processed. Therefore only careful historical, sociological, and political analysis can do full justice to the distinct qualities of any given political system. It follows that it is much easier to categorize a number of cleavages that seem to have been historically important in European political development than to evaluate their importance for political stability or effective decision-making.

In early days David Hume considered ‘factions from interest’ and ‘factions from affection’ as the most normal cases, proclaiming, unlike Burke, the rise of a new category of ‘factions from principle’: ‘the most extraordinary and unaccountable phenomenon that has yet appeared in human affairs.’ Generally speaking, the most important dividing lines in Europe have tended to be: class or sectional interest (the landed versus the moneyed interests; parties representative of sections of industry or commerce, labor, or agriculture); religion (Modernists versus Fundamentalists, Catholics versus Protestants, Clericals versus Anticlericals, Anglicans versus Non-Conformists); geographic conflict (town versus country, center versus periphery); nationality or nationalism (ethnic minority parties, extreme-nationalist movements, and parties having their real allegiance to another national state, etc.); and regime (status quo parties versus reform parties, revolutionary, or counterrevolutionary parties).
The difficulty of qualitative analysis of the importance of cleavage structures
comes out in the exaggerated attention paid to quasi-mechanical factors, such as the number of cleavages, or whether they run parallel to or cut across one another. Both English and American literatures seem to be based often on the *a priori* notion that the political universe is by nature dualistic, so that two-party systems are the self-evident political norm. This view is reinforced by Duverger's analysis, which attempts to reduce the explanation also of multiparty systems to a ‘superposition of dualisms’,

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to the non-coincidence of dividing lines in the body politic. While ‘bargaining parties’ in a dualist system are likely to ensure both stability and the orderly solution of successive issues, so the Standard argument goes, a multiparty system leads perforce to fragmentation and *immobilisme*.

This view is based on a slender empirical basis. Britain and the United States have two parties, their politics are apparently satisfactory to the theorist; ergo, a two-party system is good. In contrast, France, Weimar-Germany, and Italy had many parties, their politics were unsatisfactory; hence a multiparty system is a lesser if not an outright degenerated form. This type of reasoning then leads to the curious term of ‘working multiparty systems’\[31\] - phenomena that are apparently somewhat akin to ‘the boneless wonder’ of Barnum's Circus. Such a view testifies to an insufficient awareness of the political experience of a host of smaller European countries (such as Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark, or Switzerland) that have successfully governed themselves for generations under complex multiparty systems. Would it not be possible on the basis of the politics of these countries as confidently (but equally subjectively) to assert that the best political system is one in which all important social groupings have occasion to have themselves politically represented in separate parties, which can then use the forum of parliament and coalition government to reach the politics of compromise?

The confusion is clearly revealed by our tendency to hold two conflicting theories with equal conviction. On the one hand, we argue that politics is best served by a constant dualistic regrouping of political forces in distinct majority-minority positions. On the other hand, we hold with equal conviction that a political system can quickly be brought to the breaking-point if a number of cleavages come to run parallel to one another - for instance, if conflicts about religion, nationality, and class each make for the same division of society. Whereas we point at one time to the crisscrossing of cleavage lines as the main source of political inefficiency, we assert at another moment that only adequate cross-pressures, which offset tendencies toward increased polarization, can make for a working political community. It is to this variable that we look to explain why Flemish and Walloons, why Capital and Labour, why Clericals and Anticlericals can continue to cooperate in feasible political systems. I suggest that this paradox cannot be explained unless new variables are also taken into account.

Of crucial importance is not only the severity and incidence of conflicts, but also the attitudes political elites take toward the need to solve them by compromise rather than combat. Such attitudes are deeply rooted in political culture, itself the product of complex historical factors that differ greatly from one country to another. Traditional leadership styles, the traumatic memory of past conflicts (which may either perpetuate conflict, or cause parties to draw together), a realistic sense
of what can be reached through political action and what not, the presence of substantial or imaginary common interests, the extent to which party leaders are more tolerant than their followers and are yet able to carry them along - all are important. Unfortunately they are evasive of systematic analysis except in a specific context.

**Parties and political elites at the present time**

The relation between parties and political elites in present-day Europe may now be briefly discussed in three steps of increasing generality: parties and the ‘Iron Law of Oligarchy’; the differences in influence among different party elites; and the influence of party elites (as a genus) over against other political elites.

**Parties and the ‘Iron Law of Oligarchy’**

The ‘Iron Law of Oligarchy’ is both an analytical statement and a somewhat emotional political theory. In the following paragraphs we shall discuss each of these two aspects in relation to European experience.

From the analytical point of view the oligarchy model of political parties is generally buttressed by what seem to me to be three false arguments: first, the confusion of inequality of influence (as among leaders, militants, and voters) with oligarchy; second, the determinist fallacy which sees too direct a link between the social origins of politicians and class bias, in their politics; and third, the delusion of indispensability, which wrongly deduces an exclusive power position for those who fulfill functions that are socially indispensable. A short word on each of these: Robert Michels’ analysis of the various factors (both technical and psychological) which give leaders in mass organizations considerable power over their followers has rightly become a classic in political science literature. The real proof of oligarchical domination is, however, in other directions. Are leaders always unified when they are subject to pressure from below? Are they virtually unaccountable and unremovable? Are they free agents instead of brokers seeking to reconcile various conflicts in society? To what extent and under what circumstances can they dispense with considerations of mass interest? That few men take many decisions is not proof of oligarchy, but that they are able to take any decisions they care to take, even disregarding strong political objections. 

Unfortunately European political science is richer in noisy debate on such issues than in concrete research. Consequently it engages all too often in ‘yes’ or ‘no’ arguments rather than in careful enquiry as to the actual degrees of influence exerted by leaders as against followers. Research proper would presumably uncover great differences from one party to another and from one party system to another. It would reveal, one suspects, that leaders have far greater freedom in some matters (as foreign policy) than in other fields that impinge more directly on the daily lives of vast numbers of people. Furthermore, relations cannot be static; whereas at certain moments leaders will dictate policies, at others they will bend to explicit or even implicit demands from lower down. Parties, in other words, are almost certainly

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agencies of elite-recruitment and elite-maintenance, but they also serve as transmission belts for pressures from lower down. Most European
parties would seem to be comparatively open agencies that allow for a great deal of intra-elite conflict as well as for the rise of new elite groups in competition to older ones. Parties work, moreover, generally in a democratic environment that permits publicity and criticism by competitors and outsiders and that forces actual accountability to independent electoral groups; this cannot but blunt oligarchical proclivities.

As to the second false test of oligarchy, a rapidly growing series of publications on the social background of parliamentarians, ministers, and party members has confirmed that great inequalities continue to exist between various social classes. Upper- and middle-class elements are highly over-represented in all parties (including the explicitly working-class ones). In some countries there are signs that inequalities persist (or even increase) rather than decline. It seems an *a priori* sociological determinism, however, to conclude much more from this than the obvious - that European society is still far removed from equality of opportunity as among various classes (notably in matters of education). Social origin may but need not determine political sympathies. On the contrary, many politicians of working-class origin have been more conservative than socialist renegades from the upper classes. Politics is an autonomous process that certainly is affected by class factors but is not causally dependent on them. Theoretically a political elite (and above all competing political elites) composed almost exclusively of a large number of upper-class persons can still be fully responsive to pressures from below.

Lastly, elitist theory is often marred by what might be termed the delusion of indispensability. It is proved to the satisfaction of a theorist that a certain social group fulfills an indispensable function in society. It is concluded from this that the group has (or could have) sole control; for instance, that by withdrawing its services it could bring society to a standstill. In this way different observers have pointed to entrepreneurs, finance capitalists, bureaucrats, the military, the working class, or even the peasantry (in the physiocratic sense) as the true elite of any given society. Little attention is paid to the question whether such groupings are ever sufficiently cohesive to exploit the full power resources of their seemingly strategic social position, and what actual countervailing powers there are to stop them from even considering this. Similarly, many observers have jumped all too readily from the correct view that leadership is indispensable in large organizations (as in society at large) to the incorrect one that this gives a monopoly of power to any particular leadership circle.

The ‘Iron Law of Oligarchy’, then, is defective as an empirical theory or even as an heuristic tool. But the extent of its popularity is at the same time a significant yardstick by which to measure differences in democratic realities in Western Europe. Most elitists have come from societies where democratic politics has had an uneasy life. Mosca and Pareto reasoned mainly from the precarious background of Italian politics before 1914. Michels wrote on the basis of a German Social Democracy whose lack of power caused them to envy as well as to try to emulate Prussian rulers. Sorel’s anti-parliamentary writings on the need for a spontaneous elite mirror above all the frustrations of a French intellectual banking on a mythical working class. And even Ostrogorski wrote as much to bring a message as to study.
scientifically the processes of caucus politics in Birmingham or in American cities. Neo-elitists are, again, most frequently found in postwar France (M. Waline's *Les Partis contre La République*, 1948, being an early specimen, later followed in far more subtle terms by Duverger and many others) and among certain social scientists in the United States who feel increasingly disenchanted with traditional eager hopes for democratic reform. Against this, very few thinkers in stable democracies, such as England, Switzerland, the Low Countries, or the Scandinavian countries, can be identified with those illustrious names. Even R.T. McKenzie's *Political Parties* does little but pay lip service to Michels and Ostrogorski.

Why this connection between elitism and societies with uneasy democratic institutions? As a political theory it is pervaded by an atmosphere of despair in political action. Elitists have a low opinion of politicians; according to Ostrogorski they are worse than either Cain or Harpagon. Elitists look at parties with equal distaste; according to Waline no self-respecting Frenchman could honestly subscribe to any of the French political parties before 1940. Such pessimism about the present is reinforced by the use of the absolute yardstick of democracy as direct popular rule. Proof that even in generally accepted democratic systems men are far from equal comes therefore as a moral shock, still traceable in the grim delight that disappointed idealists, now turned ‘realists,’ continue to show at every new piece of evidence of obvious fact. In countries where the political order is effectively responsible to a wider range of political forces there is hardly the same temptation to engage in powerless invective against politicians and uncritical adulation of non-party elites; people can act and deem this sufficient.

**Differences in influence among various party elites**

The political power of party elites differs according to the internal structure of each party and its power in the party system.

Duverger has provided what is by far the most detailed and refined analysis of differences in internal party structure; he has carried the work as far as can be done short of further detailed analysis of particular parties. It would be invidious therefore in the context of this chapter to seek to add to his rich exposition except for one comment. It seems to me that his distinction between ‘internally’ and ‘externally’ created parties, however valuable as a starting point for analysis, is in danger of being overworked.

In the first place, not all ‘internally’ created parties answer to Duverger's implicit model of the French Radicals; in the process of time many middle-class parties have greatly extended their organization outside parliament. They could do so - unlike the French middle-class parties - because the nationalization of politics had proceeded much further in other European countries than in France. Thus the Dutch Catholics and Calvinists (and Christian-Democratic parties generally) have put on increasingly effective organizational drives that have intensified reciprocal action between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary elites. Secondly, many ‘externally’ created parties have tended to loosen up as they have approached office. Coalition tactics
have often required a high degree of discretionary authority for party leaders; this has decreased the freedom of action of party segments outside
the immediately dominant circle and has therefore reduced the difference from ‘internally created’ parties. Thirdly, it seems that in Europe ‘parties of social integration’ (in Neumann's sense) are losing ground under the impact of the manifold social processes responsible for the process of de-ideologization that now occupies so much of our attention. Therefore in the short run at least the importance of the distinction seems to be declining. Whether the professionalization and the de-ideologization of politics will ultimately lead to a resurgence of irrationalist ‘parties of total integration’ is another matter.

Following earlier writers, Neumann has considered a party in office or in opposition the basis for his distinction between ‘parties of patronage’ and ‘parties of principle’. Whereas office gives party elites access both to the traps and the trappings of power, opposition encourages the posture of uncommitted principle. Ceteris paribus, the value of this distinction would increase with the measure of ‘predominance’ (in Sartori's terminology) or ‘hegemony’ (in the words of LaPalombara and Weiner) that particular parties have. Long tenure has made certain parties almost indistinguishable from the formal state apparatus. Conversely, remoteness from office has increased the ideological element in those parties which we termed earlier isolationist parties.

The influence of the leaders of opposition parties stands prima facie in inverse ratio to the strength of their governmental opposite numbers. This simple statement, however, covers relations of great complexity. Government parties have differed considerably in their willingness or ability to exploit even nominally hegemonic positions. Lack of conviction, expediency and internal conflict has often posed serious obstacles in the way of doing so fully. The same factors have given opposition leaders a wedge with which to penetrate a seemingly solid government front. They have sometimes not been satisfied to play only the parliamentary game and have used other power resources, like bureaucratic connivance, interest group pressure, or mass propaganda campaigns, to thwart government action. At other times and places government and opposition parties have often formed a tacit condominium; certain issues are removed from the party game by mutual consent, but on the condition of regular consultation. The political process, in other words, is considerably more complex than a simple opposition or juxtaposition of political parties suggests, and consequently the analysis cannot stop with parties, as we have to do here.

The influence of party elites as against that of other political elites

Perhaps the best measure to distinguish the relative hold of party elites on a political system as against that of other elites is to ask how far positions of political influence can be obtained through, as opposed to outside, party channels. So defined, this question is the obverse of the earlier one relating to the ‘reach’ of a party system. Where party systems are comprehensive, safely anchored in the main power positions of a society, and reasonably stable over time, the role of parties in the recruitment of political elites, or at least in their legitimation, is by definition considerable. In contrast, where parties operate on a narrow focus, where their position toward other groups in society is precarious, where the party system
is generally unstable - there party elites occupy positions of doubtful permanence, other elites finding different loci of power and threatening to replace parties by whatever means at their disposal (e.g. the bouleversement of the French elite of the Fourth Republic in 1958).

Even in systems where the reach of the party system is wide and its stability considerable it would be wrong to conclude, however, that party elites enjoy a monopoly of political influence. In the first place, the stability of particular parties does not necessarily mean a stability of their elites; internal change-overs may considerably affect their personnel and their policies even though clienteles and labels remain much the same. In the second place, the wider the scope of party-controlled political activity, the more likely it is that elements of a very diverse nature will enter into it, thus introducing institutional, personal, and interest conflicts within the life of each party.\textsuperscript{40} The superficial image of a tight elite breaks down, when intra-party as much as inter-party conflicts provide the arena in which the most disparate political conflicts are being fought out.

Perhaps this is one key with which to explain seemingly contradictory developments in present-day Europe. In many countries, especially the more settled ones, we may witness, on the one hand, an increasing penetration of party activities in society (e.g. by a further politicization of the bureaucracy, by an increase in party-tied interest groups, a closer control of the mass media, etc.). On the other hand, there are equally definite signs of a lowering of the temperature of party conflict, a de-ideologization of party life, a professionalization of party activity, and a bureaucratization of organized politics. Stein Rokkan has spoken in this context of ‘an intriguing process of historical dialectics:\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{quote}
the extension of the suffrage increased the chances for a status polarization of national politics [thus raising the temperature of politics and increasing the role of party], but this very polarization brought about a proliferation of sectional and functional organizations which in turn tended to soften the overall strains in the system and reduce the level of polarization. What we tend to find is an accumulation of forces making for a narrowing of the alternatives for national politics, a fragmentation of the net-works of policy-influencing organizations, and a consequent decline in the importance of the decisions of the electorate-at-large. This may tend to lower the level of general political participation and to alienate from politics sizable sections of the once enfranchised citizenry, leaving the basic decisions to a bargaining process between interest organizations, parties and agencies and departments of the national bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

This seems an exceedingly interesting aperçu; but alas, we must also underwrite the author's final lines:

\begin{quote}
We know far too little about the dynamics of these developments and we need to do much more to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination of studies of these problems in different countries.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}
1. Gabriel Almond's analysis (1956) in 'Comparative Political Systems', *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 18 is a considerable advance over earlier writings that ascribed 'Continental' politics to such institutional factors as proportional representation and assembly government. Even so, his statement: 'The Scandinavian and Low Countries stand somewhere in between the Continental pattern and the Anglo-American', still betrays a similar attitude. Why should France, Germany, and Italy be more 'continental', than Holland, or Switzerland, or more 'European’ than Britain? One wonders whether the description of the smaller European democracies as ‘mixed’ is not in fact an elegant way of saying that they apparently have some Anglo-Saxon virtues in addition to a number of ‘continental’ vices.

2. As the main focus of this chapter is on problems of political development, I shall not deal further with the latter group in the pages that follow.

3. In Germany most political forces submitted fairly rapidly to the existence of the new *Reich*, in contrast to the situation in Italy, where Church resistance and regional opposition continued for a much longer time. This made the existence of the new Italian state for a long time more precarious but may, on the other hand, have provided a safety valve that prevented nationalist unifiers from going to the extremes experienced in Germany.

4. The fact of religious pluralism seems more important than the particular religion in question. Whereas the Catholic Church in the Latin countries identified closely with vested social interests and alienated large sections of the population in the process, Dutch Catholics turned into a distinct protest group that pleaded for a separation of church and state, represented a considerable challenge of the outs against the dominant Liberal bourgeoisie, and maintained an effective hold on lower-class groups. Similarly, Lutheranism tended to be much more an instrument of vested authority in Germany than in Switzerland, while in Scandinavia it played the dual role of both maintaining an official religion and inspiring fundamentalist protest against a too modernist sphere in the central cities. Calvinism too was in practice much more nonconformist in some societies than in others, depending on whether its hold was strongest on existing elites or on lower-class elements.

5. Geographic factors made certain European societies more secure from foreign attack than others: the insular position of England, the mountains of Switzerland, the rivers and canals of The Netherlands made these countries to a large extent immune against invasion on land. Consequently there was no urgent need for them to develop large standing armies. This had profound consequences for domestic political and administrative structures. In Lord Esher's telling phrase, the Navy often proved 'a constitutional force', while an army was more readily 'a royal force'. Similarly, the early development of a citizen-militia in Switzerland was a great deal removed from the compulsory militarization of Prussian *Untertanen*.


8. Walter Bagehot (1867) *The English Constitution*, (1952 World's Classics ed., Oxford: O.U.P. pp. 4ff). The fact that most of the countries here treated have remained monarchies would seem to have been a consequence more than a cause of these developments.


10. For a sophisticated analysis of the way in which the Prussian Junkers maintained their social position and lost their political independence by their submission to the ‘new social factor... the state power’ see Joseph Schumpeter (1960) ‘Social Classes in an Ethnically Homogeneous Environment,’ in *Imperialism and Social Classes*, Cleveland, Ohio: Meridian Books, pp. 144ff.

11. Note, for example, the role of the Free Masons in building up early Liberal and Radical parties, and the influence throughout Europe of Mazzini’s *La Giovane Italia*. See Guglielmo Negri (1964) *Three Essays on Comparative Politics*, Milan.

12. See earlier sections in this chapter.

15. Ibid. p. 8.
16. In the Province of Holland the Estates consisted in the seventeenth century of 19 members: one representative of the nobility, and 18 delegations of cities, manned by burghers.
17. In Prussia the same phenomenon occurred, much to the distress of Max Weber, who was angered by the tendency of ‘an amalgamation between a landed aristocracy corrupted by money-making and a capitalist middle-class corrupted by aristocratic pretensions.’ See Reinhard Bendix (1962) *Max Weber - An Intellectual Portrait*, New York: Anchor Books, p. 40. The greater political and economic prestige of the German upper classes presumably lessened revolutionary resistance to them, contrary to the situation in France and Italy, where revolutionary sentiment may have been fanned by the low prestige accorded to traditionalist political and economic elites.
20. Lipset, ibidem.
21. Dutch peasants, though split among the religious parties and the Liberal party, have nevertheless formed a powerful interest group across party lines. In addition, in the interwar period, and again since 1963, a small Poujadist-oriented Peasant Party has represented a more extremist protest-vote.
22. These differences are apparent in the European Assemblies. Many Northern and Western Liberals have been hesitant to join the ‘Liberal’ caucus. Many Northern ‘Conservatives’ have stayed outside any grouping, finding it impossible to join the right, the left really being somewhat nearer to their beliefs, though not their label.
23. Bottomore (1964) p. 82, quotes a letter from the founder of the French *École Libre des Sciences Politiques*, Emile Boutmy, dated February 1871, in which he points to the need for an administrative elite in the following terms: ‘Privilege has gone, democracy cannot be halted. The higher classes, as they call themselves, are obliged to acknowledge the right of the majority, and they can only maintain their political dominance by invoking the right of the most capable. Behind the crumbling ramparts of their prerogatives and of tradition the tide of democracy must encounter a second line of defense, constructed of manifest and useful abilities, of superior qualities whose prestige cannot be gainsaid.’
ont chance d'avoir une influence sur la minorité qui exerce le pouvoir politique au sens étroit du terme (le pouvoir central ou étatique).

33. There is great need in Europe for studies along the lines of Dahl's (1961) *Who Governs?*, New Haven: Yale University Press.


40. It is interesting to note that the amount of direct interest-representation in parliamentary parties seems to differ considerably from one country to another (e.g. the studies on ‘The Parliamentary Profession’ in *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 13, 1965, pp. 513-619). While in some countries interest groups become increasingly involved in internal party politics, in others they seem to keep parties consciously at arm's length. Perhaps the reason for such differences may be sought in differences in the political role and power of various assemblies, the measure of direct access interest groups have to the administration, the power and specific structure of individual parties, and differences in formal nomination procedures. The increasing importance of government action for interest groups has inevitably raised their concern with politics. But at the same time their need for constantly satisfactory relations with government, of whatever party, has put a premium on avoiding too close involvement with any one of them. See on this point Kirchheimer's subtle analysis in LaPalombara and Weiner (1966).


42. Ibidem.
The three existing theoretical approaches

The subject of this chapter has been approached in political science chiefly from three angles: (A) that of the traditional comparative government literature which has mainly concentrated on institutional variables; (B) that of the study of comparative party systems; and (C) that of formal coalition theory.

These three approaches have in common a desire to generalize but they all suffer from certain defects because their findings have been insufficiently tested against empirical material. Hence inadequate typologies, an over-concentration on variables that are easily collected (chiefly formal institutional data and numerical data on party systems), too little systematic attention to the methodological problem inherent in the fact that political systems are configurative wholes, and a great deal of speculative theorizing which tends to treat party systems as if they were static phenomena. Much of this is, alas, inevitable in view of the little knowledge we have of the working of systems as contrasted to their external structures.

A. The Traditional Comparative Government Literature

The traditional comparative government literature would seem to present the following problems:

1. General typologies of forms of government, like the opposition between ‘presidential systems’ and ‘parliamentary systems’, and between ‘cabinet government’ and ‘assembly government’, are to very large extent extrapolations from the functioning of the political systems of the USA, Great Britain and pre-1958 France. They leave little room for other forms: e.g. the Swiss system; systems with a directly elected President juxtaposed to a responsible parliament (Austria, Finland, Ireland, post-1958 France); and systems in which cabinets and parliaments are more balanced than in the ideal-type Britain or the stereotyped France of another day.

2. The literature ascribes too much causal importance to single institutional...
devices: e.g. dissolution, investiture, interpellations, non-confidence procedures, parliamentary committees. Hence it feeds an exaggerated belief in the potential of institutional engineering.

3. The literature suffers from certain fashions, strongly influenced by the political fortunes of ‘pattern states’. British cabinet government, French beliefs in popular sovereignty, German distastes for the alleged Parteienstaat, Italian corporatism, American presidentialism and congressional organization, have all had their vogue in the writings of institutionalist theorists at one time or another.

4. Although often normative in intent, the literature rarely spells out the criteria by which the functioning of political systems is judged. Its writings are vicariously shaped by a-political legalistic traditions, by naïve democratic models which start from an allegedly sovereign electorate, and by highly personal appreciations of the institutional structures of particular states.

B. The Literature on Comparative Party Systems

The comparative party-systems literature has been influenced by older comparative government concerns, as is clear for instance in the strong influence of the presumed dichotomy between two-party and multi-party-systems (read: ‘Britain’ and the ‘Continent’), and the widespread assumption that desirable party systems can be engineered through institutional reforms (for instance, changes in the electoral system). But as a whole, this body of literature comes nearer to actual political processes in specific polities than the traditional comparative government writings. Yet it presents the following problems:

1. It has paid an exaggerated attention to the importance of purely numerical criteria for distinguishing party systems. The construct of a two-party system has few approximations in the real world. The category of multi-party systems offers too little discrimination among very numerous, but different polities. Hence the attempt to develop more complex numerical typologies, for instance: Sartori’s contrast between moderate and extreme pluralism, Blondel’s distinction between two-party systems, two-and-a-half party systems, multi-party systems with one ‘dominant’ party and multi-party systems without a dominant party, and Rokkan’s more complex accounting of party systems on the basis of the distance which separates the largest party from the majority point, and the second and the third-largest parties from the largest party.

2. Too little empirical attention has been given to the differences in internal party structures, the degree of cohesion of different parties, and the effect of these factors on the relations between cabinets and parliaments. Epstein's thesis about the inevitable creation of cohesive parties by the mechanics of parliamentary government is suggestive, but insufficiently tested. Duverger’s contrast between ‘internally’ and ‘externally’ created parties seems too neat, and of increasingly less importance in the state of parties in the modern world, long after their creation.
3. The literature has been powerfully affected by the axiom of a natural tendency towards dualistic cleavage lines. Some examples: the alleged superiority of two-party systems; the explanation of multi-party systems through cross-cutting dualistic cleavages, inevitably leading to ‘fragmentation’; Duverger's proposition that a Center cannot exist; Sartori's contrast between good and bad pluralism according to the bi-polarity or the multi-polarity of political divisions.

4. As in the comparative government literature, value judgments have been implicit rather than explicit, without an attempt either to specify value criteria or to measure the performance of actual political systems.

C. The Contribution of Formal Coalition Theory

Paradoxically, formal coalition models have been receiving an increasing attention at a time when students of comparative party systems tend to develop more complex, developmental typologies. A new abstract theory is being formulated at a time when other students are becoming increasingly conscious of the need for closer attention to concrete historical patterns.

Modern coalition theory (as exemplified by Downs, Riker and Michael Leiserson) does provide a careful articulation of its assumptions about party behavior. One might raise the following queries about these:

1. The theories assume that parties operate as single actors. This leaves insufficient scope for factionalism within parties: factions are introduced only as elements of uncertainty, or are themselves thought to be subject to the laws of coalition behavior.

2. Whenever coalition models are tested against the actual world of politics (e.g. Michael Leiserson, Erik Damgaard) the tests have to assume the presence of an ‘ideological space’ in which parties occupy definite positions. The actual positioning of parties has either been postulated, or been studied with very weak indicators. This procedure runs the danger of circular reasoning: assumed coalition preferences are deduced from past coalition behavior and these preferences are used to explain the formation of new coalitions. The models, moreover, tend to assume a static placement of parties.

3. Most existing theories would seem unable to explain coalitions which are much wider than Riker's ‘minimum-size principle’ would dictate. The theories seem particularly unsuited to explain the formation and maintenance or fall of coalitions in what Lijphart has termed ‘consociational democracies’ and Lehmbuch ‘Konkordanz-demokratien’ or ‘Proporzdemokratien’. They neglect historical factors which have exercised a continuing influence on elite behavior and on the politicization or depoliticization of cleavage lines.
Cabinets in the smaller European democracies - some hypotheses and some data

Existing theories on cabinet-parliament relations and party systems have been drawn chiefly from the experience of the larger European countries. A systematic collection and analysis of data on cabinets in the smaller European countries should widen the empirical base against which such theories may be tested.

We have therefore collected data on all 250 cabinets which sat since 1918 in ten smaller European democracies (the five Scandinavian countries, the three Benelux countries, Ireland, and Austria). In addition, we have collected data for the same period on the holders of eight of the more important ministerial offices: those of the Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs, Defense, Interior, Justice, Finance, Economic Affairs, and Education. The data (which have been put on punched cards) are inevitably of a somewhat formal nature.

We have used, in particular,
- period in office: for cabinets, the period in office has been defined as the number of months during which one and the same Prime Minister presided over a cabinet of the same political composition, without interim resignation;
- parliamentary base: this is the combined percentage of seats in the Lower House occupied by parties which have ministers in a given cabinet;
- the number of parties: this refers to the total number of parties which are represented in a given cabinet;
- the actual party or parties which participate in the cabinet (for ministers, the political color of the individual holder of an office).

Against these data we have tested a series of assumptions and hypotheses which are commonly found in the literature.

Hypothesis 1: In the smaller European democracies, cabinets have generally been coalition cabinets.

This widespread assumption proved, on closer inspection, to be too much of a generalization. Out of 250 cabinets, no less than 72 have been composed of single parties; 95 have been two-party coalitions, 46 have been three-party coalitions and 29 have been coalitions of four parties or more. The remainder has been non-party or emergency cabinets.

Although coalition cabinets have been in the majority, single-party cabinets have predominated in some countries: Ireland, Norway, Sweden. Of our ten countries, only The Netherlands, and to a lesser extent Belgium, Luxembourg, Iceland and Finland have generally had coalition government throughout the period under study.

Hypothesis 2: Coalition cabinets are bound to be unstable.

If stability is measured by number of months in office, the 250 cabinets show the following distribution:
Table 6.1: Number of parties and average duration of cabinets (in number of months in office) in ten smaller European democracies, 1918-1969.

Cabinets composed of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Parties</th>
<th>Average Duration (months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One party</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parties</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three parties</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four parties</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five parties and more</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there is no great difference between one-party and two-party coalitions, the hypothesis seems to be confirmed. It also tends to hold when controlled for percentage parliamentary base. (See Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Average duration (number of months in office) and number of cabinets (between brackets), by number of parties and formal parliamentary base.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Parliamentary Base</th>
<th>One Party</th>
<th>Two Parties</th>
<th>Three Parties</th>
<th>Four Parties</th>
<th>Five Parties and More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 35%</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%-44%</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45%-49%</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%-54%</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55%-64%</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65%</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All cabinets (including non-party, emergency and no information)</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The same is not true, however, when cabinets are compared within countries. Our data throw together cabinets from all countries, and are therefore heavily influenced by the record of instability of some countries. Cabinets of Belgium (42), Finland (42) and Austria (32) form, in fact, close to half the total of our 250 cabinets, and as coalition cabinets have tended to predominate in these countries, this weights the record for coalition cabinets towards political instability.

The distribution of the various types of cabinets within individual countries reveals that the few coalition cabinets of Ireland, Denmark, and Norway (since 1965) have not been noticeably less stable than single-party cabinets; relatively stable coalition governments have prevailed in The Netherlands and Iceland; and the most stable governments in Finland have been four party-cabinets.

Hypothesis 3: In parliamentary systems, cabinets must have an assured majority backing in Parliament.

Table 6.3 lists our 250 cabinets according to the percentage of their parliamentary base:

**Table 6.3: Formal parliamentary base of cabinets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage parliamentary base</th>
<th>number of cabinets</th>
<th>average number of months in office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no formal parliamentary base</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 35%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 35% and 44%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 45% and 49%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 50% and 54%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 55% and 65%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 65%</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emergency cabinets</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, the hypothesized relation does not hold in our ten countries. In fact, 36.5% of all cabinets (sitting for 28.5% of the time) have been minority cabinets.

A detailed inspection of these 74 cabinets shows that minority cabinets have been in office particularly frequently in Scandinavia. Most minority cabinets occurred in the inter-war period, but the practice has remained a living reality in all Scandinavian countries, particularly in Denmark where minority cabinets have been in office for fifteen years since 1945.

Are minority cabinets perhaps really majority cabinets in disguise? The tabulation could be an artifact of the formal nature of our definition of parliamentary...
support. By defining the parliamentary base of a cabinet as the percentage strength of the parties in parliament which have ministers in the cabinet, we inevitably reckon, among the minority cabinets, cabinets enjoying the steady support of an outside party which does not have ministers in the cabinet. A more detailed enquiry does reveal a number of these cases. But in a great many other cases, cabinets have in fact acceded to office without any such formal undertaking. Hypothesis 3 must therefore be rejected.

Hypothesis 4: Although cabinets may enter into office without formal majority backing, such cabinets must be instable.

Table 6.3 lists, in its second column, the average duration of cabinets according to the width of their parliamentary base. Although minority cabinets have been slightly less stable in the aggregate than majority cabinets, their average duration (not to speak of the duration of some individual cabinets in this category) has been such as to make hypothesis 4 of dubious value. Many cabinets close to the majority point have been practically as stable as cabinets with a margin as wide as 65% or over. Minority cabinets formed on as low a formal parliamentary base as 35% or less have lasted almost as long as majority cabinets with the support of between 55% and 65%.

For majority cabinets, two contradictory propositions have been put forward by various observers with equal confidence:

Hypothesis 5a: The wider the parliamentary backing, the more stable the cabinet.
Hypothesis 5b: Parties will try to form coalitions of minimal size; hence cabinets with a narrow parliamentary majority will be more stable than cabinets with a wider parliamentary margin.

Neither hypothesis finds conclusive support in the second column of Table 6.3. The most stable cabinets have been those with a narrow parliamentary majority. This finding would support hypothesis 5b, not hypothesis 5a. But cabinets with a margin of over 65% are more stable than cabinets with margins between 55% and 65%, which goes against the minimum size principle. Several coalition theorists (Leiserson; Abraham de Swaan)\textsuperscript{11} have found that European cabinets have often been considerably larger than coalition theories would regard as rational.

To investigate this problem somewhat more closely, let us look at the following series of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6a: Whenever one party obtains a majority of the seats of parliament, it will try to monopolize office by forming a single-party cabinet.

The facts confirm the hypothesis: only rarely have parties possessing an independent parliamentary majority agreed to share power (exceptions: Austria in 1945-1949 in the aftermath of war; two cases in Luxembourg).

Hypothesis 6b: If no party obtains an independent parliamentary majority, coalitions will consist of the largest party plus one or more supporting parties necessary to reach the minimum majority point.
Although this situation has occurred frequently, there are too many alternative arrangements found for the hypothesis to claim general validity: e.g. single-party minority cabinets, coalitions of all the smaller parties against the largest party, and coalitions much wider than the hypothesis demands.

Hypothesis 6c: Whatever the size of the coalition, some parties occupy such strategic places in the political spectrum as to make their inclusion inevitable.

Table 6.4 lists for all countries the absolute number of months during which the main system parties have participated in cabinets.

Table 6.4: Parties and total months in office (major parties only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>conservatives</th>
<th>catholics</th>
<th>protestants</th>
<th>socialists</th>
<th>liberals</th>
<th>agrarians</th>
<th>communists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>p.m. 427¹</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>(302)</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>524¹ 500²</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>182</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Fine Gael 272</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Figures of ‘dominant’ parties are printed in italics.
² Protestants in the Netherlands comprise both Anti-revolutionaries and Christian-Historicals.

From this table, one can draw up a list of parties which seem to have been more or less consistently governing parties:

- **Catholics** have been represented in all or almost all cabinets in the three Benelux countries and in Austria; so have two Dutch protestant parties;
- **Socialists** have sat in practically all Swedish cabinets since 1932; they have played a dominant role in Denmark since 1929 and in Norway since 1935, even though occasionally alternative cabinets have been formed;
- **Fianna Fail** has been a governing party in Ireland since 1932, but for two periods of government by coalitions of other parties;
- **Agrarians** have been in office in the great majority of Finnish cabinets.
The listing of these various parties makes it evident that the frequent use of the term ‘dominant’ in this connection is somewhat ambiguous:

- if defined in terms of the potential of a party to reach the majority point by itself, the term excludes those steadily governing parties which remained far below the 50% threshold; the term would only be applicable to the Austrian Catholics, the Norwegian and Swedish Socialists, and Fianna Fail;
- if defined as the largest party in the system, the term excludes such perennials in government as the Finnish Agrarians or the Dutch Anti-revolutionaries and Christian-Historicals;
- if defined simply in terms of percentage chance of partaking in government responsibility, the term begs the question of whether sharing in government does make a party dominant or not: parties may have been more or less consistently represented in cabinets without exercising a dominant influence on their policies.

Hypothesis 7: The chance of parties’ inclusion in cabinets depends on a combination of (a) numerical relations and (b) their location within the party system.

A combination of Stein Rokkan’s distinction of party systems in the smaller European democracies on the basis of numerical criteria and Sartori’s classification on the basis of bipolarity or multipolarity of government-opposition relations, suggests that the ten countries may be classified in three sub-groups:

1) Bipolar systems, schematically represented on a left-right continuum, as follows:

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c} \text{A} & \text{B} \\
\end{array} \]

**Empirical examples:** Austria; to a lesser extent Ireland.

**Cabinet options:** single-party cabinets formed by A or B, or a grand coalition AB.

2) Unipolar systems, schematically represented, as follows:

\[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c} \text{A} & \text{B} & \text{C} & \text{D} & \text{E} \\
\end{array} \]

In this case one large party faces a number of smaller parties.

**Empirical examples:** Sweden, Norway and Denmark since the early 1930s; to a lesser extent Ireland in the post-war period.

**Cabinet options:** A forms single-party cabinet (on majority or minority basis as the numerical situation may be); A plus nearest smaller party (B) form a majority coalition; B + C + D + E form coalition of smaller parties against the larger party; any minority cabinet formed from one or more of the smaller parties; all-party cabinet.
(3) **Multipolar or non-polar systems**: The schematic representation depends on the numerical relations between the parties. Among the ten countries in our sample, there would seem to be two sub-categories:

(3a) **Center-based systems**, with the largest party in the center of a left-right continuum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communists</th>
<th>Socialists</th>
<th>Catholics</th>
<th>Liberals</th>
<th>Conservatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Empirical examples*: Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg.

(3b) even multiparty systems without a clear center party:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communists</th>
<th>Socialists</th>
<th>Agrarians/Progressives</th>
<th>Conservatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Empirical examples*: Finland, Iceland.

*Cabinet options*:
- in **center-based systems**: cabinets exclusively formed from the religious party (or in the Netherlands three religious parties); cabinets of religious party (or parties) with either partner on left or right; all-party cabinets.
- in even multi-party systems: formation of all manner of governments ranging from single-party minority cabinets to all-party coalitions, from coalitions seeking to polarize left-bourgeois division to coalitions seeking to bridge the gulf separating the bourgeois bloc from the Socialists or even the Communists.

(This situation made for unstable coalitions in Finland, but less so in Iceland. Perhaps this may be explained by the different numerical distribution in the latter country? The strength of Icelandic Communists and Socialists is much below that of Finland, and the power of the Conservative and Agrarians to sustain cabinets correspondingly greater).

**Hypothesis 8**: The three types of systems make for differences in the possible patterns of governmental change.

An inventory of patterns actually found in our ten countries suggests the following classification:

1. **one-party dominance**: in this situation one party dictates the composition of governments through a series of election periods; it is found in bipolar and unipolar systems. This situation has prevailed in Sweden for more than thirty years, and was characteristic to a lesser extent of Norway, Ireland, Denmark, and in a very different way of Austria until 1934;

2. **majority alternation**: this situation is possible in bi-polar systems, and in unipolar systems if the out-parties combine. Although not in a pure form, this situation existed to some extent in the alleged ‘two bloc parliamentarism’ of Denmark, in post-war Ireland, and in Norway, since 1963;
3. **semi-turnover**: in this situation, typically found in multipolar systems, one party or group of parties, is always represented in the government, but with alternating coalition partners. Examples: Netherlands, Luxembourg;

4. **open choices**: (termed *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit* by Val R. Lorwin. In this case (found in multipolar systems only), both the width and the political placing of cabinets are indeterminate, and in many cases coalitions may come about of seemingly incongruous composition. Examples: Finland, Iceland, to a lesser extent Belgium;

5. **grand coalitions**: in which all parties join in some kind of *Proporz*-arrangement. This option is theoretically possible in all three types, though logically to be expected mainly in multipolar systems. It has occurred in periods of national emergency in many countries, but also in Austria from 1945 to 1966, and occasionally in Finland.

The different patterns of governmental change have an impact on:
- the extent to which there is a *polarization* between parties in government and in opposition;
- the *width of parliamentary support*: one party dominance and majority alternation will make for narrow-based cabinets; grand coalitions are by nature wide-based coalitions; in semi-turnover systems cabinets will probably have a wider base if formed of a centre-left than of a centre-right coalition; systems of open choices are compatible with any type of parliamentary backing;
- the *site of the making and breaking of cabinets*: in systems with one-party dominance and majority alternation, cabinets will be formed and broken up mainly at the hands of the electorate; hence they will tend to sit for the period of one legislature (or longer if constitutional convention permits them). In the three other systems the life of cabinets is dependent on inter-party relations which may lead to a *renversements des alliances* also between elections;
- the *stability of ministerial personnel*: the greater the degree of change in the party composition of governments, the larger should be the turnover of persons. Hence one would expect an increased turnover as one moves from systems with grand coalitions and one-party dominance, to systems of semi-turnover, to systems with majority alternation and to systems with open choices.

Table 6.5 gives for all ten countries the number of new persons appointed to eight ministerial offices in the inter-war and the post-war periods. This table does indeed bear out the assumption that the turnover of ministerial personnel depends on the types of governmental change: note the sharp reduction in Norway and Sweden when a system of open choices was replaced by one of majority dominance; note also the increase in stability of personnel in post-war Austria. The greatest number of new entrants to the eight ministerial offices is found in Finland's system with open choices. In the Netherlands and Denmark an increase in the number of coalition alternatives went together with an increased rate of recruitment of new ministers.

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**Hans Daalder, State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics**
Table 6.5: Total number of new ministerial appointees to eight ministerial offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>inter-war period</th>
<th>postwar period</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Periods are not entirely identical. In Austria the interwar period runs for obvious reasons to 1934 only. In some Scandinavian countries, cabinets have been counted from 1920 only.

Not in all countries did all eight ministerial posts exist at all times; this depresses the possible number of *homines novi* in Iceland and Luxembourg, and to a smaller extent in Sweden.

Hypothesis 9: To account for the formation of governments one should not only know the numerical distribution and the location of parties, but the intensity of the cleavages which separate them.

In the formal models just presented, it is assumed that parties are legitimate participants in the coalition game, and that no cleavages separate them which would rule out the formation of coalitions between them.

This assumption is hardly valid. Historical conflicts have made for deep cleavages between certain parties and others. In addition, certain parties have been regarded as by definition outside the system altogether. The extent to which certain parties are unacceptable to one another, or to the potential governing parties as a body, lessens the number of permissible coalitions. This factor has been of particular importance in connection with the socialists before World War II; extreme nationalist movements in the same period; Communist parties; and Fianna Fail in Ireland in the period before 1932.

1) The admission of the Socialists

Since the introduction of universal suffrage growing left-wing strength has reduced the parliamentary basis of non-socialist cabinets in all countries but Ireland. This factor was particularly important in Austria, and in all Scandinavian countries, much less so in the three Benelux countries.
Non-socialist parties adopted any one of the following attitudes towards the Socialist party or parties:
2) The admission of national-socialists and other ultra-nationalist groups
This phenomenon made itself felt with particular force in pre-1934 Austria, where (except for one occasion in 1927, when Seipel offered a coalition to the Socialists which the latter refused) the Catholics associated with various ultra-nationalist groups to keep the Socialists in opposition. Outside Austria and to a lesser extent Finland, extremist parties of the right did not attain a sufficient potential for effective blocking or blackmail.

3) The admission of Communists to cabinet positions
As Table 6.4 showed, Communists entered cabinets for a very short period after 1945 in a number of European countries. After 1947, however, they have participated in cabinets only in Iceland and Finland. In these two countries, their numerical importance has been larger than in the other eight smaller European countries. This increased their potential blocking power and stirred desires for some opening to the left. But when entry came, this was made possible through wide-based coalitions, implying conditions and Controls.

4) The entry of Fianna Fail in 1932
The induction of Fianna Fail into legitimate Irish politics, after a period of anti-system opposition, came through electoral politics leading to eventual accession to office as a single-party cabinet with some support from Irish Labour. The strength of British parliamentary traditions and civil service efficiency eased what was at one time regarded as a possible jeopardy to democratic government.

Hypothesis 10: The induction of parties once outside the circle of legitimate coalition partners will increase the number of possible coalitions, hence:
Hypothesis 10a: governmental power will be more proportionally shared as between the parties:

The concept of ‘share of governmental participation’ has been quantified by Blondel. He logically finds that numerical equity has been greater in systems which practice (approximate forms of) grand coalitions and in systems with a
regular alternation between alternative blocs or parties than in systems with dominant majority parties. The hypothesis therefore depends on the dynamics of governmental change;

**Hypothesis 10b: the greater mutual acceptability of parties to one another should be apparent in a greater frequency with which they have sat in cabinets together;**

This hypothesis finds considerable support when one compares the number of months parties have sat in office with one another in pre-war, as contrasted to postwar, periods. But here again, the possibility of independent majority power, or exclusive majority coalitions, has prevented the Crossing of dividing lines in some cases: e.g. in Ireland between Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, and in Denmark, Norway and Sweden between Socialists and most ‘bourgeois’ parties (except in war time).

**Hypothesis 10c: the widening of permissible governmental space increases the margin of formal parliamentary support on which cabinets have rested;**

This hypothesis stands confirmed for almost all countries. In Scandinavian countries, the growing strength of Socialists has led to the formation of majority or near-majority cabinets in lieu of the narrow-based minority cabinets of an earlier period. In countries which traditionally practiced coalition cabinets, a similar widening of parliamentary support resulted from the inclusion of Socialists.

**Hypothesis 10d: the increase in the number of possible coalitions increases the instability of cabinets;**

The reasoning behind this hypothesis is as follows: parties which have more alternatives in the making of government coalitions will more readily break up any particular combination of which they form a part.

Douglas Rae and Eric Browne have found a correlation of .671 between the number of possible minimal winning coalitions in 17 countries and cabinet stability in the period since 1945. Their definition of minimal coalition: ‘the number of distinct combinations of parties which: (a) contain at least a majority of the seats in a parliament and (b) would not contain a majority if any single party were removed’ is based on purely quantitative terms, however, and does not take into account the impact of (changes in) cleavage intensity between any two parties.

A better test may be obtained if one inspects (a) the changes in the degree of cabinet stability in individual countries which result from a widening of the number of permissible coalitions, and (b) the record of stability of cabinets with parties formerly outside but now part of the legitimate system.

Of the ten countries, there has been some decrease in cabinet stability (when one compares the post-war with the interwar period) in The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark and Iceland. In most of these countries, the number of possible coalitions has gone up as a consequence of the lifting of former barriers against the Socialists. There has been a great increase in cabinet stability in Sweden and Norway, where the numerical factor made for one-party dominance (and hence lessened the scope for alternative governments). In Austria, an increase in stability resulted from a deliberate freezing of coalition options. Finally, in Belgium
and Finland an increase in the number of possible coalitions coincided with some slight increase in cabinet stability.

The effect of a widening of legitimate coalition space may be traced also by comparing the average duration of cabinets without Socialists and with Socialists. Table 6.6 shows that a widening of the basis of cabinets by the inclusion of Socialists has led to an increase in their average life in all countries but Luxembourg. But this increase has been much more dramatic in the Scandinavian countries, where Socialist strength tended to lessen the scope for alternative governments, than in countries where cabinets without Socialist participation could be formed with much less difficulty.

Table 6.6: Average duration of cabinets with Socialists and without Socialists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>no socialists in cabinet</th>
<th>socialists in cabinet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td><strong>17.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some theoretical issues and the need for further research

An inspection of the experience of cabinets in the ten countries under consideration suggests that it is possible to obtain an insight into their formation if one can specify (a) the numerical relations of parties, (b) the location of parties in relation to one another, and (c) the intensity of cleavage lines. This may be easy in the construction of formal models, but it is not in actual society.

Numerical relations are relatively easy to come by; but if the analysis is to go beyond a mere counting of parliamentary seats, it must inquire also into the extent to which numbers do present a homogeneous reality: do parties enter into the game of cabinet-making as single units or as forces internally divided? The problem of specifying dimensions and locations is even more formidable. Models usually
start from an *a priori* left-right assumption that may not be valid in actual behavior: the occasional formation of cabinets of Socialists and Liberals in Belgium is a reminder that religious conflicts may override socio-economic criteria; similarly the cooperation of Conservatives and Socialists in Iceland suggests that urban-rural divisions may make havoc of a simple left-right scale. To reason in terms of continua on which parties are assigned a fixed location makes politics too much a static process, as if dimensions may not change and as if party elites may not affect the specific location of their party on any particular dimension.

The intensity of conflict, finally, is based on the one hand on specific social cleavages, on the other hand on the extent to which systems have developed in the past a capacity to handle conflict. Formal models usually leave out the latter element, and start from the assumption that cleavages are automatically translated into conflict irrespective of the extent to which elites succeed in politicizing or depoliticizing conflict. Cleavages in fact make their impact felt in different political cultures, which themselves are a product of past politics. The rejection of the static assumptions underlying formal models calls, on the one hand, for comparative historical analysis on the way particular institutional and party patterns have come about, and, on the other, for an analysis of contemporary processes of handling political conflict.

A. Developmental Factors

Stein Rokkan's work on developmental typologies of party cleavages within the smaller European democracies has rightly called attention to the interaction between institutional factors, on the one hand, and party cleavage factors on the other. Institutions and party systems have evolved together, and hence should be analysed in their interaction, not as if one factor determined the other.

Comparative analysis leads to a rejection of the assumption (found often in the literature, even in Huntington's brilliant, ‘Political Modernization: America vs. Europe’) that all Continental European systems attained an early centralization under a dominant executive authority, against which democratization movements developed in antagonistic fashion. In fact:

- in some countries, political centralization did not come about early (e.g. Switzerland, Netherlands, and to a lesser extent Belgium and Luxembourg). These countries for long lacked the tradition of a strong centralized administration, or a permanent standing army. This profoundly affected later political developments, as it did in the USA;
- in a larger number of countries, traditions of representation resisted the full force of bureaucratic centralization (in addition to the countries above, Sweden and in its wake Finland; to a lesser extent also Norway and Denmark);
- in many European countries a forgoing local autonomy persisted, because political centralization was absent, or because geographic factors made attempts at centralization ineffective, or because socio-economic modernization came only very late.
Against the background of these factors, considerable differences existed in the manner in which responsible parliamentary government came about. One may distinguish at least four patterns:

1. In some countries, responsible parliamentary government came early, at a time when politics was still dominated by pluralist elites in the absence of strong political parties. In Switzerland and The Netherlands (and to a lesser extent in the other two Benelux countries), an autochthonous tradition of the ‘politics of accommodation’ provided the framework in which later mass movements developed. Older elite styles eased the transition to mass politics and made for a tradition in which the principle of proportionality led to a de-emphasis of the majority principle in favor of a pluralist autonomy of all subgroups in the society.

2. In a second group of countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway), a much stronger centralized establishment which centered on King and bureaucracy co-existed with representative organs which did not succeed in obtaining responsible government early or easily. In Norway, Denmark and Sweden, responsible government came about through a process of mass mobilization of counter-establishment forces. In the process political parties became strongly entrenched locally and cohesive on the floor of Parliament. Parliament became a strong ‘democratic’ forum, seeking to make the central bureaucracy accountable. This development fostered a belief in majority principles, tempered by a judicious appreciation for the need of executive government. If unavoidable, minority cabinets and ad hoc coalition arrangements for specific policy goals were preferred over the theoretical alternative of Proporz-cabinets.

3. In a third group of countries (Finland, Ireland), responsible government coincided with national emancipation; here mass politics and parliamentary government were introduced simultaneously. Bitter strife over the mode of national independence (and its possible social components) led to a situation of civil war and to strong cleavages between the parties. This at times seemed to jeopardize the continuation of democratic politics. Strong traditions of local autonomy tended to separate local politics from the politics of the centre, however, which allowed some measure of insulation for individual groups. Eventually greater legitimacy was reached when Fianna Fail in Ireland and the Socialists in Finland came into positions of governmental responsibility. In Ireland one party obtained an overall-majority. In Finland, on the other hand, instable coalitions sometimes led to a tendency to impose quasi-national solutions by presidential leadership.

4. Finally, in Austria responsible government arrived in the wake of a revolution which left a heritage of disagreement about the very existence of the state. Bitter polarization and persistent anti-democratic attitudes in authoritative circles led to the only case in our ten countries of destruction of responsible democratic government.
These four different patterns of democratization made for different political cleavages and different manners of accommodation. In group (1) traditions of pluralist accommodation tempered the political effect of whatever cleavages emerged; in group (2) cleavage lines determined the composition of governments, but strong traditions of accountable bureaucratic government tempered at the same time the full exploitation of political divisions; in group (3) disagreements over the very mode of national emancipation led to legitimacy conflicts which were softened however by the persistent influence of older political institutions and a political culture borrowed from political neighbors and former masters (British parliamentarism and civil service ideals in Ireland; Swedish representative and bureaucratic traditions in Finland). In Austria, finally, both the origin of the state and autochthonous political culture created deep fissures and anti-democratic forces triumphed.

B. The Actual Working of Systems

Different modes of cabinet government have proved reasonably effective in our ten countries, including types of cabinet which have usually been thought to be unworkable in larger European states (e.g. shifting coalition cabinets, minority governments). Two questions arise in comparative perspective: (a) is the capacity to work ‘impossible’ institutions perhaps due to the fact that smaller countries also have smaller problems; and (b) if the answer to the earlier question is negative, what makes institutions work which in other countries have been thought unworkable?

Ad a. Smaller loads on smaller countries? - This proposition - found in the literature with great frequency is treated more fully by Robert A. Dahl in his book with Edward Tufte, Size and Democracy. There is no clear evidence that national problems are simpler in smaller states. International problems could be less important because a smaller size might imply smaller responsibilities in the international world. But against this proposition, one might raise two objections: (i) is the foreign policy burden on larger states not partly a result of their own choice; and (ii) when smaller states manage to contract out of foreign policy entanglements, is this not evidence of the fact that their elites succeed in deliberately de-emphasizing and controlling the impact of foreign affairs?

Ad b. Explanations for the working of systems - if very different modes of cabinet-parliament relations are compatible with democratic stability, their relative efficiency might theoretically lie in the presence of alternative supporting elements in the system. Some of the factors which may be adduced are:

1. The institution of monarchy. There is evidence that European systems with a monarchy have been more stable than systems with an elected President. One should not confuse cause and consequence, however: if some systems retain a monarch, this may well be because past stability has been such as not to destroy this institution. A continuation of monarchy, then, is not the cause, but only the effect and proof of political stability.

2. The closeness of the elite structure. Although there is little empirical evi-
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dence, some of our ten countries show an extraordinary length of tenure for some individual ministers (notably Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries).

3. **The strength of bureaucratic structures.** Bureaucracies may contribute to a routinization of political conflict. No definite answer can be given on this point, however, until we have better studies of comparative bureaucratic behavior and its importance for the actual functioning of political systems in Europe, including their ability to ensure the political accountability of bureaucratic establishments.

4. **The strength of the interest-group network.** The importance of ‘corporate pluralism’ as an alternative site for decision-making (freeing - but also lessening the power of - cabinets and parliaments) is evident in many European countries, and deserves study in a comparative perspective.

**C. Some Needs for Further Research**

Future comparative research might perhaps best concentrate on:

1. A more systematic testing of the canons of coalition theory. This will require greater knowledge of the dimensionality of party systems (as found in the perceptions of both elite groups and the mass electorate). It demands a closer study of coalition-building processes at the time of the formation of cabinets. One should seek to elucidate the strains which cabinets face when challenged on other dimensions than those which determined their formation. One should study the reason for the break-up of cabinets and the changes of coalition patterns over time.

2. A more detailed analysis of the interaction between cabinets, parliaments, parties, interest groups and bureaucratic structures. This requires more detailed institutional analysis; it demands case-studies of policy formation and policy execution; it calls for an integration of institutional analysis, legislative behavior studies, studies on parties and interest groups, and studies on comparative bureaucratic behavior within the context of an analysis of decision-making processes.

3. A closer study of actual performance of political systems. If the literature is to be freed from the tyranny of institutional predilections, it should seek to measure the overall performance of systems by agreed criteria of evaluation. This might be done by a careful study of the way individual cabinets have handled specific, but comparable political conflicts; it should also be done by attempts to measure the overall record of systems to meet specific challenges. One should finally trace the degree of legitimacy accorded to systems by participants on all levels of the polity.

Evidently, this calls for studies on many levels. Some of the work to be done is on the level of extensive comparative study (e.g. testing of formal models of coalition theory, cross-national studies of policy-making processes, and studies of comparative legislative and administrative behavior). But important work can
also be done by single-nation analysis, or even by concentration on the working of an individual institution (like one minority cabinet in one country), provided its relevance to larger theoretical issues is borne in mind.

Eindnoten:

10. The following section shows many of the defects which were pointed out in the previous pages. This is partly due to the nature of the exercise, partly to the need to compress the findings into too little space. Some alternative ways of approaching the subject are discussed in the third section.


chapter seven | parties and political mobilization: an initial mapping

I. Introduction

This paper seeks to provide a tentative inventory of problems subsumed under the term political mobilization. It takes the use of the words ‘political mobilization’ for granted, although certain queries have rightly been raised about the use of the term ‘mobilization’. Thus one could note: the allegation that it has been uncritically transferred from the literature on totalitarianism to the study of open democratic political systems (Giovanni Sartori); the objection that it is conceptually and grammatically mistaken to speak of a person mobilizing him or herself, instead of being mobilized by others (Gunnar Sjöblom); or the view that the term political mobilization should really be used only for the process of induction of new groups into a political system in the processes of mass democratization (as analyzed above all by the late Stein Rokkan).

In this paper we shall approach the concept of political mobilization in terms of linkage processes between different elite groups on the one hand, and citizens on the other. Action can be taken from either side. One of the major, and in a democratic era undoubtedly most legitimate, linkages is provided by what is usually termed the ‘partisan-electoral channel’. In systems with responsible government, universal suffrage, and open, competitive elections, parties put up candidates and programs in a competitive struggle for representation and office. This is held to ensure democratic accountability, and allows citizens to express definite preferences for persons and policy. Obviously, parties do not provide the only, exclusive channels in the interaction between leaders and followers. There are a host of other intermediate actors, including the bureaucracy, organized interest groups, ad hoc action groups and the mass media. Both leaders and individual citizens can seek to short-cut party by more direct forms of contact, as in plebiscitary stances of leaders, or the seeking of direct access on the part of citizens. Moreover, neither citizens nor leaders come to their interaction tabula rasa. Leaders inevitably have other links, i.e. with other parties, and the various other intermediate actors just mentioned. Holding offices also demands the fulfillment of specific roles and responsibilities. Citizens, on the other hand, are socialized into political life by numerous agencies beyond party, including the family, educational institutions, churches, recreational associations and the workplace; they are affected by experi-

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ences with alternative agencies like the bureaucracy or interest groups; and they also undergo life-cycle effects.

Yet for reasons of clarity it seems useful to proceed in the following analysis in three successive steps:

1. We shall first treat the role of parties as agencies of political mobilization *in abstracto*, assuming that one can consider the problem of linkages between parties and citizens in isolation from other intermediate agencies. Section Three will explore problems raised in the relation between citizen and party (in the singular); Section Four in his relation to the party system (or parties in the plural).

2. We shall then consider the role of parties as agencies of mobilization, taking into account the interaction of parties with other possible agencies of political mobilization, including interest groups, action groups, the media and the bureaucracy. Given that this problem has very different aspects, whether one views it from the perspective of rulers, or from that of the citizens, the analysis will again be split in two sections: Section Five traces the problems from the top downwards, and Section Six looks from the citizen upwards.

3. Finally, we shall present a few general propositions on trends towards a possible displacement of parties by other agencies of political mobilization.

But before we go into the analysis, some remarks will be made on historical mobilization processes (Section Two). We shall seek to show that current analytical approaches, normative discussions and even political problems have their roots in experiences over a much longer time-span than of the post-war period alone.

This paper is exploratory in nature. It shows a somewhat uncertain mixture between normative concerns, analytical statements (based on logical and conjectural reasoning), and empirical illustrations taken eclectically from different European countries. In fact, it raises questions, rather than that it presents definite answers.

**II. Parties and historical mobilization processes**

We tend to regard the development of political parties as the natural and inevitable concomitant of mass democratization processes. Yet, a closer inspection of the record reveals that the manner of democratization left a legacy which has had an impact on discussions of the role of parties, as well as on the functioning of parties themselves, to this day.3 We shall order our remarks in this section along the following themes: the lingering impact of anti-party sentiment; the view that parties are essentially a transient, because transitional phenomenon; assumptions that at one time ‘a golden age of party’ existed; the impact for better or worse of developmental perspectives in the drawing up of typologies in the field of party analysis; the Rokkan ‘freezing proposition’; and the general issue on whether parties are dependent or independent variables in relation to social changes.
1. Lingering anti-party sentiment

From at least two sides the legitimacy of parties has been contested in the period of mass democratization, from that of traditionalist-aristocratic doctrines on the one hand, and ultra-democratic reasoning on the other. In the first perspective there was no place for the lower orders of society to tinker with the precious institutions of authority. When parties did eventually arise, they were at most assigned a highly restricted sphere for political action - a view long buttressed by legal doctrines which resisted the very idea of a *Parteienstaat*. A denial of party from a very different perspective derived from the teachings of Rousseau and his disciples. Starting from egalitarian premises, they emphasized the need for immediate and total participation of each individual, not mediated by partial associations or delegated representatives. Hence, neither parts, nor parties or partisans, were really compatible with the expression of popular sovereignty in a *volonté générale*. The first (authoritarian) tradition and the second (ultrademocratic) tradition are curiously married in populist doctrines which emphasize the need to tie leaders and followers directly together through plebiscitary devices which are not meant to divide political society but to cement the bonds between a leader and a people postulated to be fundamentally at one.

Clearly, these varied doctrines have been unable to stem the growth of parties in all stable, competitive democracies. Yet, it is as well to remember that they often exert an influence on contemporary ‘critical’ discussions of the role of party in modern society.

2. Parties as a transient phenomenon?

A number of authors have argued that parties should really be regarded as a historically specific phenomenon thrown up by a transition from a mainly ‘traditional’ to a more ‘rational-legal’ social order in the Weberian sense.

Parties were necessary instruments to bring new social strata into the political process, so it is argued, but once ‘parochials’ have turned into ‘subjects’ and better, into ‘citizens’ in the Almond-Verba sense, parties have outlived their usefulness. Instead citizens can act directly in different social groups according to specific issues at stake, while simultaneously bureaucratic agencies and the legal system allow adequate direct action for specific goals in which party may be a hindrance rather than a help. It is as well to remember that such sentiments were already voiced by classical authors like Ostrogorski and Michels who turned increasingly negative towards the very idea of party, and to recognize similarities on the other hand between such views and current anti-party sentiments of neo-democratic ideologues. A useful subject for study would be to probe such similarities, and to investigate to what degree they spring from particular political situations, in particular countries and social groups.
3. Was there ever a ‘golden age of party’?

The view that parties were essentially historically-specific agencies of initial mass mobilization, allowed yet another opinion to grow up which colors many of our present-day discussions, i.e., the idea that at one time in the history of mass de-
mocratization parties could rightfully claim to be spokesmen *par excellence* for clear principles and distinct social groups which they organized and mobilized in effective social action. Yet, in the very act of their achieving success, parties could not help being corrupted, by the opportunism of office, by a blurring of social cleavage-lines which inevitably followed successful social integration of their clienteles, by internal bureaucratic sclerosis, etc. However, the idea of a ‘golden age’ of party is likely to be myth, rather than reality - called forth by *post hoc* idealization more than by a clear inspection of actual records. At a minimum, one should again emphasize that the actual role of parties in processes of political mobilization and emancipation were very different as between parties and countries. In some countries parties which predated the processes of mass democracy adapted in forms which were often very effective for all their being far from heroic (e.g. the US party system in the time of machine politics). In yet other cases, universal suffrage was imposed from above with the clear intention to integrate voters in the State rather than in parties regarded with little sympathy (e.g., in Bismarckian Germany, and in a very different manner in a Bonapartist or Gaullist France). Again, in countries where parties did play an important role in mobilizing new groups into political life, not all parties were equally effective in different time periods, in different regions, or in relation to different social groups. At least one disadvantage of looking at parties with historicist-ideological blinkers is that it leads one to exaggerate the degree of mass participation and mobilization, or even the salience of party and party politics, for the citizenry at large even in the time of an expanding suffrage - a factor which cannot but lead to exaggerated and prejudicial views on contemporary developments.

4. Developmental typologies: Duverger and Neumann

Maurice Duverger derived both his distinction between cadre parties and mass parties, and that between internally and externally created parties, from a developmental perspective - relating them to the very different positions that, notables on the one hand, and lower orders in society on the other occupied during the time of mass democratization. Duverger posited a contagion from the left: mass parties were the result of a successful organizational effort of left-wing parties: once such parties had penetrated fully into the representative system, the need for competition would force other parties willy-nilly to follow suit. The argument is not very much different from that of Sigmund Neumann, who saw a trend towards evolution from parties of individual representation into parties of social, or even parties of total integration. Paradoxically, there has been very little empirical testing of such assumed developmental ‘laws’ towards ever increasing mass organization. But at least since Otto Kirchheimer launched his alternative forecast about the inevitable development of catch-all parties, prevailing reasoning has tended to go into the direction of a relative weakening, rather than strengthening of parties as agencies of political mobilization. Again, the Kirchheimer proposition itself has come under fire for being a postulate rather than an empirical reality. Clearly, we can only solve the problem whether such unilinear trends exist or not, by comparative analysis of a longitudinal nature.
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5. The Rokkan freezing-proposition

If one speaks of the continuing impact of past mobilization processes on present-day politics, the Rokkan ‘freezing proposition’ provides undoubtedly the most famous example. Rokkan, too, analyzed the establishment of parties in Western Europe in terms of successive waves of mobilization of new groups in societies in which the suffrage expanded. Once parties had successfully integrated such new groups in the political system, party systems froze along the alignments which had given rise to them initially. As political conversion of voters from one party to another is a much more difficult task than the encadrement of new arrivals in a political market, party systems became relatively stabilized. Rokkan’s analytical approach has been confirmed by a variety of studies (e.g. Rose-Urwin; see also Pedersen on Party life spans who indicated that the infant mortality of new parties is much greater than the death rate of more mature parties). Yet, there are a number of caveats. In the first place, different systems differ markedly in their aggregate volatility; with some systems becoming more and others less stable over time (see data in Pedersen and Maguire). Secondly, the present world of competitive party systems shows a substantial number of cases which did have marked regime changes. In some of them the party system has indeed changed drastically as compared with earlier periods of history (e.g., post-1949 Germany, post-1958 France; to a different degree all political systems in Southern Europe). Thirdly, recent research suggests that once frozen-alignments are thawing increasingly in a large number of countries, albeit at a very different rate (Maguire). Finally, it is one thing to suggest that the format and alignments of party systems show considerable continuity over time - this does not necessarily imply that parties within such systems are really a replica of their ancestors. Continuity may be the result as much of intelligent adaptation of parties as of a sclerosis of which they are sometimes uncritically accused.

6. Parties as dependent or independent variables

The point just made may be generalized. The literature knows two approaches which seem at first sight to lead to very opposite conclusions. In one view, parties are above all historical-sociological phenomena; being the product of past political and social history they are thought to be mainly a dependent variable, then as now. In another view parties are very much the independent variable. Thus approaches analyzing party strategies in terms of formal models, as well as theories about rational voting, assume that both parties and voters are free to move, and in that process to determine actual outcomes. It is suggested that this apparent dichotomy runs very much into the danger of being a superficial simplification. Even the most frozen of Rokkan's party systems have clearly survived not only because they were simply the products of happy history, but because their parties, showed a remarkable capacity to heed, not to say meet, new challenges. ‘Stable’ party systems have survived major challenges, including world wars, a long depression, a period of reconstruction and unwonted affluence, sometimes losses of colonial empires, new international alliances,
processes of political integration, and a variety of domestic societal changes. Clearly, then, ‘old’ parties have indeed
proved a remarkable capacity to cope, which is something rather different from saying that they are dependent variables only.

On the other hand, the formal theories of parties and voting have had to recognize many limitations in practice, including ideological positions, inertia and familiarity considerations, permissible and non-permissible coalitions, policy distances, etc. which all seem to suggest that parties are not as ‘independent’ as earlier theories confidently held. Parties, being normatively as well as factually independent actors, have to face new political and societal problems which are themselves not easily controllable, yet also are not forces of unstoppable doom.

III. Party and citizens in abstracto

We now turn to an analysis of the relation between party and citizens, each seen in abstracto without taking into account the simultaneous existence of more than one party on the one hand, or the presence of alternative agencies of political mobilization on the other. Our concern is with the relationship of at least the following actors: party voters, party members, party militants, and holders of representative or executive office. We shall group our (admittedly eclectic) remarks around four headings: the problem of the electoral mandate which is supposed to bind voters, party members, party activists and leaders together in one agreed party position; the role of party militants; the conflicting trends towards party bureaucratization and a new amateur politics; and the possible conflict between parties as policy-setting and mere plebiscitary agencies.

1. The problem of the electoral mandate

In any discussion about the linkages between elected leaders and followers, the problem of what in England is called ‘the electoral mandate’ looms large. The specific party platform which a party offers in elections is the basis of its electoral legitimation, and it also forms the bond between elected representatives and their parties. But it is precisely at this point that problems emerge. For to whom are elected representatives accountable, to voters who choose them, or to party members who nominate them?

To Duverger the problem was inextricably bound up with his view about the natural development of parties: whereas cadre parties and internally created parties could easily emphasize a trustee concept of representation, mass parties and externally created parties inevitably came closer to politico and delegate conceptions of representation.14 As his developmental ‘laws’ lack genuine empirical validation, they can hardly solve our problem, however.

A contrasting, equally simple explanation has been put forward by Robert McKenzie.15 In his view, the force of parliamentary institutions cannot but shift the centre of actual power to the parliamentary leaders of a party, whatever the rules of a party say about its internal decision-making processes. His analysis has come under fire from Labour Party critics like Miliband,16 and seems increasingly unrealistic.
given contemporary developments of the British party system, where power seems to move increasingly towards extra-parliamentary actors, particularly in the case of the Labour Party. Yet, explanation is complicated by the
fact, that not only very different situations prevail in different parties, but also in
different countries, and that we have very little really reliable information about the
actual relations between elected representatives and extra-parliamentary party organs,
at any one time, let alone over time.

A realistic analysis of the problem of the electoral mandate must begin from a
realization, that its importance cannot but be relative. Any electoral program, however
well prepared, inevitably faces unforeseen circumstances which may cause havoc in
the best intentions. Also, electoral promises find an unavoidable restraint in the
realities of bureaucratic implementation and the restrictions of available resources.
Moreover, whenever parties do not gain an independent majority, electoral promises
will have to be adjusted to conflicting demands of coalition partners.

Table 7.1: The party government and the party democracy model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. The party government model</th>
<th>II. The party democracy model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party leaders in office and/or representative positions should have freedom, because:</td>
<td>Party leaders in office and/or representative positions should be accountable to extra-parliamentary party organs, because:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• they owe their constitutional mandate to the voters;</td>
<td>• they owe their selection, nomination and election to party;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• office holders and representatives have a responsibility for continuous government and the national interest, beyond party;</td>
<td>• office holders and representatives have a responsibility to enact policies, which were the basis of their program, as established by party;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• no party can adequately foresee changing circumstances;</td>
<td>• if policies must be changed, this is not only the concern of leaders, but also of the entire party;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it is impossible and undesirable to refer all decisions back to the party; this is particularly true in case of coalition government;</td>
<td>• leaders have a tendency easily to identify their desire to stay in office, even at the expense of explicit compromises on party programmes, with party interest. It is the task of party to make sure that policy choices take precedence over leaders' interests;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• there must be clear, individual responsibilities for political leaders themselves, if electoral accountability has to have any real substance</td>
<td>• democracy requires participatory procedures, not only periodical plebiscitary assent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, such logical relativizations do not really solve the dilemma - not least because party militants active in extra-parliamentary party organs are not likely to be passive spectators when they see an electoral platform for which they may have fought hard, being compromised. The dilemma is perhaps most easily
illustrated by juxtaposing a party government and a party democracy model (see Table I).

In the first model, the emphasis is on the need to preserve freedom for elected representatives to act in the parliamentary arena. In the second model, the focus is on the contrary on the need for the leaders to remain accountable to those who nominated them. Neither model is by itself ‘right’; jointly they illustrate the conflicting cues to which political leaders are inevitably exposed. Any realistic analysis of political mobilization should therefore take the possibility of conflict between leader appeals to voters and to party activists into account

2. Leaders, militants, members and voters

Parties differ greatly, not only in the number of their members, but also in the degree of membership activity and mobilization. Yet even in parties with a large and relatively active membership, true militants form at most a relatively small minority. May’s ‘law’ of curvilinearity,¹⁸ which concludes that activists tend towards relatively extreme ideological positions, compared to both leaders and ordinary party members and voters, has intuitive appeal and some evidence going for it. Yet much more comparative research in this area is necessary before unambiguous conclusions may be drawn. Assuming the ‘law’ holds, how can we explain the May phenomenon? Is it because militants are by definition exclusively oriented towards party, while both leaders and ordinary members or voters are subject to greater cross-pressures? Should explanations be sought in the particular milieus and occupations from which activists tend to be recruited, i.e. those who have a relatively great control over their working hours, so that they enjoy differential advantage in spending time on political action, e.g., teachers, students, employees in social organizations? Or should one rather think in terms of different positions and responsibilities, allowing for the fact that the ideologues of today are often aspirants for real power who once they attain their goal are likely to develop very different political orientations (in a process reminiscent of the Paretian theory about a natural circulation of elites, with lions turning into foxes)?

Whatever the possible explanation, we again lack reliable evidence on whether the role of party activists within parties has of late increased, or not. It is tempting to reason in terms of a widespread effect of the 1960s, when a new generation (or rather a minority within it) was seized by ideological hopes and beliefs, and a willingness to resort to new types of political action, multiplied in its effect by (passing) media attention and (temporary) successes. It is also possible to argue in terms of new cleavages becoming salient in political perceptions, e.g., international preoccupations veering from Cold War to North-South conflicts; the susceptibility of new affluent groups for post-materialist values; new concerns about the environment; renewed debates about the nature of capitalism; or conflicts about armaments and peace policies. It is perfectly possible to argue that on the one hand the real participation of rank-and-file members has declined in numbers and volume, and yet to insist that militants within parties have exerted an increasing pressure. But
again, we have no real data, which must clearly differentiate between different parties and countries to be at all realistic.
For a proper view on the role of party militants, we should, moreover, have much more information on internal party decision-making. We have in fact remarkable little insight on a comparative basis on crucial questions such as: who appoints party leaders? How often do party congresses meet? What regulations exist on the degree of freedom for elected representatives? Who draws up, and decides on, party manifestoes? How binding are such manifestoes for candidates offering themselves for election? Who nominates parliamentary candidates? What conditions exist for renomination? Do procedures exist for recall? How binding are decisions of party congresses? Which groups in the party decide on the formation or ending of political coalitions? Obviously statutory provisions can tell us something about such matters, but if anywhere the gap between actual behavior and institutional prescription in the field of actual party politics is large indeed.

3. Party bureaucratization or a new amateur politics?

The (as of yet scanty) literature on party organization and participation suggests two possible trends: on the one hand a growing professionalization and bureaucratization of party organizations, and an increased role for party-controlled personnel in government employ; and on the other hand a new tendency towards selective amateur politics.

The trend towards increased professionalization could be illustrated by the following developments:

(a) elected representatives are becoming engaged full-time; the burden of parliamentary work has become such as to make a genuine combination with other employment increasingly difficult, if not impossible; a similar tendency is now also at work at sub-national levels;

(b) members of representative bodies tend to receive increased staff support, whether from parliamentary services or from increased personal staffs;

(c) the number of party-controlled executive positions tends to increase, as more ‘political advisers’ are appointed, ‘ministerial cabinets’ grow in numbers, advisory agencies expand greatly, and more generally there is increasing scope for patronage appointments;

(d) in many countries there is increasing State financing of parties (whether through general grants or specific subsidies, e.g., for campaigning costs, research offices, cadre training, youth work, etc.). To the extent that parties become less dependent on membership income, this factor may cause party elites to be less interested and concerned with membership activities and sensitivities;

(e) there is an increased reliance on experts in such matters as research, relation to the media, professional campaigning, etc.

These five points are merely suggestive of possible trends. As yet we cannot substantiate two other trends suggested by Kirchheimer: the increased role of interest group representatives in parliamentary representation; and the considerably increased entry of former civil servants into politics. To the extent that parliaments
are becoming assemblies of organization men, their representative role may well become more selective, if not biased. Should one argue that politics, even in its party-controlled activities, tends to provide greater scope for political careers, in that there are more positions which demand full-time engagement, and which are increasingly attractive in terms of future prospects, providing a relatively open and fast channel for social climbers? If so, what do such developments imply for political representation and continuity?

As against such presumed trends towards increased professionalization, there is also an alleged increase in amateur politics. Notably the great expansion of the tertiary and quaternary sectors has resulted in increased numbers of persons who have relatively free control of their own working-time. Leisure time has increased for the population generally. But whereas a great majority chooses other ways to spend it than on politics, certain categories are disproportionately represented in party activities: e.g. students, journalists, university staffs and others engaged in teaching, social workers, staff personnel of interest groups, civil servants, to some degree women and retired persons. Some of these categories relate to the political process in a rather special manner (and often an ideological one). Insofar as within-party activities become increasingly time-consuming, the role of those who indeed can match this development with an investment of their own time may become even more selective. Could one, then, argue that internal party politics is increasingly being monopolized by a dialogue between the politically-employed and those whose employment or freedom from employment permit an equal amount of political effort - with the remainder of party members being reduced to spectator roles?

A true validation of such speculations is only possible through a close analysis of actual decision-making in parties. But some information can be had from other sources: e.g. a census of positions, appointments to which are clearly controlled by party; a careful inventory of the cursus honorum of party elites; analysis of changes in the social background of members of parliament and other representative bodies over time, etc.

4. Principles, platforms and plebiscitary stratagems

Parties derive their legitimation in democratic politics from their unique role of seeking voter approval for political programs offered in elections. In the history of many parties, programs of principles have been major documents in political thought and development. In as far as there is a new upsurge of ideological politics, such programs might regain high symbolic importance. The same is true for more specific election programs. Manifestoes seem to show a tendency to increase in length over time, and to cover increasingly varied subjects. This is, on the one hand, a natural corollary of the widening of State intervention which potentially politicizes an ever-widening variety of social actions. But it also mirrors a desire on the part of party to provide a place for sectional groups in its midst, as well as outside it (whether of organized interest groups, ad hoc action groups, or even simple categorical ‘groups’ thought to need attention or wooing).

On the other hand, a variety of forces presses in the opposite direction. Thus,
Budge and Farlie have argued that parties tend to ‘compete’ not on the same issues, but on only those issues which they regard as comparatively favorable to themselves. Modern electioneering emphasizes a clear selectivity of issues, as well as a strong personalization of a few, if not one, party leader(s). Also, modern politics is often also characterized by a shortening of horizons: attention goes out less to long-term policies and general principles, than to winning the next election, manning particular political offices, settling pressing political issues. If this diagnosis is true, it implies that there is an inherent conflict between the perspectives of ad hoc electioneers and office holders and party activists who have pressed for long statements of principles and platforms exactly as a ‘guarantee’ for desired action. It also illustrates again the dubious value of the concept of a definite ‘mandate’, of which party activists tend to regard themselves as the chosen guardians, but which to leaders may be no more than tactical ploys or promises.

IV. Party systems and citizens in abstracto

So far, our review has been carried on, as if one political party, complete with its voters, members, militants, and leaders in different political roles, existed in isolation only. We must now shift our attention to the level of the party system, to do justice to the fact that in the actual world of politics voters and party leaders are faced with the simultaneous existence of more than one party actor. We shall divide our quick survey again into four points: the impact of the electoral system on the manner in which parties and voters interact; the extent to which citizens can use their vote to affect the political system in a decisive manner; the comparative ‘hold’ of parties and the party system on the voters; and the possible dynamics of the party system over time.

1. The debate on the electoral system: constraint or not?

Since many decades two rival views have dominated the debate on the impact of electoral systems. Put succinctly: in one view, advocated above all by Hermens and Duverger, electoral systems create parties. In his famous indictment Hermens attributed to PR ideologization of politics, fragmentation of political will, ineffective government, and a likely plebiscitary breakthrough of extremist movements. In contrast, a single-member plurality system forced a two-party system, with moderate parties contesting the middle ground between them. Duverger further elaborated on this view, by adding a third option in run-off systems also causing gravitation towards the centre, but retaining a multi-party system. Against such views of the decisive impact of electoral systems, Rokkan suggested that as a matter of actual record it was much more a question of party systems creating electoral systems, as parties which had crystallized around the time of the advent of universal suffrage, chose electoral systems which at a minimum were likely to consolidate their position.
At least two footnotes should be placed in connection with this debate. Sartori has rightly made a distinction between ‘strong’ and ‘feeble’ electoral systems, the first forcing a certain organization of electoral forces, and the other mainly registering passively whatever alignments and realignments (possibly including...
split-offs) occur in any particular party system. In the second place, there is little doubt that electoral reforms introduced after a clear discontinuity in political regimes did have a causal effect on the later development of party systems, as was amply illustrated in post-war Germany where the 5% rule greatly assisted the growth of what Wildenmann and others have called a two-and-a-half party system. Similarly, institutional reforms including the electoral system, but also since 1962 the institution of a directly-elected president under a run-off second ballot system was to have a large-scale effect on the eventual restoration and simplification of the French party system in the French Fifth Republic.

In fact, the debate on the role of electoral systems has been renewed in the 1960s and 1970s. On the one hand, the increased polarization in two-party Britain caused many British political scientists to challenge the Hermens-Duverger-Downs assumptions about a natural tendency of two-party systems towards centrist government and moderation. On the other hand, the record of coalition government was clearly upgraded, not least by Arend Lijphart's vivid challenge of the Almond concept of a 'continental-European system' which did not really fit the case of what Lijphart himself was to call consociational democracy systems, and also by a more general awareness through studies of European cabinets that single-party government tended to be a relatively rare phenomenon in European parliamentary systems.

Such developments have caused a remarkable mirror-game among reformist writers. Those familiar with a two-party system began to reject what S.E. Finer has called 'the adversary model of politics' - witness the eager rush among present-day British political scientists, otherwise of very different persuasion, to reverse the traditional statement that 'England does not love coalitions'. On the other hand, the bi-polar model retains its attraction for reformists in multi-party systems. In addition to drawing on Downs' indictment of the basically irrational features of multi-party systems, the dated belief in the merit of moderate swings of the pendulum, and the new impact of a post-Gaullist France such reformers also find solace in a simplistic reading of Sartori's typologizing of polarized pluralism.

Surely, the confusion and general self-righteousness of such debates make it a matter of urgent priority for political scientists and political leaders alike to spell out their hidden norms. Or should we really accept that one should simultaneously embrace such at first sight conflicting criteria as: the wish to have both alternation in government and continuity in policy; the view that political action should bring out differences and bridge cleavages; the desire to honor electoral mandates and the recognition that government presupposes the possibility to adjust declared intentions in the light of changing circumstances; the wish to retain 'liberal' elite values and also to honor the sovereign will of the mass electorate?

Turning towards a more mundane level, we now have a fair number of studies which give us rather complete information on the manner in which votes are translated into seats (e.g., Wildenmann/Kaltefleiter, Douglas Rae) under different institutional arrangements, including the major variable of size of district. Less satisfactory, however, is our knowledge on how different systems really affect parties and voters in the choices they must make. Speculation and simulation are all
we can go on. But there, again, we are likely to run across Rokkan's argument that parties and voters do not act in a pristine world, unaffected by historical developments, but are in fact very much determined by the manner in which party systems grew out of particular cleavages, salient at a particular historical period.

2. The effect of voter choice: how decisive?

European parliamentary systems do not offer the same degree of voter choice, for reasons both institutional and relating to the format of party systems.

Practically in all countries, voters choose members to the Lower House, and to various regional and local representative bodies. But even on this score countries differ in the frequency of elections, as they do also in the degree to which the voter can influence the actual composition of the Second Chamber. The importance of the Second Chamber itself in different systems shows great variation, while such a body is absent in some countries. More important is the issue whether voters have a direct say in the election of the head of State or the premier - a variable which in very different ways has proved to be of substantial importance in Weimar Germany, Finland, or post-1962 France. Yet another difference lies in the extent to which systems have allowed referenda (binding or consultative). The greater the degree direct voting is allowed, the greater the potential challenge for parties. Can and should they seek to enter all contests on whatever level? Are referenda a way to short-cut parties (in a manner which may not be unwelcome to them whenever they are faced with intractable and divisive issues)? And to what degree do forms of a direct election of supreme executives strengthen a plebiscitary element in voter choice, so that parties may be becoming more dependent on leaders than leaders on parties?

At the level of the party system, the major variable is, of course, the degree to which voters are likely to bring about single-party majority governments, or at a more modest level, are able to force a substantial change in the composition of governments. We do have a somewhat sophisticated terminology to characterize the manner in which governments can change under the impact of elections, ranging from alternation, two-bloc parliamentarism, semi- and peripheral turnover, to Proporz-arrangements and grand coalitions.29 We also have full inventories of the parliamentary base and party composition of cabinets over a long time span, as well as sophisticated theories about coalition-formation.30 But what we do not have is clear and reliable information on a comparative basis on what different institutional and party arrangements imply for voter perceptions, attitudes and behavior, let alone the general legitimacy of different democratic political systems. In that sense, the generally wide gap existing between scholars interested in institutions and overall political configurations of political systems on the one hand, and specialists on voting behavior on the other, is regrettable and should be bridged.

One study we do have, which throws some light on the relation between voters and governments, is the study of Rose and Mackie prepared within the Recent changes project on whether incumbency in government pays or not.31 ‘Common sense’ confidently suggests two opposite conclusions. On the one hand, it is argued, that each government is bound to take unpopular decisions, and eventually
to alienate some of its supporters; one would therefore expect governing parties not to do well in elections. On the other hand, there is the assumption that governments work in the glare of publicity, that they can manipulate the economy once election time approaches, that they can choose a moment for elections which to them seems favorable (at least in those systems which permit such tactical dissolutions); from such propositions one would expect government parties to do well. In fact, Rose and Mackie show that the available evidence does not permit either conclusion - the electoral record of governments being too checkered. One overriding difficulty is, of course, that in many cases coalition governments fall apart at election time, with each participating party going its own way. The Rose-Mackie data suggest that coalition parties suffer rather different electoral fortunes, some winning and some losing. At a minimum, this greatly complicates a systematic analysis, because one should then be able to explain why voters for parties in one common coalition do react so differently.

3. The ‘hold’ of party systems

The general debate on the future of party government is greatly affected by the assumption that there are clear signs of a weakening of the hold of parties on the loyalties, sympathies, or even simple interest of ordinary voters. Reliable statements on actual trends can only be made by studies of developments over time in single countries, and comparative studies between them. Important indicators would be:

A. Aggregate data

1. Data on tum-out (as assembled by Dittrich and Johansen). A first inspection of overtime graphs hardly confirms a clear relation between the size of turnout and a presumed well- or malfunctioning of particular systems (let alone, that there are rival propositions which would see in low turnout and which would see in high turnout a reason for concern).

2. Data on aggregate electoral volatility (as collected by Mogens N. Pedersen). Here again, trends are far from clear, because widely differing between countries over time. At the same time, however, different studies by Pedersen, Maguire, Borre, Mayer and others do suggest an increased aggregate mobility in the 1970s in most European countries.

3. Data on traditional system parties versus new parties. Such data could provide a relatively easy indicator, at least for systems which traditionally had clearly-marked system parties. But to my knowledge no conclusive data have yet come out on a comparative basis.

4. Data on political fragmentation. The Rae-index has been widely used, and also severely criticized (e.g., Pedersen, Sartori). Different authors have collected over-time data on a comparative basis; their studies again show substantial differences between countries, and not one linear, but a fluctuating trend for European countries as a whole (see Wolinetz and Ersson-Lane).
5. Membership trends. An overtime study by Stefano Bartolini is now available for all Socialist parties. Comparable analyses for other parties meet with considerable difficulty, not least because of unclear membership criteria and the greater difficulty of comparing non-Socialist parties across countries. Apparently, there is no such thing as a universal and massive decline of party memberships (although there have been drastic changes for some countries, and/or some parties).

B. Survey data
Both the wide spread of electoral surveys (often modeled in one form or another on the Michigan model), and extensive comparative projects like the Verba et al. and the Eight-Nation studies, allow close scrutiny on a comparative basis on a variety of data relevant for the study of mobilization. One should probe available data for suitable measures, e.g. on individual volatility, party identification, political competence, political cynicism, and allegiance and legitimacy generally. But at least one major problem is that we are unlikely to find longitudinal data of sufficient sophistication to allow unambiguous diagnoses of systematic import.

4. The possible dynamics of party systems
There have been only few attempts to chart possible regularities in the dynamics of party systems. We have the long-standing assumption about a natural swing of the pendulum for two-party systems (and possibly also for what Sartori calls moderate pluralist systems). Duverger once constructed, on the basis of his interpretation of French experience, a ‘law’ about a natural slide of parties towards the right, with new parties springing up on the left to fill the vacuum left by such movement. By far the most elaborate propositions have been worked out by Sartori, however. Even then we must realize that Sartori spoke only of mechanical dispositions, rather than actual ‘laws’. A major point at issue is the degree to which (polarized) party systems are subject to centrifugation or not. More generally, there is a rarely made explicit view about the importance of a ‘centre’ in party systems, and the extent to which the existence of one or more centre parties is likely to make for centripetal or centrifugal drives. Yet, is there not a curious discrepancy between the large number of elections which provide a considerable body of data for analysis, the flourishing of a large body of abstract coalition theories, and the only very limited literature on the actual dynamics of European party systems, informed by both substantive knowledge of the party configurations of countries concerned and the high analytical skills of an author like Sartori, or Downs? More systematic work along their line, in the light of actual over-time developments of European party systems, should have a high priority in future research.
V. Parties, citizens and other intermediate agents

Whereas in Sections Three and Four we dealt with the relation between party, c.q. the party system, on the one hand and citizens on the other, as if these relations existed in vacuo, we must now turn to a consideration of both parties and citizens in relation to other intermediate agencies. We speak of ‘intermediate’, because here
too, we conceive of mobilization processes as providing vertical links between the ultimate, legitimate decision-makers at the top, and the ordinary citizen at the bottom. A proper analysis will take these two different perspectives: from the top downwards (Section Five), from the bottom upwards (Section Six), duly into account. We shall assume as one major hypothesis that in all countries there is a general process of increasing social differentiation, leading to a greater assortment of linkages as well as to a multiplication of sites of decision-making.

1. Parties and group mobilization

In an ideal-type party of social integration as described by Sigmund Neumann, parties direct themselves to specific social groups, which they seek to mobilize and incorporate in the life of the party. The characteristic form of organization is the ancillary association, which under party auspices seeks to meet the interests of specific categories of citizens: women, youth, trade unionists, those in search of specific forms of recreation, like sports, singing or other music, etc. Parties also try to strengthen their hold on Communications media, by not only providing specialized party information bulletins, but by seeking to control general newspapers and also, if at all possible, radio and television. In the same way, parties have engaged in insurance activities, in elaborate education programs, and more generally as brokers in obtaining specific government services. As we said earlier, there are many indications that such closed worlds are breaking down, as specific party-bound organisations and media could in the long run not compete with more specialized actors in an increasingly mobile and open society. But here again, one must sound a word of warning before too general a conclusion is drawn. For countries and parties again differ greatly, with forms of party ‘colonization’ being much stronger and persistent in some countries (Italy, Austria, Ireland, and Finland) than in others.

Assuming such closed networks of party-controlled organizations are weakening, or even disappearing, what does this mean? Does it imply an over-all weakening of parties, as they become less socially ‘rooted’ and have fewer dependable resources for mobilization? Or should one argue that it also frees parties from historically-transient ‘ghetto positions’, which could threaten their very existence in a period of new issues and concerns?

2. Parties and formal interest groups

The relation of parties to major interest groups represents one aspect of the general problem just mentioned. In a Neumann-type party of social integration, but paradoxically also in the Kirchheimer-type of ‘catch-all’ party, stress is laid on the reciprocal advantages of network relations between parties and major interest groups. Again, we have little systematic, longitudinal information on this point - let alone that we are in a clear position to state who is ‘colonizing’ whom, and what possible changes may have taken place in such forms of interaction. Certain over time data can be derived from systematic studies of changes in the composition of parliamentary
personnel; at one time-point, the middle-level élites project offers cross-country and cross-party information. Yet, at first sight, one might venture the
hypothesis that many important interest groups are finding party a less important actor with whom and through whom to work than are ministers of whatever persuasion, as well as permanent bureaucrats.

3. Parties and ‘action groups’

Self-styled advocates of the ‘new politics’ of action groups have adduced two patently false arguments to account for the salience of new political groups in the 1960s and 1970s. One false argument is that they are a new phenomenon, as if the history of social mobilization is not replete with examples of action groups in addition to parties (which in certain cases even originated in the forms of looser voluntary societies - note as one example the emphasis on the ‘counter-cultural’ or ‘peripheral’ protest movements in the mobilization of the Old Left in Scandinavia). A second false argument is the presumed closed, oligarchic nature of many existing political parties, as if their history does not reveal an exceedingly low threshold for the successful entry of conscious minority groups. A number of recent studies have pointed out, that many activists in action groups are also disproportionately active within parties, often to the regret of existing power holders and of believers in the merit of institutionalized politics generally. Whereas some party politicians have sought to embrace action groups warmly (‘to remain in touch with the young’, ‘to take note of the issues which clearly mobilize new groups’, or even simply ‘to be with it’), there is little evidence that such tactics have durably strengthened parties organizationally or electorally. For parties face at a minimum two dilemmas: they must aggregate as well as articulate, and given the often extreme positions of forces demanding to be ‘articulated’, the task of aggregation is neither easy, nor lasting, nor always electorally rewarding; and given the low cost-benefit ratios for minority groups engaged in flamboyant actions, for as long as they obtain privileged access to the political agenda, they are not likely to forfeit such benefits for the sake of party loyalties or convenience. Clearly, the relations between parties and (many) ad hoc action groups is therefore likely to be a thorny one, as compared towards links with more established and stable interest groups, let alone the ancillary organizations under party control discussed before.

4. Parties and mass media

The subject of this paragraph is one of the most complicated ones, not least because the heading covers a variety of possible relationships. On the most general level, there is the social impact of changes in the modern communications system, including not only the ever-increasing variety of printed publications, but above all radio and television. On a somewhat lower level of abstraction, there is the issue what the effects of modern media developments are on the life of parties, both in their external presentation and their internal functioning. And finally, there is the more mundane matter of the extent of actual party control over the various media and their content.
On the basis of impressionistic evidence, parties would seem to have been unable to retain the control they once may have had over parts of the daily press: postwar history is replete with financial failures of one-time strong Socialist and other
Weltanschauung-newspapers. Control over radio and television offers a much more varied picture, with situations differing greatly between countries. But even here, the competition from alternative broadcasts seems to have seriously weakened the force of such controls as parties may have maintained or established. As compared to earlier times, few must be the groups which are still exposed mainly to a closed communications network (if ever they were).

As for the second problem, of the impact of the media on the external and internal relations of parties, again speculation must take over where concrete, detailed studies fail. One could submit the following three conjectures: First, the role of the modern media has strengthened the tendency to personalize top leaders, to give greater scope to the manipulation of issues in a selective manner, and to engage above all in short-term tactical politics. Second, the natural tendency to regard conflict rather than consensus as news is likely to be to some degree a self-fulfilling prophesy, as ardent minorities seek media attention for particularistic goals. Third, the general distraction which modern mass media provide, may unfavorably affect participation by rank-and-file members, thus eroding many of the characteristics which a parti de masse was traditionally (and probably ideally) thought to represent. To the extent this is true; this factor strengthens the role of select groups of activists in the manner analyzed earlier in this paper. (For a sophisticated attempt to relate media developments as one major variable in changes occurring in party systems to some other crucial ones, in the light of concerns about political accountability, see Sjøblom).

5. Parties and bureaucracies

In view of the joint weight of parties and bureaucracies on actual decision-making, this relationship is probably the most crucial one. From the point of view of party leaders, the functioning of bureaucracies poses at least three challenges: (a) parties must be able to ensure effective political control and democratic accountability; (b) control over the bureaucracy can be a valuable resource, for the elaboration of specific services; (c) the bureaucracy, like other agents mentioned earlier, provides an alternative linkage mechanism between government at the top and citizens at the bottom. Seen from the point of individual citizens, the bureaucracy is one major part of government, which to them is not always easily distinguished from parties in control. Empirical studies (in the Verba-Nie tradition) have emphasized direct contacting of officials as one major form of participation in political systems. The degree of satisfaction with bureaucratic responses can therefore be a major factor in the creation and maintenance of legitimacy, from which paradoxically also individual parties, the party system and the constitutional order generally can profit.

Yet, the very term bureaucracy covers in fact an ever widening number of offices, authorities and apparatuses, which are split more and more along functional as well as regional lines. Both absolutely, and relatively in relation to all other actors, the weight of different bureaucracies in relation to other political actors must have increased most in the post-war world.

In the actual relation between parties and bureaucracies, one major variable, of
continuing importance, consists of past State-building and nation-building processes. There is a world of difference between countries in which these processes developed largely without the prior or simultaneous establishment of powerful bureaucratic structures, and those in which such structures did play an indispensable, or at least relatively powerful, role. In countries with a consociational tradition, or one in which centralization was as much the result of judicial, aristocratic and representative processes (as in England), bureaucracies developed late and generally fell in easily with the assumptions of accountability to legitimate political authorities. A very different situation prevailed in countries like France, or Prussia, or in yet another manner Italy, where the bureaucracy remained in many ways a corpus alienum super-imposed on a highly localized society. To the extent, that bureaucracies live out of pre- or non-democratic traditions, the problem of partisan control and political accountability is a much greater one than elsewhere.

At the same time, the processes of wide-spread diversification cannot but make havoc with earlier assumptions about one homogeneous bureaucracy, as presupposed in such different viewpoints as the Weber ideal- type, the British Civil Service, or the French Haute Administration. A true analysis of actual relations between parties and bureaucratic agencies must go beyond a general statement about relations existing at the top echelons of government, to lower levels both along regional and functional lines. In either case very different relations may prevail, with also rather different party actors being concerned. (Is not Italy a major illustration of this case, as the system does not depend, as so often argued, on the control over the central government by the DC-cum-minor-partners alone, but also on at least four subordinate levels of government, not to speak of the remaining sottogoverno, in which often other parties have a very real share?)

One might hypothesize that in toto the role of bureaucratic agencies and individual bureaucrats has substantially grown as compared with those in the partisan-electoral channel. One might also point to the very substantial role that bureaucrats rather than politicians play in what are often too easily and generically called corporate channels. One could then suggest that parties have to some extent tried to compensate by a variety of devices to strengthen control over and above their formal powers in government and parliament: e.g., by the multiplication of ministerial personnel; by the addition of political advisers, by a strengthening of parliamentary staffs, by the formation in some countries of ever more numerous ministerial cabinets, by conscious political appointments in established bureaucratic positions, by setting up new bodies outside normal hierarchical official channels, etc. To the extent that such posited developments do indeed occur, it is a moot point whether they indeed strengthen party as an institution or not. Of old patronage has served to cement certain loyalties. But at the same time, diversification at the political level mirrors that on the bureaucratic level. Party may be a necessary channel for coveted appointments. But once arrived, political appointees need not necessarily care much about party life and tasks.

Hans Daalder, State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics
VI. Citizens, parties and alternative agencies of mobilization

1. Citizens, active or not?

So far we have focused on the interaction between political actors, who are by definition active in some form or other: top elites, party militants, interest groups, action groups, the media, and bureaucrats. When we now direct our attention to the citizens, activity cannot be taken for granted, as indeed the very concept of political mobilization suggests. In fact, there is the very fundamental issue whether citizens should always be active. On the one hand, there is the widespread assumption that citizen activity is by nature a ‘good’. Is the history of democratic development not written in terms of the activation of ever new strata in political decision-making? Do we not, ever since Rousseau, have the whole weight of the participatory democracy literature resting on us? Is not equality of participation a must, for the citizen and the system both - because the equalities of input, the fairness of the political agenda, and of the ‘authoritative allocation of values’ depend on citizen activity? Yet, it is as well to remember that there is also a widespread counter-literature: fears from Mill to Kornhauser about a ‘mass society’; the proposition ever since the study on the authoritarian personality that lower class entry might hazard liberal elite values (e.g. Berelson, Lipset); the traumatic experiences of enforced political mobilization by totalitarian regimes, etc.

At a minimum therefore there is a fundamental problem of the amount or degree of political mobilization which a political system can sustain, the nature of demands, the methods used - problems rightly posed by different models of politics, as one can note on the stress on gate-keeping and support in systems theory, on the danger of overload in communications approaches, on the need for adequate institutionalization if a political system is not to fall into political decay (Huntington), etc.

This implies no less than that our subject raises issues which at the more fundamental level of analysis bring the entire armory of empirical democratic theory into play: e.g., discussions of pluralism, in developmental and contemporary perspectives, the Eckstein theory on congruency of authority patterns, the entire literature on political legitimacy. And the same holds true, on only a slightly less general level, for the literature on political socialization, participation, the voting literature, empirical studies of political legitimacy, and so forth and so on.

2. The potential for action

The literature on historical mobilization in Western democracies provides some data and more general speculations on the circumstances under which citizens act - or perhaps on a more general level on how people change from ‘parochials’ and ‘subjects’ to ‘citizens’, in the Almond-Verba sense. Handbooks with time-series data provide a number of relevant social indicators. For our contemporary understanding the most important data are undoubtedly in the Eight-Nation studies, which have made the problem of dispositions to act, and to act in different manner, the core of their theoretical and empirical concerns.
3. The modes of action

There is by now a large-scale debate on the modes of political participation. The Verba et al. analysis with its emphasis on at least four independent dimensions of participation: voting, party and campaigning activities, communal action, and direct contacting - which are theoretically and empirically distinct - are particularly relevant. While confirming a strong bias in participation by the higher-educated, higher social status and higher income groups, they also introduce many nuances, depending on the type of issue or kind of political action required. Such findings must be weighed in the light of the findings of the Eight-nation study, and possibly different research results on the basis of additional survey research questions, notably on the independence of a separate protest dimension in addition to the four singled out by Verba et al. Also of great importance is the general conclusion by Verba et al. that, well-institutionalized forms of social organization (as provided by strong parties, interest groups and bureaucratic agencies) can do much to redress the inequalities of participation as far as actual policy outputs are concerned.²⁹

4. The channels used

Survey evidence reveals again and again that voting and direct contacting of administrative agencies are the most widespread kinds of citizen actions. On the other hand, real participation in parties is low, by whatever measure taken - even though party membership figures in relation to party voting reveal very substantial different situations, according to country or party. Measures of constancy of voting for the same party, and of party identification, can tell us something further on the degree to which parties are salient for individual citizens; to the degree that reliable longitudinal data are available we can form some impression on the degree of hold of parties on citizens. Groups are more immediately relevant to citizens than are parties. All citizens experience the influence of various primary groups, which the literature on political socialization and voting has singled out as being of the utmost important. Many citizens are members of associations, some of which are deliberately, some only incidentally politically active. The Verba et al. studies have attempted to take stock of the extent leaders and citizens perceive different groups as being actually politically relevant. Even if citizens do not, the presence of such groups, as well as their presence in them, has a substantial importance for policy-making and political attitudes. We have discussed earlier the interaction between parties and action groups, and challenged the stereotyped view that citizens must turn towards the latter, because parties are insufficiently open and responsive. Verba et al. did, of course, find communal action to be a relatively independent dimension from party activities. Yet one should remember that what we conceive above all as action groups represent only a small degree of the wide range of spontaneous citizen activities studied by Verba and his collaborators. Especially, when our focus is on the most visible, most directly ‘political’ type of action groups, we should emphasize that participation in them is highly skewed towards particular, higher-educated groups.
in society, who are also disproportionately active in parties. We have also data on some countries on the degree of legitimacy accorded to action groups, and to different modes of protest behavior. Such data will need close study, if we are to have a clear view of the relative legitimacy accorded to different kinds of institutionalized actors (including party) as against less-structured ones. Just as we should not a priori regard parties and action groups as alternative modes of political action, so we should also not confuse all types of ad hoc actions with protest behavior.

5. Mobilization and policies

Viewed from the perspective of the citizen some substantial problems arise on the role of parties in policy-making. Although individual citizens may mobilize on behalf of particular policies, much the larger part of policies devised or implemented are not the result of any obvious behavior on their part. In voting, citizens may have a correct or very incorrect view on actual responsibilities for policies they might wish to reward or penalize. Citizens may or may not have particular views about how effective alternative agencies of mobilization for pressure on policymakers may be. The current debate on whether voters vote in the light of their own economic prospects, or their view on how those in power handle economic policy, or neither, should be a reminder that the feedback of policies on citizen attitudes and behavior may be very different from what policymakers expect. Again, there is some evidence from the Eurobarometer studies that many citizens are becoming more satisfied with their own situation, as the outlook for the future darkens. Clearly, levels of expectation exert a powerful independent role on the extent to which people are likely to hold politicians really accountable for policies, or their absence. What these short remarks simply reaffirm, is the need to relate findings from survey research on citizen perspectives and attitudes to the policy outputs and the general functioning of political systems, over time and across countries.

VII. Parties and other linkage actors: displacement or changing roles?

1. The dangers of evolutionary reasoning

In the very concept of The future of party government there is more than a hint that parties may be on their way out, along a foredoomed trajectory. In that respect, it is as well to remember at least the following points made in earlier sections:

(a) It is too readily assumed, without much evidence, that there was a golden age of party which is now being moaned. Should one not, at a minimum, take into account that different countries had very different degrees of party government in the past?

(b) Similarly, there is substantial evidence that parties in different countries have, if anything, been strengthened in the last quarter of a century or so. Both in
France and in Germany, parties have made an impressive comeback, and parties clearly remain exceedingly important actors in many other countries.
(c) There is considerable danger in reasoning in zero-sum terms. Even when other intermediate actors increase in importance, it does not necessarily follow that such developments go to the detriment of party, let alone that power is actually taken away from them. In as far as the overall role of government increases, one should allow for the possibility that all actors, including parties, play an increasingly important role.

(d) It may well be that the role of parties increases in some areas, while it decreases in others. One cannot really speak of the power of parties, without specifying power in relation to what or whom.

2. Some tentative generalizations

With that very substantial proviso, one might suggest that the following developments affect, at a minimum, the role of parties:

(a) there is a clear increase in the number of groups - both institutionalized and non-institutionalized ones. Most of these operate independently in the political arena, in that they attempt to influence other political actors directly - as much as they may, or may not, seek to influence party;

(b) the number of arenas for political decision-making has increased, notably in connection with what are called ‘sectoral’ politics;

(c) the media play probably an increased role in articulating political demands, as well as in the manner in which demands are being articulated. Parties as much as other political actors seek to adjust to this fact. Yet, the immediacy of newspaper attention gives relatively small groups new opportunities for direct approaches to power holders, without the intermediate channel of party;

(d) there is an increased element of plebiscitary politics - both in the exposure of particular leaders, as in recourse to referenda and opinion polls. Leaders and voters are therefore, to some degree at least, more directly accessible to one another, without regular control from procedural party politics;

(e) the complexities of modern government increase the need to call on experts - a development which parties cannot balance fully by building up party research bureaus, increasing the number of parliamentary staffs at the disposal of party, or attempts to mobilize friendly experts;

(f) the increased mass of routinized decision-making, whether in bureaucratic agencies, or in relatively closed circuits of a semi-corporatist nature, inevitably escapes party control; and its aggregate effect limits the freedom of parties to set priorities, as old commitments and sectoral politics dominate over new demands;

(g) there is also a tendency for other actors to play an increasing role in political decision-making; one should note the role of the judiciary and central banks;

(h) international decision-making exerts an increasing influence, which even a more intense movement towards the building-up of party cooperation
across frontiers than exists at present, cannot hope to control;

(i) given the possible weakening of party as the major agency in articulation and actual policy decisions, their main importance could well be in leadership selection and the long-term formulation of policy perspectives. These tasks put heavy demands on internal party mechanisms, which do not seem to be very well suited to them for the present. However, they are at least clearly within the uncontested control of parties themselves.

Eindnoten:

14. These terms are taken, of course, from J.C. Wahlke et al., *The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior* (New York: Wiley, 1962).
23. For an excellent discussion of institutional factors such as the impact of electoral systems, direct election of the chief executive and federalism, see Robert A. Dahl, ‘Some Explanations’, in Robert A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 348-386.
33. Mogens Pedersen, ‘Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility’, *op. cit*.
35. Though it should be noted that work in this area will be carried out in the block-volatility analysis designed for the Party Government project by Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair. For a preliminary outline of their approach, see their ‘Report on a New Framework for the Analysis of Changes in Western European Party Systems’, paper presented to the Workshop on the Future of Party Government, ECPR Joint Sessions, University of Aarhus, 1982.


42. Hans Daalder, ‘In Search of the Center’, *op. cit*.


49. Verba, Nie and Kim, *op. cit*.

Introduction

This article has its origin in a curious anomaly. Writings about European party systems abound with references to the Left. They also give considerable attention to a less easily defined Right. Yet, there is practically no systematic treatment of the center or of center parties. Admittedly, the term center is widely, if loosely, used in both journalistic comment and in academic descriptions of the functioning of party systems in individual countries. Nevertheless, European party systems are rarely viewed from a center perspective. On the contrary, the idea of a center tends to find little favor with scholars. More than a quarter of a century ago, Duverger argued in a famous paragraph of his book, Political Parties:

‘The center does not exist in politics; there may well be a Center party but there is no center tendency, no center doctrine. The term “center” is applied to the geometrical spot at which the moderates of opposed tendencies meet: moderates of the Right and moderates of the Left. Every Center is divided against itself and remains separated into two halves, Left-Center and Right-Center. For the Center is nothing more than the artificial grouping of the right wing of the Left and the left wing of the Right. The fate of the Center is to be torn asunder, buffeted and annihilated: torn asunder when one of its halves votes Right and the other Left, buffeted when it votes as a group first Right then Left, annihilated when it abstains from voting. The dream of the Center is to achieve a synthesis of contradictory aspirations; but synthesis is a power only of the mind. Action involves choice and politics involve action. [...] There are no true Centers, only superimposed dualisms.’

Giovanni Sartori has written of center parties in hardly more positive terms. He greatly values what he terms centripetal drives in party systems - i.e., a competition of parties for votes at the center. But for precisely that reason he takes a negative stance toward the ‘physical occupation of the center’ by one or more center parties, which he singles out as one of the distinctive features of systems of ‘polarized pluralism’. For this implies that ‘the central area of the political system is out of competition [...] In other terms, the very existence of a center party (or par-
ties) discourages centrality, i.e., the centripetal drives of the political system. And the centripetal drives are precisely the moderating drives. This is why this type is center-fleeing, or centrifugal, and thereby conducive to immoderate or extremist politics.\textsuperscript{12}

Such critical attitudes toward center parties stand in marked contrast to the rhetoric of many participants and observers of European party systems. Clearly, the idea of center parties has been regarded as an attractive one by politicians, who in recent decades have regarded the very word \textit{center} as a positive label for their parties. The term has been adopted by former agrarian parties in Scandinavian party systems, by new parties in various re-emerging democracies of Southern Europe, and among would-be reformers of party systems in a Giscardist France or a Jenkins-type Britain. \textit{N'en déplaise} Duverger, terms like \textit{centripetal competition}, \textit{centrism} and \textit{center} generally carry positive overtones. But such sentiments are rarely given specific meaning or explanation.

Academic writings in this area are neither extensive nor well-focused. Scanning the literature (e.g., on party systems, political cleavages, or coalition theories), one finds few explicit references to the concept of a center and its use in the study of party systems. In addition to Duverger and Sartori, only Downs (1957) seems to have made the idea of a center a key variable in his writings.\textsuperscript{3} Implicitly, some attention is given to the notion by authors who have studied the formation of European cabinet coalitions, based on an assumed location of parties along one or more dominant dimensions.\textsuperscript{4} The writings of formal theorists shed some indirect light on the subject, notably because they specify the conditions that must be met if one is logically to speak of a center in a multi-actor game. As a whole, however, the literature offers few cumulative lessons, possibly owing to at least two factors.

First, the term \textit{center} forms part of at least three rather different kinds of metaphors. Thus, some authors reason in \textit{locational} terms, holding that a particular individual or party occupies a center position in a given political space. Others reason in metaphors taken from \textit{mechanics}: e.g., certain parties hold the balance in a political system, or the interaction of parties shows the operation of centripetal or centrifugal forces. Yet other writers focus in particular on specific \textit{kinds of cleavages}, which may be inherently dualistic in nature (as Duverger would argue as a matter of course), or may allow more variegated positions.

A second confusion results from failure to specify the unit of analysis. For some, the center is a theoretical point, to which parties may be near or distant. For others, the center is an actual actor, whether a pivotal deputy in an actual parliamentary vote or one or more parties in a given party system. But in treating a party as an actor, new ambiguities may arise, depending upon whether or not a party can in fact be treated as a \textit{unitary actor}, or whether it should be analyzed in terms of possible internal divisions (e.g., within the parliamentary group or between this group, party activists outside parliament, and voters for a party).

The importance of these distinctions should become clearer in the course of the following exploration, which will move from the spatial concept of center (Sections One to Three), to approaches reasoning in mechanistic terms (Section Four), to analyses in terms of actual social cleavages (Section Five).
The center in voting

The Median Member or the Median Party

It is clear from the passage quoted above that Duverger bases his view of the nonexistence of the center on the need for a voting body (such as a parliament) to say either yes or no to a particular proposal. Hence, he refers to the center as a mere ‘geometrical spot’ which separates the proponents and opponents of a particular decision. As the word suggests, such a point is most easily envisaged as a point on a line on which all members of a voting body are arranged. The center, then, equals the position of the ‘median member’ - a conclusion substantiated in formal theory by Black (1958). Certain problems emerge from this proposition, however. How does one know who the median member is? If one is to locate the median member of a voting body, members must be somehow arranged in a logical order, which is tantamount to saying that there must be a common underlying dimension, a point that will be taken up shortly. But how can one substantiate this dimension, except in a concrete vote, and only a posteriori?

If one analyzes decisions of a voting body in terms of parties as actors rather than in terms of individuals, what is the relationship between this median member and the party in which he is included? Can one describe the latter party logically as the center party, or should one instead speak of a party containing the median or central member?

If one wishes to denote the party containing the central or median member as the central party, then difficulties arise when one tries to apply the concept to a two-party system. For in such a system the majority party would become the center party by definition. In the case of alternating majority parties, this would imply alternating center parties. If parties do not alternate, one is in the presence of a predominant party. Although such a party must be of central importance to a system of this kind, does one gain any insight by also calling such a party a center party?

In systems with more than two parties, two conditions may exist. On the one hand, although there are more than two parties in the system, one party may still have the majority. Hence, it occupies the center point by definition. In this case, nothing changes from the previous situation, except that now there are more non-central parties. On the other hand, in cases where no party has a majority, one must have some way of establishing which party contains the median member, which again raises the problem of an underlying dimension, which will be treated in the next two sections.

Finally, one might attempt to shift the argument from the median member to the median party, i.e., the party that finds itself hemmed in by as many parties on one side as on the other. But such a shift presupposes that it is the number of parties which is important rather than their relative sizes. This proposition clearly leads to ridiculous conclusions where a party finds two very small actors on one side and two very much larger ones on the other. The party that would find itself in such a middle would in any case not be the party containing the center, as defined by the median member.
In summary: to make the center in a voting body identical with the median member or median party and to apply these concepts to party systems raises at least two major problems. First, one must find some way in which to rank-order members or parties or both in relation to one another. Second, one must somehow take into account the different sizes of the parties in a particular system.

The Problem of Successive Votes

Even though one may solve the problem of locating the median member in a particular vote, no solution is yet given for locating the center in a succession of votes. Although each vote may logically have its median member, there is no reason whatsoever that the same member will be the central member for each vote, unless all votes represent only one common dimension.

This dilemma is typically solved in escapist ways. One approach focuses on one crucial vote only, e.g., on the vote necessary to confirm a new cabinet in office. All other votes are then made subordinate to the needs of the cabinet coalition thus formed. Another approach seeks to arrive at a stable positioning of individual members (and their parties) by shifting from voting to self-location, e.g., by asking members to place themselves on a left-right scale. A third approach seeks to analyze a selected number of actual votes in order to determine whether members (or parties) fail in place around so-called pivotal actors who are thought to be of central importance. In all such cases, successive votes are really subordinated to presumed dominant alignments. If in practice more than one dimension is found, that one specific dimension is thought to be the decisive one. Hence one can maintain the concept of a median member (or center), even though that member is not central in all actual votes.

The Shifting of the Center

The assumption that the median member is the center becomes particularly questionable in the following cases:

1. In a well-known study in the mid-1960s, Giovanni Sartori arranged the Italian parties along one line and noted that different ‘centers of gravity of the parliamentary majorities’ existed according to the issues faced by the Italian parliament, e.g., an economic majority, a political majority ‘committed to the defense of the system, that would unite on basic constitutional issues, and that opposes any shift in international alliances,’ and a religious majority. Sartori did not pursue this idea and still speaks in the same article of the center in the singular rather than in the plural. But he then adds: ‘a center is relative to its left and right wings, it will follow in the long run the general trend of the polity’ and ‘the center will move if the balance between its left and its right should shift’.

2. The location of the effective center will change if the votes of certain parties at the extremes are regarded as illegitimate, and conversely if the area of legitimate
space expands, situations that have characterized the French Fourth Republic and postwar Italy.
3. One might argue in a similar fashion that the formation of a relatively permanent political coalition logically implies a shift of the pivotal member away from the median of parliament to the median of the coalition. But this argument is in turn subject to criticism - e.g., by those who see the key to power within a specific coalition to be in the hands not of its median member or party, but of those supporters of a coalition who provide the last necessary votes and who conceivably could also shift their votes to an alternative winning coalition, which again suggests that the idea of the median member (assuming such a member can be located) is of little value in the analysis of successive votes and potentially changing coalitions.

The center in traditional left-right assumptions

The Influence of Geometric Thinking

The idea of arranging parliamentary deputies or parties on a left-right dimension has an immediate and intuitive appeal. It is general practice in expositions of single-country studies, and it is widely acceptable to political elites and citizens alike, as is amply proved by the success of surveys containing questions in which respondents must place themselves or parties on linear scales. At a minimum, however, one must be wary that a left-right imagery does not take an uncritical upper hand because of the sheer ease of geometric understanding. The terms left and right had their origin in the seating arrangements of the French Convention. Just as seats gained a symbolic importance, so the very terminology has tended to acquire a bias towards the left which unavoidably affects future spatial locations.

Undoubtedly, the idea of a linear left-right dimension is highly evocative, as it permits not only notions such as the extremes or the center, but also intermediate ideas like center-left or center-right. But the same notion can also be deceptive, if it is assumed that apparently similar distances at any part of the scale are also similar in political content and affect.

Finally, the left-right image is also compatible with that other intuitively attractive geometric representation: the bell-shaped curve of a normal distribution, which is easily superimposed on a left-right scale. Since in a normal distribution the large majority is clustered near the median, the idea that there is a logical force working for moderation in electoral competition may be uncritically adopted as a basis for further analysis. In that case, no attention needs to be paid to problems of real-life situations, where the mean, median, and mode are not coterminous, let alone to the critical importance of there being only one or more modes in a given distribution of political preferences.

Because the idea of a center depends on the possibility of locating parties on a left-right scale, the manner of obtaining such placements is of critical importance. There are at least three ways in which scholars have sought to solve this problem:
asking respondents thought to be representative of a party to place themselves, their own party, and other parties on an imposed left-right scale; scaling or factor-analyzing responses to other survey questions so as to trace underlying dimensions; and analyzing actual behavior.9

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Individual Self-locations and Placement of Parties on an Imposed Left-Right Scale

Subjective placements on imposed left-right scales meet with certain problems such as non-responses (generally found less frequently among elites than in mass responses); faulty responses (the authors of the Eight-Nation study found by follow-up questions that as many as 1 out of 5 voters might have a totally irrelevant notion of the scale on which they were prepared to place themselves;\textsuperscript{10} a tendency with many respondents to play safe and choose a center location or to eschew the more extreme positions; differing interpretations about the use of the scale; assumptions concerning the interval nature of the scale, necessary to execute arithmetical operations; the problem of scale length (e.g., the finding that the use of 7-, 9-, or 10-point scales makes for material differences).\textsuperscript{11}

Assuming that these problems are not of major importance, scholars have used the responses of both mass and elite surveys to obtain an ‘average’ placement of a party. Thus, Sani and Sartori (1983) take averaged responses from the mass surveys in the eight-nation study to obtain the locations of parties, which they then use in a large-scale systematic analysis that regards the ideological distance existing in party systems as a key variable.\textsuperscript{12} They then use these data for a cross-national comparison of the extent of ideological polarization of party systems. Other writers have preferred to rely on elite data as providing more authoritative responses. The problem of finding the correct respondents for the desired location of parties is an important one whenever substantial differences are found, for example between the self-location of a party leader, individual members of the parliamentary party, the leaders outside parliament, and the party voters, not to speak about the assigned locations of one party by leaders or voters of other parties.

The problem becomes particularly crucial if certain systematic biases have an influence on the data. Thus, it has been a common finding that party activists take up more extreme ideological positions than either party leaders or party voters.\textsuperscript{13} Such a crucial finding should not be hidden behind the analytical need to locate a single placement of a party. Survey responses suggest a consistent tendency in some countries for legislators to place themselves to the left of the location they attribute to both their fellow deputies and their voters.\textsuperscript{14}

Scaling Other Survey Questions

In a number of countries (e.g., the United States, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Netherlands), studies have been undertaken to compare the responses of legislators and voters to the same issue questions. The findings of the 1972 Dutch study may illustrate some of the problems that are likely to come up if one seeks to use these data to trace the existence or nonexistence of one dominant left-right dimension. It contained the following items relevant to attempts to place parties on some form of underlying dimension (in addition to locations on a self-imposed left-right scale): preference rank orderings, sympathy ratings for particular parties, and placements of self, one's own party, party voters, and the other major parties on seven issues.
(each issue represented by 7- or 9-point interval scales). The following conclusions were drawn.
Strong indications were indeed found for the existence of a left-right scale. However, the best result was not one straight line, but rather a horseshoe curve, with the extremes on the left and right approaching one another at either end; the major system parties showing substantial differentiations in the lower bend of the figure. The Dutch psychologist Van de Geer explains these findings in terms of a general law of perception which allows for much greater discriminatory perceptions in intermediate zones as compared to extremes. Does this finding tally with Sartori's use of the concept of space elasticity and his particular conclusion?

A short space does not allow, or does not facilitate, the perception of a center: It has, so to speak, no room for it. A short space is defined simply by its ends - left and right. A third point of reference - the central point - becomes meaningful and perceivable only as the space extends, and particularly when the ends of the space are perceived as being two poles apart.15

However, the placement of parties that results from the scaling of voter responses showed substantial differences from the results obtained from interviews with legislators. This is true both of the general space, and more important, also on the location of parties by voters and deputies on particular issues. Hence, the question arises again: whose placement is decisive, and what issues are the significant ones?

Also, some issues clearly broke out of a left-right dimension. This was particularly true of abortion, defense, and law-and-order issues at the elite level, and of abortion and development aid at the mass level. In other words, although a left-right dimension was consistently found (if one reads along a horseshoe curve), and although the placement of parties along this dimension tended to substantiate stereotyped notions on the assumed location of parties in relation to one another on particular issue scales, the dimension did not fit important issue areas that the parties must deal with. Said differently, the left-right dimension was sufficiently robust to allow the singling out of some parties as having a center location. But on certain issues, neither the scale nor the location held. Clearly, presumed center parties are not center parties on all issues!

Finally, a separate analysis of deputies from the major party groupings showed that not all groupings saw the space obtained from scaling all responses by all deputies in a similar manner. In particular, members of parties that others assigned to a location on the right tended themselves to see the space as one in which their location was much more in the middle. In other words, some parties' centers need not be other parties' centers!

The Analysis of Actual Behavior

At least three kinds of actual behavior lend themselves to a test for left-right (and hence center) placement of parties: participation in government coalitions, parliamentary voting, and official party pronouncement such as campaign statements or party platforms.
Analyses of coalition behavior have increasingly considered the role of ideology. The most successful explanations have been what are called ‘minimal
range’ or ‘minimum connected winning’ theories which hold that coalitions are formed containing adjacent parties in sufficient number as to ensure a majority. However, the placement by De Swaan (1973), Dodd (1976) and others of parties in relation to one another is based on the judgment of ‘authoritative observers’ of the politics of a particular country. As these judgments may well be based mainly on their knowledge of actual coalition behavior, there is a danger that coalitions are explained on the basis of knowledge of coalition behavior: this clearly smacks of a tautology. Notions like range, adjacent, and connected or closed coalitions meet with the problem of whether one dimension is sufficient to account for actual coalition behavior. In constructing a policy scale defined mainly in socioeconomic terms, De Swaan must take considerable liberties in forcing parties on to such a scale. (One should note in particular his placing of religious parties, and his reinterpretation of the right part of the scale so as to accommodate authoritarian and national-socialist movements, as well as anticollectivist groupings, at one and the same end of a continuum.) Finally, the placement of parties on a scale is generally static over time. Hence, the data throw little light on dynamic movements that may affect the center as much as either ends of the scale.

Data on the way parties line up in parliamentary voting have a considerable advantage over coalition data in any attempt to place parties on a scale. As Pedersen, Damgaard, and Nannestad Olsen (1971) have convincingly shown, analysis of such data allows inspection of the movement of parties over time. It also makes it possible to trace the actual behavior of parties in certain issue areas as distinct from others. Parliamentary voting is, of course, heavily influenced by whether or not parties participate in a government coalition. But this problem may to some degree be overcome, particularly in cases where there is some degree of autonomy between the governmental and the parliamentary arenas.

A third indicator may be found in a systematic study of party manifestoes along the lines of the study on British manifestoes by David Robertson (1976). An international project in this area has been initiated by Robertson and Ian Budge. One must await publication of the results before one can conclude whether or not this type of study makes it easier to arrange parties on some more durable left-right scale.

**Conclusions on the Left-Right Scale**

Whenever a robust left-right scale can be established, the assumption that there is a center at some intermediate point or area offers at least some promise. However, the foregoing paragraphs have raised certain difficulties: the actual placement of parties on such a scale may differ according to the category of respondents interviewed, the kind of data and analysis techniques used, the actual issues at stake, or the time studied. Although left-right perceptions are strongly present, there is not necessarily an immediate relation between perception and behavior. More important, for certain actors, and in certain issue areas, the left-right dimension does not hold. Often political realities prove stubbornly resistant to attempts to reduce a multidimensional universe to a unidimensional ordering.
Does a center exist in a multidimensional space?

Geometric Representations

Clearly, the idea of a center in a multidimensional world is intuitively a great deal more difficult to grasp than in a linear representation. Even in a simple two-dimensional representation of a triangle (see Figure 1a), with three parties B, C, and D at the points, one could associate the idea of a center with four positions: the midpoints between BC, CD, and BD, and the point A equidistant from B, C, and D. Even easier to grasp is the idea of a circle (Figure 1b) - or in a three-dimensional representation, a sphere - on which all parties are placed. In such a representation there is indeed only one center, but this emerges at the expense of any meaningful insight into dimensions. Another possible location is the point of intersection between two dimensions: at this point one actor (A) would be placed centrally on two dimensions, unlike other actors who might be central on one dimension, but not on the other (B and C, respectively) - see Figure 1c. Such spatial locations are less suggestive, however, than locations on a simple line.20.

Figure 8.1: Three possible geometric representations of parties in a multidimensional space
Duverger: The Center as a Result of Superimposed Dualisms

As we noted above, Maurice Duverger derives the existence of a center or centers from ‘superimposed dualisms.’ Figure 2 reproduces his well-known circle of overlapping cleavages. The figure indeed suggests one possible explanation of multipartism. But such an explanation does not say anything about a center, unless one projects all parties onto one dimension. Thus, the Socialists, the Progressive Christians, the Radicals, and the MRP become center parties if one takes the Communists and the RPF as the end points of the decisive dimension. This is saying little else than that a center emerges if one reduces a multidimensional space to a unidimensional ordering. Such apparently is the strength of the left-right imagery, even for an author who sets out deliberately to analyze the simultaneous existence of more cleavage lines!

One should add that on closer inspection Duverger does not offer just one theory about the (‘non-existing’) center, but many. Thus one may distinguish at least the following three:

1. the assumption that all real political choices are inherently dualistic. Hence, a center can only be defined as a pale reflection of the real forces at the poles and is inevitably divided between the opposing attraction exercised from the two poles, of one and the same dimension;
2. the proposition that a center is the result of projecting parties on one overriding axis where others form the defining poles (e.g., Communists vis-à-vis the Right);
3. the view - still to be treated - that center parties are really the residue of past history, as once-progressive forces are being overtaken by new forces on the Left (Duverger's *sinistrisme*).

**Sartori: A Unidimensional Space of Competition in a Multidimensional Political Universe?**

No writer has grappled with the dimensionality problem more gingerly and persistently than Giovanni Sartori. Sartori has been aware from the outset of the multidimensionality of issues and identifications in contemporary politics, and he has been very conscious of the indeterminacy of meaning, and the strong biases, of left-right imagery. He has strongly criticized authors who rely on a socioeconomic interpretation of a left-right scale in the face of contrary evidence and has suggested instead that priority should be given to a constitutional-political interpretation. He has warned against the facile assumption that similar intervals in a spatial representation also reflect the same actual political distances. A major point in all his writings has been that there are indeed major ideological divides which separate system parties from non-system parties. He therefore uses terms like *different spacings* and *disjointed spaces*. Yet, again and again, he has attempted to reduce the multidimensionality of modern politics to a mainly unidimensional interpretation, at least as far as the dynamics of interparty competition are concerned. To do so he follows a number of roads:

1. His primary interest in Volume I of *Parties and Party Systems* is to push for an interpretation of the interaction of parties as independent rather than dependent variables; hence his strong emphasis on the role of the number of parties, and the mechanical effects of their interaction. From it he deduces a number of properties vital for his interpretation, including his notion of space elasticity (the larger the number of parties, the wider the space), the appearance of one or more parties occupying a center position, the displacement of centripetal competition in a system with bipolar mechanics by centrifugal competition in a multipolar one, and eventually as a result of a policy of out-bidding and out-flanking by irresponsible extremist parties, the likelihood of the growth of antisystem parties in a polarized system bound for destruction.

2. Following Converse, Sartori suggests that in given systems a variety of dimensions may coexist, but that these may be of unequal ‘length.’ In that case, a process of foreshortening may effectively drive a party on the shorter dimension onto the longer - more salient and dominant - dimension.

3. As we saw, Sani and Sartori (1983) present extensive evidence that on a self-imposed left-right scale voters place themselves much wider apart in some European countries than in others. The resulting degree of polarization (for which they provide a variety of measures) shows a gratifying correspondence with Sartori’s distinction between ‘polarized’ and ‘moderate’ multiparty systems. In the same article, these two authors also relate...
self-locations on a left-right scale to responses to a number of important issue and attitude questions and often find a substantial relationship.

4. Sartori also continues to grapple with the problems, most clearly posed by the so-called segmented societies, in which there clearly is a world of multidimensional identifications. He submits that these identifications cannot by definition enter strongly into the world of electoral competition because that would effectively suppose the presence of at least two parties competing along one and the same ideological dimension for such voters as are available to either contestant. Instead, Sartori submits, the major dimension for electoral competition in most European countries today is left-right competition. Parties not on that dimension can only engage in defensive competition, not in expansive strategies. They also do not really affect the decisive interplay of the party system, unless they engage in the struggle along the general and dominant dimension. In this way, Sartori explains why in certain party systems (e.g., the consociational democracies characterized by segmented societies), there are five parties or more, which yet do not show a tendency toward increasing polarization. There may be numerous parties with various identifications, but for the effective dimension of competition, such systems represent cases of party crowding rather than of strong polarization.

I have summarized Sartori’s arguments rather extensively because his distinction between ‘domains and identification’ (which are often multidimensional) and a ‘space of electoral competition’ (which is much more likely to be unidimensional) could solve the problem of whether a center can exist in a multidimensional party landscape. If the space of competition is effectively unidimensional, a center emerges as a result of the interplay of numerical factors in the way Sartori describes.

I offer the following comments:

At first reading, Sartori’s reduction of a multidimensional world of identifications to a unidimensional space of competition shows some resemblance to Duverger’s reasoning. In Duverger’s case center parties emerge because they are forced to locate themselves between the end points of a continuum which is apparently thought to be the dominant one. Duverger does not make clear, however, why parties not on the dominant dimension should end up near ‘the’ center of a party system, or even at some point in between the extreme poles. Is this because parties formed on the basis of another dimension are likely to harbor rather heterogeneous elements, if looked at from the standpoint of the overriding dimension, which in the analogy of the ‘crosscutting’ proposition forces such parties to choose a somewhat indeterminate and hence ‘centrist’ position? Whenever different dimensions exist, there is no logical reason to hold that they will intersect anywhere near the center of any other relevant dimension. The manner of intersection is a matter for empirical enquiry and should take into account that a particular point of intersection need not be a stable one. Much will depend on such varying factors as the angle of crosscutting, the compatibility of the dimensions, the bargainability of

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issues, and *ad hoc* or lasting coalitions (which may lessen the salience of particular dimensions).

The actual location of parties on a dimension (which is not the dimension on which they themselves are based) proves in practice to be a task of considerable complexity. As we saw, Abram de Swaan went through the exercise of trying to fit all European parties in the countries he covers on one overriding dimension, which, following Downs, but unlike Sartori, he defines in socioeconomic terms. He inevitably met with great difficulties which he could only solve by a combination of arbitrary choices and a redefinition of the right end of the scale, so as to accommodate clerical, extreme liberal, nationalist, authoritarian, and fascist parties indiscriminately, rather a case of saving the hypothesis of one unidimensional analysis!

Sartori's view on the existence of one overriding ‘space of electoral competition’ is argued in terms of logic rather than based on strong empirical validation. To my reading, he is in danger of paying too little regard to the dynamic nature of interparty conflict. Is interparty conflict not exactly about the relative salience of different dimensions? Both old and new parties seek to exploit new issues, possibly resulting in new dimensions of conflict. Each party tries to exploit to the maximum that dimension in which it finds itself most comfortable, while attempting simultaneously to drive a wedge into the ranks of its adversaries whose main advantage may lie on another dimension. Sani and Sartori offer interesting data on the congruence of attitudes on diverse questions and self-locations on a left-right scale. But even their own graphs show such a relationship to be far from absolute, which must imply that there is ample opportunity for parties to compete selectively with one another. Sani and Sartori single out Belgium as a special case of two-dimensional electoral competition. Is Belgium really unique or only one rather clear example of multidimensional competition, not unknown elsewhere?

Sartori's propositions need more empirical enquiry, and his theoretical scheme needs further consideration from the perspective of center and center parties as well as in other ways. For Sartori uses not only spatial metaphors and insights derived from properties of perception (the center becoming salient as an ideological space stretches), but also views about the mechanical interaction among parties as the number of relevant actors increases - changing a centripetal into centrifugal competition - and criteria of relative size (e.g., the development of more than two poles in a system, and the occupation or nonoccupation of the center by one or more center parties).

**Can a Center Exist in a Nonreduceable Multidimensional Space?**

Here we tread on a terrain that is best covered by formal theory. Judging by one study that specifically investigates our problem it seems solvable only if we redefine the notion of the center as some form of equilibrium point in a game-theoretical setting. It appears that such a point can be obtained only if certain specific conditions are set, e.g., considerations of minimum size, familiarity or inertia considerations which focus on established links between actors and which restrict the range of possible coalitions ruling out unfamiliar combinations; and consid-
erations concerning the relative dependence of different preferences of actors on one another, in order to compel certain combinations of stands because they are logically connected, and to rule out others. I fear that at this point I must leave the argument to specialists in formal theories who move in a mathematical world well beyond my horizon.

**Is the Spatial Image (Whether Unidimensional or Multidimensional in Nature) Applicable to All European Party Systems?**

One could think of two situations in which the spatial representation becomes meaningless:

A situation of complete *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit* of all parties: In such a situation only office counts, rather than with whom one gets office. Neither past coalition experiences, nor ideological dimensions, nor future policies offer any restraints. This situation is nearest to the reasoning of the coalition theory of the minimum-size variety. That this theory performed most poorly in empirical tests of European cabinet coalitions suggests that the assumptions are not very realistic. The need to reintroduce ideological dimensions or other restraining conditions or both may therefore yet save the notion of a centre in European party systems.

The second situation might be one of complete segmentation, dividing society into closed subcultures between which no logical relations exist. Typically, in such a situation neither normal majority assumptions nor considerations of ideological affinity hold. Instead, government proceeds by *Proporz*, a deliberate depoliticization of issues, a far-reaching autonomy of subcultures.

**The center in terms of mechanics**

If one moves from spatial reasonings to conceptions drawn from the world of mechanics, one meets with two rather different metaphors. First, one can imagine a set of scales that a particular force tips toward one side or the other. Second, one may conceive of centripetal against centrifugal forces working in a given party system. In either case, one can reason in terms of voters or of parties. In the case of voters, the emphasis is on the outcome of elections. In the case of parties the accent is rather on the formation or breakup of government coalitions.

**The Image of the Scales: Floating Voters**

A large body of writings - whether on formal models of party systems or more descriptive surveys of particular countries - gives a crucial place to voters in the middle. By moving their weight from one (alternative) coalition of parties to another, voters can determine the composition of governments. One often assumes that voters...
in the middle also represent a force for moderation. But many analysts question why this must be so. Are the floating voters the best informed or the most responsible? Or, on the contrary, are they the least interested and most indifferent? Or should one regard them as those most likely to be subject to cross-pressures, which makes them reject extremist demands on any particular issue? The debate on the floating voters is now at least two decades old and it is clear from empirical study that there is not one simple answer. A reification of the floating vote does
insufficient justice to the fact that it is in practice composed of varied and changing
groups of voters. The very image of one ‘floating’ vote pays too little attention to
crosscurrents, to changes in the makeup of the electorate through the entry of new
voters and the deaths of older ones, and to the additional effects of voting or
nonvoting. Voters in the assumed ‘floating vote’ represent very different opinions,
regard rather different issues as salient, and need not be in the center at all.

Such problems are evaded in another mechanistic metaphor - e.g., the assumption
that there is a natural swing of the pendulum. A party or parties in power - so it is
argued cannot escape growing criticism that eventually will lead to a loss of voters
shifting to opposition parties. That mechanism holds governments at least indirectly
accountable, so that it cannot afford to move far out from the middle ground between
it and the opposition. Empirical data do not offer substantial proof for that mechanical
conception. 33.

The Impact of the Scales: Key Parties

In a similar analogy, particular parties of various sizes are thought to occupy a position
in which they can determine the formation (or ending) of a particular government
coalition. Their role in this respect has been characterized also with a variety of other
mechanistic metaphors such as pivotal parties, key parties, hinge parties, or partis
charnières. Logically, their special position depends on the circumstance that their
cooperation is necessary to form or maintain a government, given a situation that
parties on either side of them lack a majority of their own and prove unable to enter
into a (larger) coalition between themselves, bypassing parties in between. The
argument has been strongly influenced by the traditional finding that before the Fifth
Republic France was governed by what Duverger called the éternel marais of the
Center, and by the postwar position of the Liberal FDP in West Germany. Yet here
again questions must be raised. Is it justified to lump together - all and sundry - small
parties that can balance two very much larger parties, the size of which makes the
inclusion of any one of them in government a foregone conclusion? Should one argue
that in an evenly balanced position of rival governing teams any party can develop
into a hinge party, irrespective of its own political positioning in relation to the other
parties? There are some empirical pointers in that direction (as the wooing of the
nationalist parties in Britain in the 1970s. or the rather odd position of the Austrian
FÖP in relation to Socialists and Catholics has shown). Yet in that case the mechanical
metaphor is pushed so far that what would otherwise remain an out-party is made
into a center party by definition. Compared to that type of argument, the earlier
assumption about a relatively persistent patterning of parties in relation to one another
in known dimensions of politics seems rather more persuasive.

The chief problem with both the voter and the party metaphor based on the image
of the scales is the underlying assumption that a party system provides potential rival
teams that must be in some form of rough balance with one another. In many actual
party systems, that is not a realistic assumption: e.g., in systems with a predominant
(let alone a hegemonic) party, or in complex party systems that do not spontaneously
divide into two alternative blocs. In the latter situation, the like-
lihood that movement by a specific group of voters, or by one particular party, can force a drastic readjustment of forces is not very great. How useful is it, anyway, to reason in a metaphor of a set of scales, if a rather large party, rather than a small one, actually straddles the equilibrium point?

Centripetal and Centrifugal Mechanics

We must now return to Sartori's analysis of centripetal competition for voters at the center, which he regards as characteristic for systems with two to four relevant parties, competing along one and the same dimension with a low degree of ideological polarization, and of centrifugal competition, which to him is the mechanical disposition of systems of five or more relevant parties - not being segmented polities - with a high degree of ideological polarization. A major element in his analysis is the view that in the latter case the occupation of the center by one or more center parties encourages centrifugal drives. I offer the following comments.

Sartori has generally taken a rather negative stand toward center parties, although he grudgingly gave these parties a somewhat more positive evaluation in later years. I quote from two different publications:

In a situation of centrifugal pluralism the center party (or parties) appears to be more than anything else a feedback, or a retroaction, of the centrifugal drives [...] According to this interpretation, then, the center is more a negative convergence, a sum of exclusions, than a positive agency of instigation. And this is why it is likely to be a passive, rather inert, and, all in all, immobile kind of aggregation.

and I still believe in this diagnosis, but the recent Chilean experience, which was characterized by a chronic fickleness of the in-between parties, vindicates a more positive interpretation. I would put it thus: Even though the center parties tend to be immobilistic, they remain an equilibrating force that performs a 'mediating role,' and mediation, or brokerage, is not the same as immobilism. This having been conceded, I hasten to add that a center positioning seemingly condemns to a policy of mediation, in the sense that a different role backfires on the party's positioning without paying off in performance or accomplishment. A center party that attempts to outdo the parties located on its left or right will contribute, more than to anything else, to a crescendo of escalation and extremization.

Sartori posits that the very occupancy of the center area by one or more center parties puts that area 'out of competition,' and hence encourages centrifugal rather than centripetal drives. It is difficult to concur with this argument: as long as there are votes in the center, why should parties not in the center refrain from going after these votes in what must by definition be centripetal electoral tactics? Rather than speaking of centripetal competition in systems of moderate pluralism (generally having three to five parties) and of centrifugal competitions in systems of polarized pluralism (having five or more parties effectively competing with one another), is it not more reasonable to argue that in any system of three or more parties (in which
at least one party finds itself in an intermediate position between other parties), there will always be *both* centripetal *and* centrifugal drives? In a

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visual representation of competition among five parties, large extreme parties on the Left and Right overlap only with the intermediate parties, not with the large party at the center. But why should large out-parties not attempt to move toward the center at the expense of the intermediate and center parties both? Are not both the PCI and the MSI competing with the DC directly for electoral votes in contemporary Italy?

Sartori's argument is possibly influenced by the fact that the DC represents a center that is really based on a criterion other than the formal left-right dimension. Yet if so, he should be led to different conclusions by his own view that it is typically the left-right space of competition rather than domains of identification which governs the decisive relations among parties. A comparison of the Italian and the Dutch case would seem to confirm that conclusion. In both systems, the center is occupied and has been so occupied for many years. In the Dutch case, this fact has been a major element in forcing both Socialists and Liberals to tone down whatever anticlerical proclivities they may once have had, and indeed in forcing them to compete both in policies and electorally in above all a centripetal manner. Sartori will argue that the Dutch and Italian cases are not really comparable, given the presence of sizeable antisystem oppositions and a much wider ideological space in Italy as compared to the Netherlands. This is of course true, but is not one major reason for the lower polarization in the Netherlands that parties once distant from one another eventually learnt to compete in a centripetal manner, and hence in the end contributed toward depolarization?

On a more theoretical plane, Sartori finds one distinguishing feature of ‘moderate’ as contrasted to ‘polarized’ pluralism in the existence of ‘bilateral oppositions’ in the latter against ‘bipolar mechanics’ in the earlier case. In a self-locating left-right scale, the Netherlands comes out as a country that generally shows a number of distinct modes. One should note, however, that this finding comes out much more clearly with the use of 9- or 10-point scales than with 7-point scales. Although the weight of the extremes in the Dutch system is very much smaller than that in Italy, it is far from evident that the Netherlands could really be regarded as an example of a ‘bi-polar coalitional configuration.’

One is struck by the fact that Sartori gives relatively little attention to size factors, in that the proportionate size of a center party, of adjacent parties, and of more extreme parties including whenever relevant antisystem parties, may be more important for the actual functioning of party systems than the absolute number of relevant parties. One should attempt to specify the importance of such size factors.

Analyses in terms of cleavage

Yet another manner to treat the presence or absence of a center in party systems is through analysis in terms of social and political cleavages. Here we again encounter Duverger, with his reference to the center as ‘the moderates of opposed tendencies’ and also in his derivation of the center from a ‘superimposition of dualisms.’ The following comments seem in order.
The Dangers of the Cleavages Terminology

The term *cleavage* has the unavoidable connotation that there is a sharp divide that separates social or political groups. It follows that the middle ground is a dangerous place to be, or even one that is logically nonexistent as indeed Duverger would have us believe. However, if one inspects the nature of actual political and social cleavages, it becomes apparent that the idea of a clear divide is much more applicable to certain categories of cleavages than to others. There is indeed little between blacks and whites, Catholics and Calvinists, native speakers of one tongue or another, or members of different tribes. But such a statement is not true for many other social bases on which parties have been formed, e.g., the criteria that to Hume were the three alternative bases of party: interest, affection, and principle; social class (except in a vulgarized Marxist sense); regionalism, or even some of the new social cleavages arising from a reorientation of values in a postindustrial society toward the environment, women's rights, issues of organizational scale, international peace, or special concerns with the Third World. A realistic analysis in terms of cleavages should lead one to conclude therefore that centrist and intermediate positions are a much more realistic proposition for some cleavages than for others, without succumbing immediately to what one might call the tyranny of polar types.

The Importance of Numbers

Even if political life were organized solely around exclusive cleavages, it makes considerable difference in practice whether it leads to the formation of two groups or more. Compromise and adjustment would seem much easier to reach when more than two ascriptive groups are involved, and especially when no single group has a definite majority position. This finding is indeed one common in both anthropological literature and in the writing on modern segmented polities. When one group has an unassailable majority, there is much less scope for brokerage than when numerical relations make some form of bargaining inevitable even to reach a majority point.

The Degree of Political Affect

One further disadvantage of a reasoning in terms of cleavages is that one concludes too rapidly that particular cleavages are unavoidably loaded with political content. It may be true that survey data demonstrate highly skewed patterns which suggest that different groups are opposed on matters like religion, class, or language. Yet the political relevance of such a finding depends on the actual degree to which such cleavage divisions are politicized, a point underlined also by Sani and Sartori when they argue that conflicting identifications need not result in effective political combat.
The Superimposition Hypothesis Once More

Duverger's derivation of a center through a superimposition of dualistic cleavages logically presupposes that particular cleavages have different salience for different groups of political actors. By assuming one cleavage to be the dominant one from
a systemic point of view, groups on another cleavage end up having a heterogeneous, hence by definition an ambiguous, position. This is indeed Duverger's biased view, but tenable only if one accepts the a priori assumption of the existence of one overriding dimension. It is a telling illustration of the powerful normative sentiments that accompany discussions of a center. What is detested by Duverger as preventing ‘real’ choices is hailed elsewhere under the perspective of ‘cross-cutting cleavages,’ regarded as the force par excellence which ensures moderation in a homogeneous political culture!

The Center as a Historical Residue

In yet another generalization, Duverger explains parties in a center position as the result of new parties springing up to the left of existing ones, which force the previously existing parties from their original left position to the center or even the right of the system. One is probably not far amiss in thinking that Duverger sees the new parties as representing the future, relegating older parties to eventual oblivion as no longer representative of living forces. The argument underplays the possibility of new parties coming in, not from the Left but from the Right, or even into the middle of the existing political spectrum (e.g., in Duverger's France the Gaullists and reforming Centrists, D'66 in the Netherlands, or the not easily placeable Progress Party in Denmark).

Even if one were to accept Duverger's law of a gradual displacement of older parties by newer parties on their left (i.e., in the light of the historical rise of new working-class parties), one should recognize that older cleavage lines are not necessarily doomed to extinction. One famous example is the course of events in Norway, where the original Left of peripheral protest parties was indeed shifted away from its original position to such an extent that one wing (the Agrarians) was eventually to re-name itself Center Party. Yet as Rokkan and Valen had correctly forecast, older cleavages could indeed become salient again once their values were threatened. In the 1972 battle over the EEC Referendum, many of the presumed Centrists joined modern New Left groups in polar opposition to a modern pro-European front of conservatives and establishment socialists alike. Clearly, one must reason not in terms of a static superposition of dualisms, but in terms of a dynamic interplay of cleavages, historically and in the contemporary world. History does not freeze parties in immovable positions, nor does it force them into an irreversible momentum in one direction only.

Labels and positions: the concrete experience of European party systems

So far, our search for the center has mainly followed conceptual lines. We have explored spatial analogies, ranging from a concentration on the median voter or median party, moving on to the assumption of the existence of a left-right dimension...
(which easily suggests the notion of a center location as well), and ending with the intractable problem of a multidimensional political universe. We have turned toward mechanistic metaphors in terms of a balancing of the scales and of centripetal versus centrifugal forces. Finally, we have concentrated on analyses
of cleavages which can be more or less dualistic, and hence allow or not allow for intermediate or brokerage positions. Our search has been far from conclusive. Our most difficult problem has been that of the inevitable multiplicity of issues, dimensions, and cleavages in political life which stubbornly resist attempts to reduce them to one dominant underlying dimension. (If that analysis is true, then one should query the facile use of the terms left and right as much as that of the term center, as all such terms become inherently ambiguous.) A further problem is the mixing of metaphors. Finally, there are clear signs of bias. Whereas some like a center, others do not. And with Sartori, one may even frown on center parties because one does like competition for the center.

Can one do better by inspecting the actual record of European party systems? One could do so by investigating to what degree the use of the term center by particular parties in particular party systems throws light on our problem, and by exploring the extent to which European party systems are in practice characterized by having parties at the center or not.

Checking the Labels

There is little doubt that the label center has gained in popularity among European parties in recent years. In Nordic countries a number of parties formally took on the label center as former agrarian parties renamed themselves Center Party in Sweden (1957), Norway (1959), and Finland (1965). In Denmark a splinter party from the Socialist Party called itself the Center Democrats (1973). In the re-emerging democracies in Southern Europe at least one party adopted the label center, although this label covered rather different parties in different countries, e.g., Suarez's Union of Democratic Center in Spain, the Democratic Social Center (now Christian Democratic Party) in Portugal, and the Center Union of Mavros in Greece (Duverger would have noted with satisfaction that neither parties nor labels proved durable, however).

Appeals to a center designation are also made in other countries, even though parties did not take on the actual label. Thus, in Italy the DC, the PRI, and the PSDI have claimed the presumed center space in the political system, and even the Liberal PLI has sought to out-center the DC from the right. In French politics a center tendency has been a consistent phenomenon, and the label has constantly reappeared for one or other group within it. One finds a general usage of the term in Dutch political dialogue. There was widespread discussion in Britain of the need for a Center Party before the new Social Democratic Party was formed in 1981 (e.g., The Times, January 17, 1980, following Roy Jenkins' Richard Dimbleby Lecture of November 22, 1979).

The concept left has been so strong, however, as practically to preclude the use of the term center by parties that find themselves hemmed in by a large party on their left (whether Communists or Socialists or both), and large parties on their right. Non-socialist reform movements have generally preferred terms like radicals, democrats, or progressives to that of center. In some cases parties that have willy-nilly found themselves in what might easily be regarded as objectively a center position have deliberately disclaimed the label that they found uncongenial
for ideological reasons (e.g., the Italian PSI). Even academic writers unblushingly dichotomize European parties into left and center-right parties, clearly regarding the label \textit{center} as being more right than left.\footnote{49}

\section*{Checking the Positions}

One can also explore when and where parties have in fact acted as center parties in European party systems, irrespective of their labels. The following attempt at a simple classification is based mainly on the mechanistic assumption of the presence or absence of one or more parties which can effectively tip the balance to one government combination rather than another.

In a pure two-party system (such as the stereotyped British one), the idea of a center party would not logically fit. At most, with Downs and Sartori one should argue in such a situation in terms of the center as a point of gravitation to which the two competing parties would be irresistibly drawn. The traditional interpretation of British politics in terms of a Front Benchers' Constitution where the 'Butskell' rule, whatever the more militants in either party say, illustrates - and probably inspired - this way of reasoning.\footnote{50} But at least two developments have since then changed this classical conception: the loss by Labour of a majority position in the Commons in the 1970s, and growing concern about the Downsian movement of the two main system parties away from the center. The first event gave life to the idea that other parties might occupy a balancing position (e.g., the Liberals, but also the various nationalist parties and, since 1981, the new SDP, i.e. the Alliance). Resistance against a growing adversary politics, on the other hand, has done much to upgrade the view that what Britain needs are not majority parties, but center parties.\footnote{51}

A second case has been dubbed a \textit{two-and-a-half party} system, i.e., a system with two large rival parties, each of which needs the support of a third party to obtain a majority in parliament. The archetype is of course the German Federal Republic since the early 1960s, where the FDP has used its leverage to obtain representation in national and Linder-governments well beyond its proportionate share. As compared to the German FDP, the Austrian Freedom Party seemed to be too far removed from what would be regarded as a legitimate center position to play a similar role. Yet with the fall of the Kreisky Cabinet in 1983, the strength of mechanical factors was such as indeed to propel that party into government with the Socialists. Could Irish Labor eventually develop similarly into a third force between Fianna Fail and Fine Gael?

In a number of European systems a situation has occurred where party conflict consisted of \textit{one large party facing a number of smaller parties}. The clearest examples of such a situation have been Ireland and Sweden, where Fianna Fail and the Socialists face a number of much smaller rivals. Somewhat similar situations occurred for a time in Norway and in the German Federal Republic (when the CDU/CSU crossed or came near to the majority point). Often the out-parties had little choice but to remain opposition parties in such a situation, ruling out the possibility of regarding them as center parties. Yet such a situation presents a standing temptation to one or
other of the smaller opposition parties to move over, as indeed the Agrarians did repeatedly in Scandinavia even before they called themselves center parties.
In a fourth situation conflict has been mainly between two rival blocs, as in the traditional two-bloc parliamentarism of Denmark, or in the more recent period of the French Fifth Republic. In such a situation, the movement of a single party can be of decisive importance. Witness, for example, the change in the balance of Danish politics when the Danish radicals went over decisively to a bourgeois bloc, or the flirtation of some socialists and majority centrists with the idea of a new center coalition, before the victory of Mitterrand in 1981 put an end to such speculations for the time being. What clearly distinguishes this type of political situation from the third situation mentioned above is the absence of a realistic expectation of an independent majority for any one party. Hence, there is room for tactical maneuvering for what is intuitively described as the Center-Left and the Center-Right to move either toward each other, or each to a possible ally in a centrifugal direction, which underlines the importance of quantitative proportions in addition to locational ones. It also suggests that terms such as centripetal and centrifugal may have a different explanation, depending on electoral or coalitional politics.

In other countries or at different times in countries mentioned earlier the typical situation has been one of continuous (or at least very frequent) rule by one or more parties that have changed allies from time to time. The typical cases are those of the Netherlands, Italy, and to a degree also Finland. The hold on the system by the Catholics (and to a large extent their Protestant allies, now all amalgamated in a new Christian Democratic Appeal) in Holland, of the DC in Italy, and of the Finnish Agrarians who were later to call themselves explicitly the Center Party, has been such as to make them of pivotal importance to the system. Yet within this category certain differences exist, depending on the extent to which these parties can actually enter alternating coalitions (the case of semi-turnover, typically found in the Netherlands), or are forced to look mainly in one direction (Italy, ever since parties on the right of the DC were regarded as clearly illegitimate, thus leaving only the choice between minority government and an apertura a sinistra).

In this category one should also place most of the French Fourth Republic and Belgium and Luxemburg, even though the role of the Christian Democrats has been somewhat less dominant in these countries than that of their Dutch counterparts.

Some countries resort frequently to the practice of minority governments, Parties called to exercise the role of government in such countries could conceivably be regarded as center parties to the extent that their presence in government, paradoxically, is resented least by all other relevant parties. However, for an understanding of the nature of actual interparty relations, the operation of parliamentary coalitions may be just as telling as the presence of a particular party in (minority) government.

Finally, there is a residual class which for want of a better term one might call that of changing coalitions. Relations of parties are such that neither clear alternation nor semi-turnover is present sufficiently to constitute a regular pattern. The chief candidates for this category would seem to be Iceland, but also Finnish and maybe Belgian politics offer some illustrations. Typically, parties may ally themselves along frequently changing dimensions and opt for grand coalitions as much as for caretaker governments of experts or minority parties.
The relevance of the notion of center parties for different European party systems

If the short inventory given above is correct, European party systems seem to fall in at least three different groups.

In some systems the notion of a center party hardly applies. This is logically the case under any of three conditions: countries with stable single-party majority governments (e.g., Britain, France under De Gaulle and Pompidou, Austria under Kreisky, Sweden until at least 1976), countries with clear alternating governments even when often not of the single-party majority variety (Denmark until 1973, Norway, Ireland), and in the rather different case of Proporz systems, in which all major parties enter government by definition (e.g., Switzerland).

In a second group of countries, the idea of center party or center parties is a key variable. This was the case in the French Fourth Republic and has been true of Italy, Finland, and also the Netherlands ever since the religious system parties forced Liberals and Socialists into the position of alternate suitors. It is also true for the German Federal Republic as long as the FDP can effectively play off Christian Democrats and Socialists against one another.

Finally, there is a third group of countries where the relevance of the notion of center parties is contingent on both size and positioning of major parties in relation to one another, which is dependent on the outcome of elections and the issues to be handled. In this intermediate category one might place Belgium, Luxemburg, Denmark since 1973, and possibly Iceland.

As this grouping suggests, the major determining variables are the relative size of parties (above all, majority or minority) and how stable the parties' positions are in relation to one another. Countries differ markedly from one another in both respects, and a particular country may also change from one category to another over time.

Power and Prejudice

The preceding pages leave two possible approaches still untreated.

First, one might pay special attention to parties continuously in power. Continuous exercise of power is clearly not the same as being a dominant party, since the first notion is compatible with the continuous presence of a small party in successive government coalition. Such a categorization points to a group of parties which provide important questions for detailed study, e.g., of the forces that make such a party indispensable for governments, and of the consequences that result from long government tenure for the electoral position of the party, for its role in relation to other political actors (notably the bureaucracy), as well as the consequences that result from its relationship to parties not in the government. But equating center parties with perennial governing parties otherwise confuses rather than clarifies understanding.

Second, we clearly need an explicit study of normative assessments of center parties. We have frequently drawn attention to the many unspecified value judgments associated with the treatment of notions like center and center parties. A care-
ful review of such value judgments might help us to obtain clearer insights into alternative theories of good government, which after all laid a heavy hand on our discussions and comparative research on the empirical functioning of party systems.

Eindnoten:


27. It has been a particular pleasure to watch the development of this term, invented during an academic conference by that famous punster, the late Val Lorwin, to make light of both Belgian politics and German academic language, into a ‘serious’ term of contemporary scholarship.


plural societies. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977) and Daalder (Daalder, H. The consociational democracy theme. World Politics, 1974, 26, 604-621). It is perhaps intriguing to note that Lijphart rarely uses concepts like center or centrism in his analysis of Dutch politics, whereas my own more descriptive writing abounds with the concept.


43. For an interesting analysis of the origins of the dualist interpretation of French politics, see Graham, B. Theories of the French party system under the Third Republic. Political Studies, 1964, 12, 21-32.


54. If the role of a center party depends above all on the relative size of parties in relation to one another, this would logically imply that specific parliamentary situations rather than countries are the more promising units of analysis.
Introduction

We all speak about the crisis of party. But are we clear what we mean? A priori normative positions often cloud both our diagnoses and prognoses. In the debate on the crisis of party, I will argue, at least four different bodies of writing are intermingled which should be clearly distinguished:

1. The persistent body of thought which denies a legitimate role for party, and sees parties as a threat to the good society. Such thoughts were nurtured from two sides: lingering authoritarian ideologies on the one hand, and naive democratic beliefs on the other. I will call these views the denial of party.

2. The views of those who regard certain types of parties as ‘good’ but other types parties as ‘bad’. These writings may be summarized under the label the selective rejection of party.

3. The proposition that certain party systems are ‘good’ and others are ‘bad’. This view will be dealt with under the heading the selective rejection of party systems.

4. The affirmation by those who regard parties as a transient phenomenon, products of a period of mass mobilization which is now a matter of the past. According to this argument, parties are becoming increasingly irrelevant in democratic politics as other actors and institutions have taken over the major functions which parties once played. That body of literature will be analyzed under the rubric the redundancy of party.

The denial of party

We must first recognize that, comparatively speaking, organized and legitimate political parties are a relatively new phenomenon. David Hume, for instance, could still speak of parties of principle as ‘the most extraordinary and unaccountable phenomenon that has yet appeared in human affairs’. In the Britain of his day, ‘factions’ and ‘parties’ were not yet clearly distinguished from one another; and while ‘factions from interest’ and ‘factions from affection’ were to him and his contemporaries perfectly understood phenomena, this was not true of ‘parties
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from principle.¹ But the situation was changing in the eighteenth century, at the very time Hume wrote. The viscount of Bolingbroke drew up the first explicit argument in favor of formal opposition as a political good, and Edmund Burke defined parties as ‘a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavors, the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed.’² Parties increasingly came to be understood as legitimate actors, and the institutionalized competition of parties as a valuable characteristic of an open polity.

It was no accident that such thoughts developed first in Britain of those days. For two fundamental conditions for the rise of party were already were well understood in that country by the eighteenth century: first, the acceptance of the inevitability of pluralist forces in any society; and second, the importance of political representation. For parties to become the modern institutions we know today, two further conditions had to be fulfilled, however. First, Burke's argument that people could honestly differ on the common good, and might legitimately organize to seek representative office on that basis, had to be accepted; and secondly, the manner of representation had to be altered so that, instead of the principle of sending ‘delegates’ on behalf of particular social orders, regions, or cities, representatives would depend on recognized bodies of individual voters. Once the latter became increasingly numerous, the modern party became not only legitimate, but a matter of necessity. First local, and then increasingly nationwide, organizations had to be formed to fill the gap between individual representatives and expanding numbers of voters.

The rise of the modern party produced the first articulate analyses of the role of party in modern society. In 1902, the Russian émigré Moisei Ostrogorski published his two-volume book on Democracy and the organization of political parties which was a detailed, if highly critical, comparative study of the building of ‘caucuses’ in modern city centers in Britain and the United States.³ Ostrogorski did not like what he saw. He ended his book with a strong plea to substitute ad hoc, single-issue associations (which would allow the full play of individual will) for mass parties which in his view denied individuals their sovereign right to decide. And Ostrogorski influenced that other great, early theorist of party, Robert Michels. The latter's Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie. Untersuchungen über die oligarchischen Tendenzen des Gruppenlebens, which appeared in 1911,⁴ was based on a trenchant analysis of decision-making within the German Social Democratic Party of his time. Starting from the belief that the political influence of members within organizations should be direct and equal, he in fact showed the inevitability of rule by political elites. Parties were thus seen by both Ostrogorski and Michels as subordinating individuals to organizations, the latter being inevitably dominated by party leaders. Hence Michels' paradox that masses were capable of revolution, but not of self-rule, as all they could achieve was to substitute new elites for old ones, oligarchy being so inevitable as indeed to represent ‘an iron law’. If Ostrogorski was to conclude with a preference for ad hoc associations over durable parties, Michels was eventually to turn his diagnosis of unavoidable elitism into a romanticist advocacy of fascism.
On closer analysis, the source of such a rejection of party can be found in two, at first sight, very different bodies of thought. On the one hand, there were the proponents of a traditional political order who saw in the rise of party an unwanted invasion of the terrain of the state, which as the guardian of long-term transcendental interest threatened to fall victim to private interests of a short-term nature. On the other hand, there were those who cherished a belief in the ‘sovereign’, free individual and thus opposed what they regarded as the tyranny of party, which would do away with freedom of individual action and thought for the sake of collectivist organizations led by irresponsible elites.

The first of these arguments logically gave rise to the frequent assertion that there was danger in a Parteienstaat. To those using this notion, parties (which on closer analysis were nothing but the instruments of political elites covering private interests under a cloak of ideology) encroached on the mainsprings of decision-making in the state which should remain immune from such attempts at ‘colonization’. In the second view, parties were regarded not as genuine instruments of representation, but as barriers between individuals and the general interest. In either case, this led to a wish deliberately to restrict the scope of party. Thus, it was thought necessary to immunize certain sectors of government from the stranglehold of party (notably the judiciary, but also the bureaucracy and to some extent the supreme executive itself). At the same time, it would be vital to maintain direct links between ‘the’ people and their leaders, so as to preclude the complete dominance of parties in that relationship. This might be achieved, for instance, by assuring the direct election of presidents or prime ministers, and by maintaining or introducing other plebiscitary instruments, including referenda which could be used by government if need be also against a Parliament increasingly monopolized by self-seeking parties.

If such reasoning had its origin in older, autocratic traditions, newer beliefs in direct democracy could be turned to the same direction. Did not Rousseau's notion of the general will imply that no special place should be given to ‘partial societies’, that anything which would come between individuals and the general will was bound to infringe on the general interest, and that citizens should themselves remain free and autonomous rather than allowing their right to decide to fall in the hands of ‘parties’ which denuded them of their right to decide for themselves?

The two arguments (the older authoritarian one and the one favoring a direct expression of individual will) might at first sight seem to be at opposite poles. Yet, on closer analysis, they had certain features in common. In both one finds the postulate of a pre-existing harmony which should not be jeopardized by the divisive battle of competing parties. In both there was a clear distaste for modern forms of organization. Both also rejected the idea of a mandate for elected representatives, as likely to impair the formation of genuine will and ‘objective’ interest, whether residing in the state or in the people. One can formalize this argument. For parties to exist and to acquire legitimacy, there should be a clear acceptance that men might honestly differ, that all may organize to repeat Burke's words ‘upon some particular principle’ to promote ‘the national interest’, that all may vote equally, and that government must rest on what Schumpeter would term the ‘competitive
struggle for the people's vote’. Modern parties, in other words, presuppose the conditions of representative democracy. Typically, parties are rejected by those who do not accept such underlying principles, either because they believe the state to have legitimate claims beyond electoral expression and democratic representation, or because they see in parties the ‘associations partielles’ par excellence so much rejected by Rousseau as infringing on the formation of a (mythical) ‘volonté générale’.

The selective rejection of parties

Unlike those who doubt the legitimacy of organized parties altogether, others reject certain types of parties, but not all. In well-known typologies of political parties, such as those of Maurice Duverger or Sigmund Neumann, one finds the assumption that there is an inevitable, but one suspects sometimes regretted, transition from what Duverger\(^6\) called the partis comité or caucus parties to the partis de masse or mass parties and Neumann\(^7\) a shift from ‘parties of individual representation’ to ‘parties of integration’, with the implicit danger of a slide towards ‘parties of total integration’ characteristic of totalitarian regimes. This reflects a definite ambiguity in the appraisal of mass parties. On the one hand there is widespread recognition of their emancipatory and democratic potential. To the extent that they structure the vote and make for reasonably unified actors, they can be seen to contribute to political stability and to allow for both the exercise of leadership and permit accountable government. One can see the force of such arguments amongst critics of fluid ‘politics’ as exemplified in the United States, in many of the states of the Third World, and now in Central and Eastern Europe. A famous normative statement on the need for coherent mass parties was the seminal report drawn up more than forty years ago by the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association, under the title Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System.\(^8\) And one finds the same line of reasoning amongst those who plead for the need for more structured party systems as a condition of viable democracy, in the extensive literature on democracy and political development.

But there is no denying another body of thought which betrays a definite distancing from the notion of the mass party. Mass parties are accused of being heavily ideologized ‘fighting machines’, seeking to subject both voters and the state to a combination of dogma and elitist self-interest. Their party discipline is held to destroy the conditions of free debate which is regarded as the hallmark of the parliamentary system. Mass parties in particular are thought to ‘penetrate’ beyond the legitimate terrain of competitive electoral politics into the sanctity of the state, or in another view they are thought to submit the social order to unwanted ‘colonization’. Such ideas, I must repeat, are nurtured strongly by idealized views of alternative ways of ordering the body politic: a romanticized traditionalism, beliefs in a monolithic state, a hallowed notion of a ‘golden age of parliamentarism’, in which unfettered deputies debated until ‘du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité’, a naive hope in communitarian direct democracy: views which on closer analysis tend to a denial of parties altogether rather than to a selective acceptance of some parties and a rejection of others.
The selective appraisals of particular party systems

The literature on party systems is equally replete with normative statements which extol certain party systems but damn others. Thus one often finds, among political scientists as among historians and constitutional lawyers, the assumption that ‘my country is best’. But one also finds the reverse position: critics of a given party system seek inspiration in comparing it with the assumed ‘better’ system of another country. I shall review such arguments in four successive steps.9

The Once Dominant Model of the British System

Until relatively recently, the dominant model for many critics and reformers in other countries was undoubtedly ‘the’ British party system - the little word ‘the’ is put between quotes to indicate that it referred to an idealized, stylized version of the British system as much as to the realities of British politics at any particular period of time. I shall not seek to define that all too familiar model. But one should note its pervasive influence in a number of ideas:

1. There is a widespread conviction that one can engineer a two-party system by the introduction of the single member district system.10
2. There is the idealization of single-party government and its logical opposite: the undesirability of coalition governments.
3. The idea of a ‘front benchers' constitution’;11 implies a specific, normative reading of the relationship between elites and followers. Such thinking gives a clear verdict in favor of leadership won in a constant battle among rival contenders seeking to ‘climb the slippery pole of politics’. It underlines the merit of ‘amateurs’ changing from one ministerial post to another and thus exercising a genuine ‘political control’ over specialized departments and bureaucrats. And it takes an unmistakable position on the need for control by parliamentary leaders over politicians fulfilling roles in the party outside Parliament.12
4. The concept of the political mandate: even though British voters technically vote, not for a government but for a Member of Parliament in the district in which they live, the strength of the two-party system makes voting in practice a matter of direct choice of alternative prime ministers. This endorses both the idea of absolute majority rule and the assumption of clear, accountable government.

The ideal-type British model has not only influenced much of our normative thinking about the working of party systems, it has also for long determined prevailing typologies and models in comparative politics. It was one reason why originally German critics of Weimar13 held up the British system as the best guarantee of ensuring stable democratic government in a larger state. The stark two-party system mesmerized Duverger whose belief in the ‘naturalness’ of dual forces was so strong as to make him deduce even multi-party systems from a ‘superposition des
dualisms'. Even in the more sophisticated writings of Duverger's ardent critic, Giovanni Sartori, one can easily trace the impact of the British type. This appears not so much in his analysis of two-party systems, which he recognizes as being rare in practice, but in his analysis of systems of moderate pluralism, where rival coalitions of parties dance a British minuet around the center. In the rather different typology of Gabriel Almond it is again the British system which is the prototype of the ‘Anglo-Saxon system’ which in stark contrast to the ‘continental European system’ is characterized by a homogeneous political culture and a highly differentiated role structure which permits the political process to function with characteristic moderation and an efficient, non-ideological style of pragmatic bargaining. Even when the tables were turned, and a new generation of researchers began to oppose what they regard as a rather superficial view of ‘Europe’ - witness the writings of the consociational democracy school - the British model was retained as at least one polar type.

The British model was also very much at the basis of the construction of formal models which have played a powerful role in the literature on parties and party systems, and on the functioning of democracy generally. Thus, it served Schumpeter with the material from which to fashion his ‘alternative theory of democracy’. Since Schumpeter published his Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy in 1942 writings on democracy have been suffused with views about rival elites competing for the people's vote. In practice, rather different assumptions went with such views. Some thought it possible to maintain a confident belief in the sovereignty of the electorate - for example, through reifying the notion of a ‘mandate’ as bestowing full power on the majority party for the limited period of one Parliament, and discounting the dangers of that notion by suggesting that governments were really controlled if not by the last, at least by the next election. Others followed Schumpeter more closely, stressing the fact that electoral will was really the product rather than the source of the political process. In either version the assumption remained that politics was above all a dualistic conflict between rival groups, a group in power and a group of opposition forces which would seek replace it.

Schumpeter undoubtedly strongly influenced the later elaboration and formalization of models of party politics by Anthony Downs (1957). In his book on An Economic Theory of Democracy, the ‘normal’ model of politics is very much that of two actors being forced to compete with one another for the same voters in the center of a political system, and thus being necessarily drawn to a moderate - and, in its logical conclusion, identical - position at the center. In reverse, Downs depicted a multi-party system as lacking by definition some of that ‘rationality’, parties now having the choice not to compete at large irrespective of ideological positions, but on the contrary carving out a special ideological position on which they might ‘particularize’ their appeal to specific groups of voters.

The Rejection of Multi-Party Systems

A logical corollary of the strong normative value of the British two-party system was the wholesale rejection of multi-party systems. Such a rejection is not difficult
to document. Three major examples are the traditional treatment of the politics of the French Third and Fourth Republic, Weimar Germany, and post-1945 Italy.

A wholesale rejection of the ‘instable’ politics of the French Third (and later Fourth) Republic formed the traditional tune of French as well as British observers. It sounded the theme of the fragmentation of will represented by the French Parliament, thought to be the inevitable consequence of a large number of constantly regrouping parties which was responsible for executive instability. That view led many in turn to the assumption that such stability as there was, was due to the force of the Napoleonic state which provided permanent strength in a system in which the party system was ineffective. This of course meant an acceptance that la fonction publique should remain free from the encroachment of parties. In contrast, parties were easily seen as instruments of self-seeking politicians, rising to power in a République des camarades.\(^{18}\) Specific explanations were thought to account for the weakness of parties in France. Some found this in an excessive role for ideology which kept voters apart and the Republic divided. Others emphasized the individualist recruitment of French members of Parliament which, as long as they nurtured their local constituencies, were really free to do as they wished in the Paris Assemblée, which was described as a maison sans fenêtres.

Such arguments, taken from debates in the early part of the twentieth century, were strongly reinforced by events in the 1930s and the Vichy experience which were to give rise in the Fourth Republic to the groping for solutions which were thought to lie in institutional reforms as diverse as introducing an effective right of dissolution to strengthen Cabinets against the ‘irresponsible maneuverings’ of Parliament, the introduction of a special mandate for a prime minister relying on a clear vote d’investiture, the manipulation of the electoral system, or beyond this the search for an independent electoral mandate for the executive. Such debates were to reach a feverish state in 1958 when the Fourth Republic succumbed, and France was to be given a new constitution under the decisive control of that ardent critic of the Third and Fourth Republic alike, General Charles de Gaulle. Parliament during the last gasps of the Fourth Republic put certain conditions when it agreed to a wholesale transfer of authority to De Gaulle. Among them was the insistence on the maintenance of free elections and the principle of a parliamentary system. But there is little doubt that the framers of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic intended specifically to reduce the power of Parliament, to circumscribe the role of traditional party groups, and to rely for good government instead on a president who in both his personal and constitutional capacities would be very much the arbitrator of political life and institutions. One finds in French legal and political writings a strong distaste for a multi-party system which entrusted government to constantly shifting, ineffective, and immobilist coalitions at the center, cet éternel marais in Duverger's words. As a corollary one finds a strong belief in the need and possibility of institutional tinkering with political systems, rather than a recognition of the value of a stable, functioning party system.

French writing is nothing compared to the effect of the even greater Kladderadatsch of Weimar. The Weimar Constitution had been hailed as the epitome of democratic politics, but was seen within a decade and a half to be power-
less to stop Hitler’s Machtsübernahme. Already before 1933 a vigorous debate had been opened on the appropriate role of parties and party systems. I have already signaled the habitual rejection of a Parteienstaat by constitutional thinkers in Germany. One major problem of government under Weimar was the inability of parties to form lasting government coalitions and to prevent the rise of a new totalitarian party which was to conquer power later. Again, as in France both in the interwar period and later, the presumed malfunctioning of the political system was attributed to a faulty party system. That argument might be directed against all parties and their tendency to encroach on the mainsprings of government which should remain free from their grip. It could also be turned against specific parties, whether those organized too strongly, as many non-socialists argued thinking of socialists or communists, or not strongly enough, as those were to argue who held the ‘democratic’ parties of Weimar to have been too timid and too weak to grasp real power, and to subordinate the state apparatus (including the bureaucracy, the military, and even the courts) to real democratic control. It was in this climate that Hermens could formulate his influential indictment of proportional representation as a major cause of the fail of Weimar: it was to that factor, so the argument went, that one should ascribe the nefarious ideologization and fragmentation of politics which proportional representation engendered. If one were to point to smaller European countries which seemed to be able to work democratic politics more effectively under one kind of proportional representation or other, that argument could easily be discounted with the riposte that larger states could not afford the inability to act as the realities of the international world inevitably charged larger states with responsibilities not resting on small countries. Such arguments, brought over to Britain and the United States by influential writers, including Hermens himself, could not but reinforce the conviction that ‘Anglo-Saxon’ two-party systems were superior, and that ‘continental’ systems of government suffered a congenital defect in lacking the ability to combine the realities of party politics with the need for unmistakable executive government.

The indictment of excessive multipartism has also been a constant feature in the criticism of Italian politics after 1945. Even before the drastic changes in the early 1990s the specter of Weimar hung over much of the political debate about the chances of democracy in Italy. There were undoubted similarities between Sartori’s model of extreme or polarized pluralist party systems on the one hand, and Hermens’s interpretation of the fail of the Weimar Republic, on the other. Thus, Sartori's notion of ‘ideological stretching’ resembles Hermens's argument, as does his view that ‘centrifugal’ forces will benefit ‘irresponsible oppositions’, which through a ‘policy of outbidding’ and ‘outflanking’ threaten the heart of responsible democratic politics. And for all his criticism of Duverger, Sartori's strong disavowal of center parties which by occupying the center ground induce centrifugal forces in the system is not so different from Duverger's fundamental rejection of the center. One of the major contributions of Sartori’s typology of party systems is his deliberate distinction between ‘moderate’ and ‘extreme’ pluralism, ‘moderate’ pluralist systems differing fundamentally from ‘extreme’ multiparty systems in having a mechanics of ‘blocs’ of parties in a system with two
poles that are not too far apart on an ideological dimension. One need not deny the merit of that model yet to notice that such a ‘moderate’ pluralist system apparently has some ‘British’ virtues, although it presumably remains a poor relation of the Westminster family.

The failure of alternation was a constantly recurring theme in the writings also of other Italian political scientists. The impact of such reasoning was so strong that a growing distaste for the ruling system parties could lead to a Wholesale overhaul of the electoral system, intended not only to throw the rascals out, but also to secure the blessings of alternating governments, so it was thought. Disappointment with the ensuing polarization would, however, soon make many one-time proponents of such reforms seek desperately for ways to strengthen moderate forces at the center.

The Re-evaluation of Multi-Party Systems

The preceding literature generally shares a dichotomous view of party systems: it opposes, in one form or another, a meritorious two-party system found in the Anglo-Saxon world to a rather less successful multi-party system characteristic of party systems on ‘the’ European continent. This simple dichotomy has since withered, as a result of at least two changes: first, the discovery that not all multiparty systems resembled Weimar, a Third or Fourth Republic France, or post-1945 Italy; and second, a growing criticism of the archetype of the two-party system as practiced at Westminster itself. Of course, some had always recognized that certain states seemed to have stable politics notwithstanding somewhat ‘quaint’ institutions and party divisions. Switzerland was generally accorded a special status, and so to a lesser extent were Scandinavian countries. Yet, there was an unmistakable touch of surprise in discoveries in the 1950s and later that not all Continental European systems resembled France (e.g. Wheare 1963), and that there were such things as ‘working multiparty systems’.21 I have already noted the earlier argument which clearly sought to explain away the examples of many a smaller democracy which apparently could afford the luxury of a ‘divided’ (not to speak of ‘fragmented’) system because unlike larger states they were not called on really to act in the world of international politics. However, a more fundamental re-evaluation was also taking place.

One factor was the growing tendency to draw up comparative tables as various new international organizations (notably the OECD and the EU) came to collect a variety of social indicators to assess the policy performance of different countries. Such tables hardly suggested a better record for Britain than for other European countries. In the process even countries long regarded as the ‘sick cases’ of Europe began to be seen in a new light. This happened first to the Federal German Republic, then to France, and for a time even to Italy. Although there remained considerable room for debate whether performance on economic or social indicators should be attributed to governments and their policies, or rather to successes scored irrespective of (or even notwithstanding) these governments or policies, it at least made clear that there was a problem which needed study.

A second factor was the growing internationalization of political studies.

Hans Daalder, *State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics*
Notably through the powerful impact of American political science, younger political scientists in country after country began to have a new look at their own systems. If they learned to reject too narrow historical and institutional approaches which had traditionally dominated the study of their own countries, they also could not help reacting more or less strongly to what to them smacked as often naive, and on closer analysis parochial, theories and typologies framed from the perspective of the United States, or Britain for that matter. If this initially implied little more than an insistence that one's own country was somehow different and did not really fit the place assigned to it on the as yet overly general map of comparative politics, it resulted eventually in the growth of a large body of monographic literature on which future comparative study could draw. And in certain cases it led to the deliberate development of counter-models.

Thirdly, an increasing sophistication of research methodology also led comparative scholars to look for more ‘cases’ with which to confirm or falsify particular hypotheses. Thus, a growing literature developed seeking to test hunches about a variety of phenomena, including the effect of electoral systems, the salience of particular cleavages in party systems, the measure of fragmentation, the duration of cabinets, and the validity of coalition theories. In such approaches one country might be as ‘good’ as another for empirical analysis. To some extent the complexity of multi-party systems might serve sophisticated analysts even better than the overly simple, and also somewhat rare, case of two-party polities.

The movement away from the one-time normative dominance of the British two-party systems was further strengthened by increasing criticism of the model in Britain itself. One could see this in the growing rejection of adversarial government (in this respect one should note the very considerable influence of the writings of S.E. Finer), the increased protest against a total sovereignty of Parliament which allows unrepresentative single-party governments absolute power, a renewed fear of the power of extra-parliamentary party organizations, and so forth.

The Consensus Multi-Party Model

The tables were definitely turned in the writings of my one-time compatriot, now an American citizen, but always admirable colleague Arend Lijphart who developed first the so-called ‘consociational democracy model’ and later the ‘consensus model’ of politics as a deliberate counter-model to the ‘Westminster type politics’ or ‘majoritarian government’. Lijphart began by way of deviant case analysis, using the Netherlands as a special case to criticize the assumptions of Almond and others that there was an unavoidable negative relationship between plural societies (characterized by a fragmented political culture) and democratic stability. He then generalized the consociational democracy model (systems in which elites consciously chose cooperation to counter the divisions of countries in different subcultures) to other European countries (notably Belgium, Austria, and Switzerland). From there, he went further to distinguish between ‘majoritarian’ political systems, ‘logically based on the principle of concentrating as much power as possible in the hands of the majority’, from their opposites, ‘based on
the principle of sharing, dispersing, and limiting power in a variety of ways’. In an analysis of twenty-one countries (actually twenty-two cases as he treated the French Fourth and Fifth Republic as separate cases) Lijphart found that one major dimension separating these two models was composed by features clearly related to differences relevant to the party system.25 ‘Majoritarian’ systems differed from ‘consensual’ systems on each of the following five characteristics: (1) concentration of executive power versus executive power-sharing; (2) executive dominance versus executive-legislative balance; (3) two-party versus multi-party systems; (4) one-dimensional versus multidimensional party systems; and (5) plurality election versus proportional representation. Lijphart then constructed a nine-cell table formed by three categories on this dimension and three on a second dimension composed of three other variables (unitary and centralized versus federal and decentralized government; unicameralism versus strong bicameralism; and unwritten versus written and rigid constitutions). He found that only one European country (Britain) was clearly majoritarian on both dimensions. But most European countries fell clearly on the consensual end of the continuum on the parties dimension, while only a few occupied intermediate places, and only Ireland, Austria, and Germany were closer to the ideal-type ‘majoritarian’ case.26

Lijphart's analysis went far to confirm earlier views that, far from representing the ‘normal’ model, the British case was rather the exception in European politics. Moving beyond this he also questioned its value as a ‘normative’ model, clearly arguing that what he termed the ‘consensual’ model was in many ways superior also as a prescriptive model, at least for countries which knew sharp social divisions as so many European countries historically did. If one surveys this rather considerable shift, away from a two-party model to an empirical and in the case of Lijphart undoubtedly also normative ‘consensus-model’, one cannot but feel that we are in the presence of a great many a priori views about the functioning, or not-functioning, of particular type of party systems, and hence in the presence of a literature which needs thorough rethinking.

The redundancy of parties

Finally, another trend of thought emerged which questions the very function of parties and party systems themselves. Such views were argued from a variety of perspectives. One view stated that parties played a historically specific role in mobilizing new groups of citizens and integrating them into the body politic; but once this historically unique task had been performed, parties would be proven to be transient phenomena only. Another view, somewhat less deterministic, held that parties which once represented distinct policies and groups fell increasingly under the working of market forces; in the process they came to resemble one another as Tweedledee and Tweedledum, losing their virtue with their specificity. A third argument emphasized not so much the role of parties themselves, but the increasing role of other political actors which singly or jointly went far to remove the substance of function and power
from parties, and thus caused parties no longer ‘to really matter’. A short review of each of these positions should be enough to indicate their impact and intent.
Political Parties as Passing Agents of Mass Mobilization

This school of thought attributed to parties a historically specific role in the process of democratization. As shown particularly clearly in the seminal writings of Stein Rokkan (1970), many European parties crystallized around the expansion of the franchise, and played a historical task in incorporating new groups into the body politic. From this some observers drew certain rather far-going conclusions (not drawn by Rokkan himself, one should hasten to say). One of these conclusions was that parties indeed fulfilled a specific historical task in drawing new citizen groups into the body politic. Having done this, parties no longer serve a real need, as other actors take over their role of mobilization and articulation.

Such a view could be reinforced by those who gave a particular interpretation to Lipset and Rokkan's famous freezing proposition. Rokkan's emphasis on the crucial role of past political alignments could be read as a proposition that parties which represented such alignments no longer reflect the 'new politics' of another era so that they must increasingly and inevitably lose their relevance in the contemporary world. Whether they do is an empirical question. For the present argument it suffices to state that such a conclusion could be construed on the basis of the freezing proposition.

Parties as Market Forces

Such thinking comes unexpectedly close to a second view which holds that parties are giving up their historical function and raison d'être, and are instead turning into mere market forces. One finds this argument to some degree in Schumpeter's theory of democracy, but it is made more explicitly in Downs, and particularly in the work of Otto Kirchheimer, who coined the term catch-all party. I shall take their arguments as read, emphasizing merely that in such views parties are no longer thought of as representing 'bodies of particular principle', but rather as vote-maximizing agents without any real ideologies of their own, in a time when ideologies come to an end anyhow and a new cynical realism takes over. One may note that here again we are in the presence of a somewhat normative statement (although Kirchheimer disliked his own creation) rather than of a fully proven empirical statement.

The Waning of Parties

A more definite step towards the view that parties are really redundant was made by those who came to query the role of party in modern society altogether. That view has been argued in a variety of ways: studies on 'whether parties really matter'; theories about neocorporatism; a neopluralist perspective which sees 'action groups' as replacing parties as chief agents of political representation; and a renewed call for the introduction of new direct democracy instruments, if not the increased use of such instruments already in place.
Doubts about the extent to which parties really mattered had their origin in American political science. Students of comparative state politics came to ask the question whether policy outcomes in different American states could be attributed to peculiarities of their party system (for example, whether Democrats or
Republicans were in charge, or whether states were clearly competitive between them), or to the more general social conditions prevailing in any one state which threw up their own problems for whatever party happened to be in charge. This type of analysis was taken over by students of comparative public policy using European data. One major line of analysis concerned the expansion of the welfare state, and of particular policies within it. Such analyses tied in closely with older studies of ‘political economy’ or ‘public finance’, which ever since Wagner (1892) held that the increase of state tasks and expenditures was a function not of ideology but of objective social and economic changes accompanying industrialization. One particular variant of this kind of analysis centered on the degree to which socialists could have a differential impact in societies which some described as having a ‘mixed’ economy but others preferred to call essentially ‘capitalist’. If some found that the participation of socialists in government did matter, others found the opposite. The latter view was in consonance with Marxist and Neo-Marxist critics who saw in Stamokap (a conjunction of state and monopoly capital) yet another stage in the development of capitalism seeing in the close linkage between state and economic interests an explanation why capitalism had not yet come to its close as a crisis-model would inevitably have it.

The elaboration of more detailed neocorporatist theories took place very much against a similar background of left-wing hopes being destroyed by the harsh realities of social structural developments. Many proponents of the neocorporatist approach did not care to discuss the role of parties, or tended at most to treat them as surface phenomena. They clearly held that the importance of what Rokkan called ‘the partisan-electoral channel’ was greatly overwhelmed by the realities of ‘corporate pluralism’. Neocorporatist writers pointed to the rapid and reciprocal expansion of state agencies and specialized interest groups which settled policies between them in a direct give and take without party actors interfering. Clearly, roles that parties were thought to play (and possibly had once played) in determining government policy were thus fulfilled by institutionalized interest groups intertwined with sections of officiandom. Being side-stepped in policy-making and policy-implementation, parties also became less functional in their traditional role of articulation and aggregation.

A third school of thought about an inevitable waning of parties based itself on the increased role of ad hoc ‘action groups’. If special interests had specific institutionalized channels which gave them direct access to government, so other groups learnt that the interest of policy-makers was often secured more easily by direct action tactics and media exposure than by working through the more tortuous channels of party decision-making. Paradoxically, therefore, the traditional role of parties as intermediaries was thought to be eroded by two seemingly opposite processes: the increased institutionalization of sectional interests and the attempt by such groups as well as single-interest groups and ad hoc media interests to short-circuit the road to the government agenda through direct action tactics.

Finally, there is the deliberate use of direct democracy instruments to sidestep the role of parties. Such tendencies can be seen in a variety of political expedients and reforms. Thus, ever since the adoption at the beginning of the French Fifth
Republic of the 1958 Constitution and the ensuing (unconstitutional) 1962 referendum which introduced the direct election of the French president, the wish for a directly elected executive has exercised an unmistakable lure in other European countries as well. In parliamentary elections, there has been a marked increase in the role of communication specialists who tend to package politicians rather than seek a mandate for party platforms. One can signal an increased call for and use of referenda, precisely to take specific decisions out of the hand of party-controlled parliaments, not to speak of possible regime change. And of late, there has been the new hype of a presumed teledemocracy which should restore the ‘democratic city-state’ through new electronic media which purportedly would allow its citizens to share directly in political debate and to take binding decisions without having to rely on party intermediaries.

Conclusion

The preceding survey - which is partly an inventory of theoretical propositions, partly a sketch of changing political moods in the wake of far-going political and social changes which have taken place in European societies - should make clear that a great many often a priori arguments enter into any discussion of the role of party in European politics. As we saw, the period began with a denial of party and of lingering doubts about the extent to which parties might properly intrude on government. Once parties came to be more accepted there were still doubts about what parties were to be preferred: looser parties of representation or mass parties representing groups formed on specific cleavages. In all such cases the specter of more totalitarian parties (whether fascist or national-socialist, or communist) hovered as a portentous presence. Furthermore, parties came to be accepted much more easily in certain societies than in others. They were greeted with most reluctance in states which had a powerful tradition of authoritarian government represented most distinctly by dynasties and their bureaucracies. Wherever more pluralist traditions had prevailed in processes of state making, older traditions of representation and conceptions of politics in terms of balanced estates or interests was to facilitate the eventual legitimation of parties. Modern parties formed mainly as existing or aspiring elites mobilized an expanding number of voters: as Rokkan taught us, the cleavages which were salient at the time of the advent of universal suffrage were to have a very strong impact on later divisions, and hence on the format of party systems.

Much of the writing on parties and party systems was inspired by individual country experiences. Notably the British system was long held up as an enviable model, both in Britain itself but also among critics of existing party systems elsewhere. In contrast, notions about multi-party systems were for a long time heavily colored by experiences in countries which saw their party system end with their democratic regime, as in Fascist Italy, Weimar Germany, and to some extent 1940 or 1958 France. The situation began to change when the British two-party system came increasingly under criticism, while at the same time multi-party systems began to have a more favorable image, first through greater knowledge of the politics of smaller European democracies, then also in the increasingly rehabilitated larger
continental European countries. The turn towards more empirical styles of comparative political science research greatly facilitated this development.

But at the same time the political relevance of parties and party competition was increasingly questioned. Some six lines of argument which contributed to that line of argument have been reviewed: the view that parties are by nature the product of a historical period of initial mass mobilization, but have now become largely irrelevant for present-day political choices; the catch-all proposition which argued that the pull of the market led parties to give up their once distinct functions of articulating and aggregating policy positions; the debate on whether parties really mattered in the elaboration of policies which in reality are determined by objective structural requirements of modern society; neocorporatist theories which see in the interaction of specialized state agencies and interest groups the real arena of political decision-making, while parties appear to become mere surface phenomena; the view that parties lose out increasingly as the primary channels of articulation and aggregation in favor of ‘direct action’ groups and media contacts; and the renewed advocacy of direct democracy instruments which would ‘free’ the citizen from party control. Again, this survey should make clear that ‘general’ statements about parties frequently contain highly a priori assumptions. Often, the assumed ‘crisis of parties’ is mainly a euphemism for a dislike of parties. The debate is shot through with speculative statements about ‘inexorable’ trends: towards mass parties, towards catch-all parties, towards a ‘waning’ of parties as other political actors take over. There is much less in the way of detailed study of the actual role of parties.

If we want to do better, what should we do? First, we should seek to query the presence of possible, normative biases in the literature, and our own thought and writings. Some of these have been spelt out in the preceding pages. Secondly, we should attempt to detail the different criteria by which the working of parties and party systems may be judged. Any such attempt is likely to reveal the existence of conflicting criteria. If so, such conflicts should be clearly faced rather than left unanswered. Thirdly, one should carefully specify the particular roles and functions which parties play. It may well be that parties are losing certain functions, but gaining others (notably in political recruitment). The assumed ‘crisis of party’ may result from a one-sided focusing on some functions to the possible neglect or exclusion of others. This may lead us to write off parties rather than to analyze their actual functioning and possible changes in them.

Once we have faced possible biases (and hopefully discarded them), once we have replaced such biases by a clear specification of normative criteria (even though these may be mutually conflicting), and once we have realized fully the manifold functions which parties and party systems fulfill in democratic societies, we must turn towards a full study of the empirical record. This will force us to investigate the actual functioning of parties and party systems in relation to other political actors, most notably the voters, interest groups and action groups, the media, and the various actors within government ranging from Cabinets and Members of Parliament to different levels of the bureaucracy. In doing so, we are likely to find considerable differences, from time-period to time-period, from country to country, from one possible function of parties or party systems to an-
other, from one site of decision-making to another. This should force us to give up many easy generalizations, and instead to grapple with very complex developments. If this will disillusion us of popular certainties, it will undoubtedly make for more realistic comparative insights.

Eindnoten:

10. I am of course referring to the old debate on whether electoral systems ‘make’ party systems, or whether inversely party systems are likely to ‘make’ electoral systems to suit their needs - a subject with which, one would have thought, Stein Rokkan dealt with conclusively in his famous article on ‘Electoral Systems’ in the *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* (1968).
19. This line of reasoning may have been an important factor in the deliberate upgrading of parties in the Federal German Republic after 1949, not least by massive financial support given by the state.

20. One should note that in his younger days Giovanni Sartori was assistant to G. Maranini, Professor of Political Science in Florence. Maranini shared Hermens’ belief that proportional representation caused the downfall of democratic politics and thus inexorably paved the way for fascism. See his intervention in the debate about electoral politics in Heckscher, G. (1957), *The Study of Comparative Government and Politics*, London: Allen & Unwin.


III.
The consociational model
chapter ten | on building consociational nations: the cases of the
netherlands and switzerland

Introduction

Of late, the term ‘consociational’ has been increasingly used to characterize a certain
pattern of political life in which the political elites of distinct social groups succeed
in establishing a viable, pluralistic state by a process of mutual forbearance and
accommodation. In modern social Science, the word was first used by David Apter.1
The term was further elaborated into a general classificatory concept by Arend
Lijphart.2 Independently of him and sometimes under different terms like
Proporzdemokratie or Konkordanzdemokratie, Gerhard Lehmbruch, Jürg Steiner,
and Rodney Stiefbold have sought to analyze comparable types of political
experience.3

The word *consociatio* originated with Johannes Althusius.4 It is significant that a
term first adopted to analyze the development of a new polity in the Low Countries
in the early seventeenth century, is now being revived in the study of comparative
political development in the twentieth century. A process of building-up a new
political society from below, to some degree by the consent of participating
communities, in which deliberate compromises by elites carefully circumscribe and
limit the extent to which political power can be wielded by one political center, may
be a relatively rare political phenomenon. Yet it provides at least a significant footnote
to the prevailing mood in the study of nation-building which so often proceeds from
the assumption that nationhood should be forged from above, by the deliberate
imposition of a ‘modern’ state on traditional society.

The term ‘consociational democracy’ has been used by Lijphart to characterize
the political life of European countries (the Low Countries, Austria, Switzerland) as
well as countries on other continents (e.g. Israël, Lebanon, Uruguay, Colombia).
This chapter will deal only in its conclusion with the general model of consociational
democracy. Its major emphasis will be on a two-country comparison prompted by
the suggestion of Stein Rokkan that a treatment of the Dutch and Swiss cases of
nation-building might open ‘fascinating possibilities of comparative historical
analysis.’5 Inevitably, in the context of a short chapter, the argument will proceed
mainly in the form of propositions that stand in need of more detailed historical
substantiation.

Comparison presupposes common as well as contrasting characteristics. In the
first section of this chapter, common elements in the political development of the

* Hans Daalder, ‘On Building Consociational Nations: The Cases of the Netherlands and
Netherlands and Switzerland will be traced. In the second section, the focus will shift to differences between the two countries. The chapter will conclude with some remarks on more theoretical questions that are prompted by a comparison of Dutch and Swiss experiences in nation-building with those of other countries.

**Common characteristics of Swiss and Dutch nation-building processes**

Both the Netherlands and Switzerland provide examples of states that attained international sovereignty with only minimal internal consolidation. Some violence did occur both in the processes of external demarcation and internal integration; but nationhood typically grew through extensive processes of accommodation and compromise. In the typology of European states the two countries resemble the United Kingdom and Sweden in their centuries-old status as independent polities that show strong traditions of continuous representative organs and that grew slowly - but without reversals - into modern democratic societies. But unlike these two countries, nationhood was achieved without dynastic guidance or early central government. Like Italy and Germany, the modern state developed through unification of once highly dispersed political communities. But whereas conquest and forceful unification stood at the cradle of Italian and German statehood, Swiss and Dutch statehood as well as nationhood were formed on the whole by compact and accommodation.

If one seeks to account for the Dutch and Swiss developments, the following factors would seem to stand out.

**Geopolitical Factors**

Otto Hintze long ago drew attention to the importance for later developments of the specific location of certain countries at the periphery of the Holy Roman Empire. Due to the weakness of central authority in the Empire, independent dukedoms, bishoprics, counties, cities, cantons and provinces maintained themselves with a high degree of political self-sufficiency and independence when in other countries like France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the Scandinavian countries, dynastic rule resulted in centralized statehood. The development notably of the United Kingdom and France as strong power centers on the international scene, assisted the further development of political independence of Switzerland and the Netherlands: Swiss independence after the fifteenth century was strengthened by a special relationship with France, and Dutch nationhood was achieved not least because Habsburgs, Bourbons, and Stuarts were unwilling to see political control over the European Delta go to any one of them.

A second common geopolitical factor between the Netherlands and Switzerland is their location at some of the most important trade routes of Europe. This location led to the early development of mercantile cities. Both in the Netherlands and in some of the more important Swiss cantons, cities thus gained a dominant position that they also extended over the surrounding countryside. But these cities remained
at the same time highly particularist political communities. In both countries a polycephalous city network developed in which no single city could become
the ‘capital city’ for the whole country. Switzerland as well as the Netherlands remained for a long time, much to the dislike of nineteenth-century unifiers like Friedrich List, a Konglomerat von Munizipalitäten. Moreover, in both countries strong rural cantons and provinces retained an independent political title beside the more prosperous city-dominated polities.

Third, for geographic reasons, neither country saw the development of large land ownership. Communal grazing practices in Switzerland, common needs for the protection of land against the ever-present threat of the sea and rivers in the Lowlands, made for an early development of self-reliant peasant communities. If not always in practice, this arrangement provided at least in political theory for the idea of self-governing communes administered by commoners. Later political developments could, therefore, be inspired by ancient traditions.

The Peculiar Development of Sovereignty

Both in the Netherlands and in Switzerland, independent national existence was originally decided by the force of arms. Territorial consolidation was achieved only by extensive military battles against foreign claimants and, to some extent, at least in Switzerland, by a show of strength against internal dissidents. Local military conflicts decided the course of later frontiers, and military alliances began the process of later development of national identity. To state that nationhood emerged from the completely voluntary association of free communities, would therefore be an unwarranted simplification. In the Netherlands, the seven United Provinces conquered Brabant and Limburg in the 1620s and 1630s and ruled them as dependent territories for 150 years. Switzerland for long was a patchwork of Urkantone, associated cantons and a host of dependencies of which Ticino and Vaud were the most important. The essence of Dutch and Swiss political life remained for very long a motley arrangement of particularist communities, not national cooperation among equals.

Yet, this very particularism had important consequences for later developments. Interestingly, even the more important, potentially more powerful provinces and cantons did not aspire to become central administrative capitals. And even in dependent territories, local traditions and local governments were permitted to persist. A measure of traditionalist self-sufficiency could eventually substantiate later claims for a separate identity on a par with former overlords. The much dispersed power structure gave ample scope, moreover, for local elites to maintain themselves, and for the confederation as a whole to continue irrespective of political changes within any of the constituent political communities. If there was hardly any national political life, there were also no strong national cleavages or conflicts.

Both the Netherlands and Switzerland emerged therefore as independent political societies without either a strong central government apparatus or an articulate national identity. Common affairs were decided ad hoc by political procedures that resembled international conferences rather than legitimate national government. Neither the United Provinces nor the Swiss Confederation knew a central army or a central bureaucracy. There were no organs of state that could act directly on the individual and there was no concept of common citizenship.

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Does this mean that one cannot speak of a Dutch or a Swiss nationality in this period? The answer is somewhat in the nature of a *petitio principii*. If one defines ‘the central factor of nation-building’ as ‘the orderly exercise of a nation-wide public authority,’ the answer must be negative, as no such nationwide public authority existed. If one speaks of nations only when there has been a ‘process whereby people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller tribes, villages, or petty principalities to the larger central political system,’ [emphasis added] the conclusion must be equally negative. But one could also argue that at least one condition of nationality - sovereign political existence - had been fulfilled. And if one defines nationality more in terms of at least some consciousness of togetherness rather than as an exclusivist transfer of loyalties to a new state, signs of an incipient nationhood could be found at least among the leading political strata of Swiss and Dutch society.

The Persistence of Pluralism in Modernization

The French Revolution, undoubtedly, had a major effect on the development of Dutch and to a lesser extent on that of Swiss nationhood. In the Netherlands, French occupation brought a lasting unitary state, common citizenship, common laws, and equal rights for the various religions. In Switzerland, the institutions of the Helvetic Republic proved abortive, but old inequalities between the cantons disappeared and virtually equal rights were secured for the main languages. Eventually, Switzerland too moved to more definite forms of (federal) statehood in 1848.

But the drive of radical forces for unification (as represented by the Dutch *Patriotten beweging* or the Swiss Helvetic Society towards the end of the eighteenth century, or again by innovative radicals around 1848) never succeeded in achieving a sharp break with older pluralist traditions. If thinkers of the French Enlightenment put the twin concepts of absolutism and individualism against what they conceived as the dead weight of privileged corporate interests, Dutch and Swiss traditions consistently regarded an entrenched pluralism as the safeguard of liberties. Admittedly, these old liberties (in the plural) might frustrate individual equality and individual liberty (in the singular). Yet, corporate rights were regarded as important in themselves, as well as a protection against threatening claims by an omnipotent new state.

The formation of the Dutch and Swiss nations could therefore become the result of a slow process of genuine national integration, rather than that of deliberate nation-building. It would be difficult to point to one social group, or one political center, or one legal institution that might be regarded as the chief nation-building force. Data on elite recruitment (whether on Dutch Cabinet personnel or on Swiss members of Parliament show that elite positions in the nineteenth century were shared widely by all the major regions of the country. National integration first evolved slowly on the level of accommodating elites, to filter down later to the more parochial orders of society. The slow development of a stronger national sentiment in the population at large was therefore in the main complementary to, rather than destructive of, older local allegiances.
In Dutch and Swiss nineteenth-century history one also looks in vain for a salient role of the usual agencies of nation-building: the army, the bureaucracy, national schools.

National armies appeared relatively late on the Dutch and Swiss scenes. Although they may have played some role in the political socialization of recruits into a developing national political culture - a role so often attributed to armies - a definite sense of national identity preceded the introduction of compulsory military service.

Especially in Switzerland, the national bureaucracy has remained of relatively modest dimensions, not the least because the cantonal governments retained very major political and administrative functions in the federal structure. In the Netherlands also, which was a unitary state from 1795 onwards, the central bureaucracy remained of modest size until the early twentieth century. Recruitment to higher civil service roles has retained many of the features of earlier particularist elite practices. To this day, the Swiss and the Dutch bureaucracy remain in many respects not only nationalizing agencies, but also points of brokerage between highly differentiated subgroups of society.

Schools have undoubtedly played an important role in fostering the development of national sentiment. But in Switzerland control over education has, in practice, remained a highly regionalized and localized affair. In the Netherlands, an attempt by secular, liberal elite groups in the second part of the nineteenth century to build up a centralized school system soon ran into strong opposition from Calvinists and Catholics who successfully fought for autonomy of religious schools under their own control. An inspection of the course content of Dutch and Swiss schools would probably reveal an insistence on both national and sub-national allegiances, typically regarded as fully compatible.

Thus, older traditions of elite accommodation, which had grown from the necessities of the highly dispersed power structure of the pre-1789 confederations, could be carried over into the modernization process. Older pluralist elite attitudes facilitated the gradual settlement of participation demands from new social groupings in society. Both in Switzerland and in the Netherlands verbal adherence to ancient ideals of accountable government had gone together in practice with effective rule by relatively narrow - albeit also pluralist - elite groups. But typically, these groups had enjoyed a high degree of legitimacy. The franchise was extended only slowly and older practices by which policies were preferably determined in negotiations and compromises outside the public market place, have retained a strong hold in the political culture. Both the Netherlands and Switzerland substantiate two of Stein Rokkan's hypotheses: (a) 'The stronger the inherited traditions of representative rule, whether within estates, territorial assemblies or city councils, the greater the chances of early legitimation of opposition;' and (b) 'the stronger the inherited traditions of representative rule, the slower, and the less likely to be reversed, the processes of enfranchisement and equalization.'

Finally, in the two countries, a strong emphasis on the need to insure that political power could not become concentrated in one political center, has continued to form part of the political culture. More so in Switzerland than in the Netherlands,
local governments have been kept strong and relatively independent political sites. In both countries, central government institutions have been so arranged as to insure a definite duality between the executive and the legislature. Within each, older pluralist traditions and modern electoral devices have seen to it that political power has been divided over a variety of political parties: the distance that separates even the largest party from the majority point has been greater in Switzerland and in the Netherlands than in practically any other European countries. Coalition government is ingrained both within the official government structures and in the decision-making processes of the large number of interest groups.

In sum, ancient pluralism has facilitated the development of a stable, legitimate, and consistently pluralist modern society. Both the Netherlands and Switzerland are countries with strong subcultural divisions. Yet, of the six possible ways to deal with subcultural conflicts according to Robert A. Dahl, violence and repression as well as secession or separation have been remarkably absent. Instead, a respect for autonomy, a habitual reference to proportional representation, and sometimes a willingness to abide by mutual veto rather than undiluted majority decisions have been characteristic features of Dutch and Swiss political culture. And this instinctive respect for diversity has, paradoxically, eased modern processes of assimilation.

**Contrasts between Dutch and Swiss nation-building processes**

If ‘the inevitability of gradualness’ in a consistently pluralist evolution is the most obvious common characteristic of the two countries, certain differences between them should also be noted.

**Geopolitical Factors**

Geographic factors have differentiated Dutch and Swiss political development on the following points.

First, Dutch geography provided less durable barriers to processes of social mobility than did the Swiss terrain. Particularism was therefore more easily broken up once the homogenizing processes of political modernization set in. The most conspicuous illustration of this process is the relatively unhindered development of one national language. To this day Frisian remains a separate language spoken by a few hundred thousand persons; in addition there are numerous slowly disappearing Dutch dialects, but there was never any real issue about the acceptance of the original tongue of the burghers of the cities of the Netherlands as the national language. This fact, in turn, facilitated easy communication throughout the country, and paved the way for stronger assimilatory processes than could be found in Switzerland.

Second, Switzerland is a land-locked country, the Netherlands very much a sea-faring nation. The latter country acquired a colonial empire, and also developed other strong overseas links. At the same time, the Netherlands psychologically stood

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for a long time - to use a habitual Dutch metaphor - with its back against the European continent (strong trading links with the *Hinterland* notwith-
standing). The Dutch self-image was therefore relatively little influenced by the country's precarious position as a small European state at the borders of larger European powers. Switzerland, on the other hand, was acutely conscious of its larger neighbors. The very fact that Swiss citizens spoke the languages of three larger neighboring states - and that each of these tended to define nationality in linguistic terms - made it imperative to separate the concept of nationhood from any possible link with seemingly objective ‘national’ criteria of language, culture, or ethnic descent.\(^\text{20}\) Of the two countries, the Netherlands became the more homogeneous, unconsciously nationalized society; Switzerland the more heterogeneous diversified State which embraced a self-conscious ‘political’ definition of nationhood.\(^\text{21}\)

**Differences in Political Centralization**

Since 1795, the Netherlands has been the more centralized political community, but even before, some vestiges of centralization could be found in the Low Countries. The Dutch Republic, after all, developed when mediaeval traditions inspired particularist societies in the sixteenth century to revolt against the Burgundians who seemed destined to become the most successful centralizing dynasty of Europe.\(^\text{22}\) If the Dutch Revolt arrested this drive towards centralization, some remnants of it could yet be found in some of the curious political organs of the Dutch Republic. Notably, the office of the *stadhouder* (literally, the Sovereign's *remplaçant*) retained vestiges of earlier centralizing practices, and provided a political base for the Orange dynasty that had no counterpart in Swiss history. Technically, the *stadhouders* were servants of each of the provinces, and for long periods the city aristocracies successfully kept the Orange princes from power. But the office carried the command of fleet and army, and eventually developed even before the arrival of the unitary state into a unifying force, complete with court and court circle.

Much more than the Swiss Confederation, the Dutch Republic was for a time an active participant on the international scene. Some of the Orange princes - as well as the Grand-Pensionary of Holland - were actively involved in high diplomatic maneuvers. The Dutch fleet, and the Dutch colonies, also made for a stronger international presence. This more active international stance hardly contributed towards internal consolidation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, activist foreign policies were settled in the most narrow circles, in which the otherwise highly particularist representatives of the Province of Holland had a decisive voice. Typically, activism in foreign policy was more characteristic of the loosely structured Dutch Republic than of the nineteenth-century centralized kingdom. But the role played by the Republic in international affairs created at least a self-conscious image of the international importance of the Netherlands, which later nationalist historians could exploit on behalf of nationalist mythology.

Both during the days of French supremacy, and after the defeat of Napoleon, there was a definite revulsion against centralized structures in both countries. But whereas Switzerland reverted almost completely to the old order in 1813, the Netherlands knew its period of strongest autocratic rule after 1815. Fears of the older diversity caused the new kings to obtain strong powers. Control over local
governments remained strongly centralized, and to this day the appointment of provincial governors and local mayors rests with the central government. Decisive powers were explicitly vested in the national government. Ever since 1813, Dutch political life has tended to be national in scope: constitutional conflicts centered on the national institutions, and political oppositions tended to develop as contestants in one national political arena.

In contrast, nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments in Switzerland have been far less centralistic in nature. Not only after 1813, but also after the formation of a genuine political federation in 1848, Swiss politics has remained a very specific compromise between local, regional, and national forms of government. The Swiss Gemeinde has retained many characteristics of autonomous polities, including lifelong administrative and sentimental ties with persons born within its boundaries. The Swiss cantons have remained powerful bodies, with great diversities in structure and policies. And even in the national institutions, regional interests hold an important place. The Swiss Upper House (like the American Senate) continues to give absolute parity to cantons, large or small; the Dutch Eerste Kamer is also elected by the provincial councillors but only after a complex weighting arrangement makes the vote of each council or proportional to population. The Swiss Executive (Bundesrat), composed of only seven members, preserves a careful balance between linguistic and regional interests, unlike the much larger Dutch Cabinets that are formed almost exclusively with an eye to the relative strength of political parties. Also in the election of the Lower House - as well as the day-to-day functioning of political parties - regional forces play a much greater role in Switzerland than in the Netherlands. Being more important than Dutch local government posts, cantonal government positions provide much greater sources of leverage for local politicians within their national parties than can be found in the Netherlands.

Differences in the Cleavage Structure

The much greater, continuing influence of regional factors in Swiss political life strongly affects the degree of politicization of various cleavages. This factor may perhaps be best illustrated in the very different manner in which religious factors have affected the growth of national integration.

Both the Netherlands and Switzerland belong to the mixed religious belt in Europe in which Protestants and Catholics live side by side. In the United Provinces, Calvinism became the established church, even though Catholics never numbered less than a third of the Dutch population. Catholics not only lived in the conquered provinces of Brabant and Limburg, but also formed large minorities - and locally even majorities - in the western parts of the country. Switzerland did not know a national established church; the effective independence of each of the cantons made for the development of specific Catholic and specific Protestant cantons (true to the old Augsburg formula of cuius regio eius religio). Much more so than in the Netherlands, religion was therefore tied to specific regional positions.

This factor had great effect on later developments. The localization of religion in Switzerland in particular cantons exacerbated regional strife. It polarized con-
lict to such an extent that religious conflict led to the regional *Sonderbund* war in 1847.24

In the Netherlands, on the other hand, national unification after 1795 had insured equal rights for all religious groups throughout the state. But both the secular claims of the new state and the widespread processes of secularization in society at large provoked Calvinists and Catholics to demand autonomy for their churches and denominational control over education. This issue made religion the dominant dividing line in the formation of modern political parties in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, religion therefore became both an integrative and a divisive force. It split mixed religious local communities, and built strong organizational links among like-minded believers across the nation. The strong institutional build-up of Calvinist and Catholic organizations led to a strong segmentation of the Dutch nation in separate subcultural communities of Calvinists, Catholics, and more secular groups. But this new division, while splitting the country along a new dimension, integrated and nationalized political life.

The subordination of regional to religious cleavages can be best illustrated by the example of the Dutch Catholics. About half of the Dutch Catholics live in the two southern provinces of Brabant and Limburg. These provinces shared a common history, similar patterns of speech, and religious outlook with neighboring Belgium. Belgian Catholicism exercised a strong influence on these southern provinces, not the least because a Catholic hierarchy had disappeared in the north when Calvinists captured the leadership of the Dutch Revolt at the end of the sixteenth century. Until very late, only weak administrative links and at most tenuous integrationist contacts on the level of a narrow political elite linked Brabant and Limburg between 1650 and 1850 with the remainder of the Netherlands. These circumstances would seem to make Brabant and Limburg natural candidates for secessionist stirrings. Why then did these not materialize?

The explanation probably lies in differences in the timing of political mobilization. Brabant and Limburg remained for a long time the least developed, most traditional part of the Netherlands. Northern Catholics, on the other hand - living as distinct minority groups in a part of the country that modernized earliest - developed a more definite political consciousness than their southern brethren. Sensitive to the massive Protestantism that surrounded them, these Catholic minorities demanded a return of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in order to secure their identity with a definite organizational base. The resurrection of the Catholic hierarchy in 1853 - and later joint political action for other Catholic interests - strengthened organizational links between Catholics of all parts of the country. The fight on behalf of separate Catholic interests simultaneously promoted the integration of Brabant and Limburg in the Dutch nation.

In both the Netherlands and Switzerland, then, religion was an important cleavage line. But the much greater political centralization of the Dutch state made religion less a regional than a national source of political conflict. Much more so than in Switzerland, regional factors were subordinated to national partisan alignments. If in Switzerland religion was one factor in a highly diversified society, in the Netherlands the contest between Calvinists, Catholics, and more secular ele-
ments of the society became of overriding importance; in this process a strongly integrated, but religiously segmented political community developed.

We can make this statement more general. Partly due to the much greater role of regional factors, Swiss political culture is more highly fragmented than Dutch political culture. Factors of class, religion, language, and regionalism intersect one another at numerous points. None of these factors have assumed dominant importance, and in many cases the potential for politicization of any one cleavage line has been minimized by rival claims of other possible divisions. Swiss politics, too, might be dubbed ‘the politics of accommodation.’ But accommodationist practices are diffused among many more sites and arenas than in the Netherlands, where religion (and to a lesser extent class) came to subordinate other potential cleavages as the basis on which political organizations were formed and political decisions made.

Consociational democracy and Dutch and Swiss experience

In this final section, we shall raise, on the basis of Swiss and Dutch experience, some more general theoretical questions. These are important if one seeks to generalize from the experiences of these two countries to wider issues of possible models of nation-building. Two issues deserve special attention: (a) to what extent is consociationalism a matter of free choice for political elite groups; and (b) is the model of consociationalism restricted to nations of smaller size?

Consociationalism as Free Choice?

In the argument of Arend Lijphart, consociational democracy should be seen above all as a result of ‘deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilizing and destabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation,’ undertaken by leaders of rival subcultures; Lijphart defines consociational democracy as ‘government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy.’ Implicit in this reasoning is the statement that certain political societies develop such sharp cleavages, that only the ‘deliberate joint effort by the elites [can] stabilize the system.’

Lijphart's argument is directed against the writings of a generation of scholars who have ascribed the stability of political systems to a combination of a homogeneous political culture and a group structure in which ‘cross-cutting cleavages’ make for overlapping memberships and hence for political moderation. He attributes a vital importance to the stance of political elites who may turn the expected dangers of a fragmented political culture into a ‘self-denying prophecy,’ by counteracting the divisive effects through conscious policies of accommodation. He mentions certain conditions that should be fulfilled for a successful consociational democracy: (1) that the elites have the ability to accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures; (2) that they have the ability to transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elites of rival subcultures; (3) [that they have] a
commitment to the maintenance of the system and to the improvement of its cohesion and stability; (4) finally, that the elites understand the perils of political fragmentation.

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These are demanding conditions, but they remain largely on the level of free choice by strategic elite groups. The major theme of the earlier part of this chapter has been that, in the Netherlands and Switzerland, traditions of pluralism and political accommodation long preceded the processes of political modernization. Against Lijphart's views of consociational democracy as the outcome of a desire on the part of elites to counteract the potential threat of political divisions, one might put forth the reverse thesis: earlier consociational practices facilitated the peaceful transition towards newer forms of pluralist political organization in these two countries. Consociationalism, in this view, is not a response to the perils of subcultural splits, but the prior reason why subcultural divisions never did become perilous.

Whereas our analysis starts from a developmental perspective of centuries, Lijphart gives a critical analysis of certain general sociological models that have a somewhat static character. In doing so, Lijphart remains, to some extent, hostage to some of the mechanistic fallacies that underlie the literature on political cleavages. This body of literature often assumes, without adequate political analysis, that social divisions automatically translate themselves into political conflicts, hence the search for cross-cutting cleavages to dampen the explosive potential of polarized cleavage lines. Hence, also Lijphart's quest for counteracting forces on the elite level, when he finds societies in which cross-cutting cleavages seem to be replaced by mutually reinforcing dividing lines. Both views tend to neglect the important question of what forces make for the politicization, or non-politicization of dividing lines. Under general terms like 'subcultural splits,' 'segmentation,' 'fragmentation,' 'cleavages,' all manner of social divisions are regarded as loaded with potential political content. Rarely are different cleavage-lines distinguished according to their potential for politicization. Too little attention is paid to the issue of whether earlier politicization of one cleavage line may prevent the exploitation of other possible cleavages. Elite cultures are regarded too much as a dependent variable only: Lijphart's elites act to counteract the perils of 'objective' cleavages. In our view, on the other hand, the elite culture is in itself a most important independent variable that may go far to determine how cleavages are handled in a political society, to what extent they become loaded with political tension, and to what degree subcultural divisions are solved in a spirit of tolerance and accommodation, or by violence and repression.

The importance of these theoretical matters for the comparative study of nation-building processes should be obvious. The view of elite culture as an important independent variable forces one to take a long developmental perspective. Differences between existing nation-states are seen to be to a considerable extent the product of earlier forms of state formation.

Similarly, the future of nation-building efforts in the new states becomes highly dependent on prior elite experiences. Prevailing ideological outlooks in the new states are not favorable for consociationalist choices. Older pluralist traditions in the new states are strong, but they are regarded generally by present-day political elites as obstacles that should be cleared away, rather than as building-stones from which a new, pluralist nation might be constructed. Later developments will de-
pend to a very large extent on choices now taken. The importance of stressing the various alternative roads to modern statehood, including the consociational one, lies in the need to destroy the widespread assumption that *Blut und Eisen* is the ‘normal’ path to nation-building.29.

### Consociationalism - A Luxury of Small Nations?

Both the Netherlands and Switzerland are smaller nations. It has often been argued that their specific political experiences are related to that fact. A Standard argument holds that smaller nations can practice a certain pattern of political life that larger states could not endure, exactly because these latter states cannot escape the international responsibilities their size forces on them.30. According to this theory, larger states carry a greater political load. They must have certain institutions that allow them to act with sufficient decisiveness. Considerations of defense necessitate a larger army that in turn requires a strong bureaucracy. The need to act rules out the cumbersome accommodationist styles of Swiss or Dutch politics; for that reason electoral systems like proportional representation or accommodationist coalition systems on the level of the cabinet or chief executive are impracticable. In the particular case of Switzerland (or the Netherlands before 1940), the stance was moreover facilitated by the fact that the surrounding powers liked to see neutral states in charge of strategic locations. Even this factor implied neutrality by imposition; it gave these countries a license for internal tolerance and cumbersome pluralism that larger nations could not afford.31

It is not easy to assess the justification of this body of reasoning. Undoubtedly, countries like Switzerland and the Netherlands fared better in international politics than did many of the larger states, and to the extent to which small size assisted this development, it helped them to maintain the accommodationist practices of older times. But should one grant the argument that larger states must carry the burden of international politics as distinct from actually carrying, let alone preferring to carry it? Did not the once-subject inhabitants of Ticino consciously prefer in 1798 to join the archaic Swiss Republic rather than join an incipient national state in Italy because they preferred internal freedoms to foreign grandeur? Did not in the early nineteenth century many *Kleinstaatler* in Germany foresee the dangers that the development of a large, new German state might spell both for internal freedoms and external aggressiveness?

The statement that smaller states carry in fact a smaller load in international politics remains debatable. Handling a foreign environment and the impact of foreign influences within their boundaries pose large problems for small states. Not the least of these is survival itself. The Netherlands’ and Switzerland's survival among the states of Europe may possibly be due in some measure to their ability to handle not only internal diversity, but also foreign-imposed loads.

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Eindnoten:


11. A machine-readable bibliographical file on all Dutch cabinet ministers since 1848 is available in the Leiden Department of Political Science, based on material originally collected by Mattei Dogan and Maria Scheffervan der Veen. In the context of a larger study of the Dutch Parliament, a similar file is being prepared on all members of the Dutch Parliament from 1848 to the present. E. Gruner and K. Frei, *Schweizerische Bundesversammlung 1848-1920*, Bern, 1966, 2 vols.


17. This article concentrates above all on the distinct properties in the national development of Switzerland and the Netherlands. These countries have, of course, many other features in common with European states. Most of the general indicators specified by Rokkan, in his ‘Methods and Models in the Comparative Study of Nation-building,’ p. 65ff. would be highly relevant for a study of Dutch and Swiss experience. Swiss and Dutch national development might also be contrasted with that of the United States. In fact, both countries often resemble Huntington’s ‘American’ pattern of development more than his ‘European’ type (whether ‘British’ or ‘Continental’). See Samuel P. Huntington, ‘Political Modernization: America vs. Europe,’ *World Politics*, Vol. 18, 1965-66, pp. 378-414.

18. These six possible ways of solving subcultural conflicts are (a) violence and repression, (b) secession or separation, (c) mutual veto, (d) autonomy, (e) proportional representation, and (f) assimilation - see Dahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-59.

19. Typically, the Swiss referendum has in practice become much more a weapon wielded by minorities who seek to resist majority decisions taken by the federal Parliament than an expression of will by the sovereign Swiss people as a whole.

20. It has been argued that Switzerland owes its continued political independence to the very circumstance that it was not a German-speaking state only, but a multilingual political
community. According to the historian William Martin, the conquest of French-speaking parts by the original Swiss Confederation in 1536 determined the very existence of a Swiss state:

‘On ne saurait exagérer l'importance de cette conquête. Elle est comparable à celle du Tessin et la dépasse de beaucoup. Ce fut pour la Confédération une nouvelle naissance. Sans qu'il soit permis de refaire L'histoire, on peut affirmer que si la Suisse était restée purement allemande, elle n'aurait pas pu défendre son indépendance contre le mouvement des nationalités modernes qui a tendu a la création de grands Etats sur une base linguistique. Au moment oí les Bernois ont conquis le Pays de Vaud, ils n'ont peut-être pas saisi toute la portée nationale de leur acte, car la diversité des langues n'étonnait alors aucun esprit. Mais la conquête n'en a pas moins régénéré, et peut-être sauvé, la Confédération.’


23. It is again illustrative, however, of the forces of pluralism in the Netherlands that these central appointees nevertheless developed into highly independent magistrates rather than into ‘prefects’ on behalf of the center.

24. It testifies to the lasting strength of accommodationist practices in Switzerland that immediately after the civil war victors and vanquished sat together in elaborating the Swiss Constitution of 1848 that retained much of the older regional particularism and to a large degree depoliticized religious cleavages.

25. See especially the theoretical study on Switzerland by Steiner, op. cit.

26. This phrase is the well-chosen title of Arend Lijphart's important study, The Politics of Accommodation - Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands, Berkeley, Calif., 1968.

27. The above quotes are all from Arend Lijphart, ‘Consociational Democracy,’ World Politics, January 1969, p. 212ff.

28. See the article mentioned in note 2 above.


30. These views are particularly evident in the writings of Ferdinand Hermens, Carl J. Friedrich, and Barrington Moore. See on this same point Lijphart, ‘Consociational Democracy,’ op. cit., p. 217; Lehmbuch, Proporzdemokratie, and Rokkan, op. cit., p. 88ff.

31. In a similar vein, the greater freedom characteristic of the United Kingdom and the United States is often explained by their ability to avoid entanglements in large-scale land wars.
The books that are the subject of this review share three important characteristics.

1. They deal exclusively, or at least predominantly, with the political experiences of some smaller European countries which have traditionally been terra incognita on the map of comparative politics. Most writing in the field of comparative politics has centered either on the larger developed countries or on the developing states in the Third World. The Scandinavian and Benelux countries, Austria, and Switzerland have either been neglected or treated as isolated phenomena, mainly of folkloristic interest. As a category, they have been written off (with the exception of Austria) as ‘the sober parliamentary democracies,’ or as examples (listed with a note of surprise) of ‘working multi-party systems.’ In Gabriel Almond's

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* This review article, published in *World Politics* vol. 26(4), 1974, pp. 604-621, was written when I was a Fellow at the new Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Wassenaar. It benefited from a critical reading by S.N. Eisenstadt.
famous typology they appeared as systems which combined certain features of what he called the ‘Anglo-American type’ on the one hand, and the ‘continental European system’ on the other. Paradoxically, the smaller developed countries of Europe therefore remained an underdeveloped area in political science.

2. These books are much more than simple studies of particular countries. In fact, the books by Huyse, Lijphart, and Steiner are, in Lijphart's words, ‘an extended theoretical argument based on a single case of particular significance to pluralist theory,’ without an attempt ‘to provide an exhaustive description of all facets of the political system’ (p. 15, n. 43). Lehbruch's study is more of a general essay. G. Bingham Powell chooses the narrow focus of a single Austrian city to administer a survey that seeks answers to major theoretical issues. These books therefore graphically reveal the superficiality of the view that configurative studies can contribute little to general theory - a vacuous assumption disproved convincingly earlier by Harry Eckstein in his study of Norway.

3. These studies present a formidable challenge to existing typologies of democratic regimes, and to widely held beliefs on the conditions of effective and stable democratic rule. Against prevailing normative views, based mainly on American or British perspectives, they contrapose the model of what Lijphart has called ‘consociational democracy,’ or what Lehbruch first termed Proporzdemokratie and later Konkordanzdemokratie. Since 1967, when this concept was first developed independently by these two authors, an extensive body of theoretical writing has sprung up. Jürg Steiner and Lucien Huyse have added their intimate knowledge of their native Switzerland and Belgium, respectively, to Lijphart's analysis of the Netherlands and to Lehbruch's comparative essay which was based mainly on Austrian and Swiss democracy. Lijphart and Nordlinger contributed to a further systematization of the theory. Lijphart's counter-typology has now acquired the imprimatur of the editors of the Little, Brown Series, Gabriel A. Almond, James S. Coleman, and Lucian W. Pye, who advertise Kurt Steiner's recent volume in that series, Politics in Austria, as showing ‘the Austrian Republic's transformation from the “centrifugal democracy” of the interwar period, to “the consociational democracy” of the Great Coalition after World War II, to the current “depoliticized democracy.”

These books should therefore not be read chiefly as studies of specific countries; those in search of detailed historical or institutional knowledge will occasionally find themselves disappointed. Instead, we are presented with sophisticated monographs that have much to offer, not only to specialists in comparative politics, but also to students of normative and empirical democratic theory and of political sociology, and even to those specialists in international relations who are interested in the interaction of domestic and international politics.
II

The model of consociational democracy starts from a familiar proposition in pluralist theory: that social cleavages are moderated if different cleavages cut across one another, but become loaded with conflict if they cumulatively reinforce one another. Societies that show the latter pattern are designated by a variety of terms, such as ‘vertical pluralism,’ ‘segmented pluralism,’ ‘social fragmentation,’ ‘ideological compartmentalization,’ or by a Dutch metaphor (often misspelled and practically always mispronounced), verzuiling - literally meaning pillarization. In Almond's view, the fragmented political culture and the poorly differentiated role structure of such systems make for an ideological style of politics, immobilism in policy making, and an erosion of democratic legitimacy and stability. In an extreme form there would be such a hardening of cleavage lines that civil war is likely to erupt, as indeed happened in the case of the Austrian Lager in 1934. I first experienced the full force of this argument when a leading American political scientist confronted me with the statement: ‘You know, your country theoretically cannot exist.’ A sense of bewilderment lies at the bottom of the literature under review. Basically, the authors seek to explain what at first sight seems to be the paradox of coexistence of strong subcultural divisions with democratic stability. Pared to its essentials, their argument runs as follows:

1. Strongly divided societies can be stabilized by a conscious effort on the part of political elites, provided they deliberately seek to counteract the immobilizing and destabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation. Patterns of inter-elite accommodation therefore form an independent variable that may impede and reverse the centrifugal forces at the level of the masses.

2. In order to be successful in these efforts, elites must consciously eschew the competitive practices which underlie the norms of British-style democracy. Instead, they must regulate political life by forming some kind of elite cartel.

3. Elites must therefore drop the assumption of simple majority rule. They must rely instead on forms of proportional representation in which no single actor acquires an independent mandate. In segmented societies, ‘rational’ theories of coalition behavior therefore do not hold. The characteristic form of politics is that of grand coalitions in which all major segmental groups share and find security.

4. Governmental power must be narrowly circumscribed, so as to allow subcultural groups considerable autonomy in arranging their own affairs. Mutual vetoes and concurrent majorities are vital in matters that might affect values which are of overriding importance to any or all of the subgroups in the society.

5. Consociational democracy therefore tends to show a curious mixture of ideological intransigence on the one hand and pragmatic political bargaining on the other. Separatism makes for a dogmatic, expressive style of
politics within ideological families. But relations among subcultures are settled by a process of careful and businesslike adjustments.

6. To prevent the stagnation brought on by ideological immobilism, such societies must develop procedures of purposive depoliticization. Preferably, matters must be treated in technocratic terms so as to prevent them from catching ideological fire. That can be done most easily by a process of bargaining behind closed doors. Carefully articulated compromises can then be offered as the only possible solution which can find acceptance by all.

7. Such politics inevitably reduce the importance of elections and even of the direct accountability of leaders. Elections are conducted in strong ideological terms. Since political groups cater above all to their own particular ideological clienteles, elections result in little real change. Elite groups therefore remain largely insulated from direct political upsets. And they need this insulation to work out the careful compromises that serve to stabilize highly divided societies.

8. Autonomous elite politics therefore presuppose that the electorate on the whole plays a rather passive role - as both a condition for and a consequence of stable politics in divided societies. At least two of the authors (Jürg Steiner and Lucien Huyse), first came to the subject of consociationalism by way of empirical studies of political participation, which revealed a low degree of political participation combined with a substantial belief in the legitimacy of the existing political system.⁶

9. Successful consociational democracy tends to have an extensive network of functional organizations within ideological families, which allows a means of controlled representation for special interests. The prevalence of myriad ideological organizations is therefore not necessarily a sign of impending battle. Rather, it provides the organizational infrastructure on which elites can operate in an atmosphere of discretionary freedom, coupled with a fair guarantee of consensus. In the view of some authors, such ideologically separate groups also help to minimize opportunities of conflict: ‘good social fences,’ in Lijphart's words, ‘may make good political neighbors.’⁷

This schematic representation inevitably neglects many nuances in the analyses found in these books. Moreover, the authors have moved beyond such general statements. Powell and Steiner present original survey work. Lijphart has used secondary analyses of survey material to test the relative importance of religion and class as dividing lines.⁸ Lehmbruch has published a series of review articles on the literature of individual countries included in the typology;⁹ he has scrutinized the normative debates on electoral reform and the functioning of political parties and coalitions.¹⁰ Lijphart is extending his work by treating Northern Ireland, Canadian linguistic controversy, and the possible applicability of the model of consociational democracy to the new states. Steiner, more than other authors, in-
cludes sketches of actual policy-making processes. The authors have commented on one another's work, moreover, so that one can indeed begin to speak of an incipient school.

The fertility of theoretical debate and the impressive array of arguments derived from the political experience of a number of polities constitute impressive testimony to the internationalization of the discipline. The books under review are, after all, the work of a German with close knowledge of Austria and Switzerland (Lehmbruch); a Dutchman who received his doctorate from Yale and studied and taught in the United States for twelve years before he returned to the Netherlands to take up a chair at Leiden University (Lijphart); a Swiss who received a doctorate in Mannheim and is now Professor of Political Science at the University of North Carolina (Steiner); an American who has been closely associated with Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in projects on comparative politics and whose present book is based on original fieldwork in Austria (Bingham Powell); and a Belgian who worked in Oxford for some time and whose book is perhaps the fullest theoretical critique yet published of the literature of the other writers (Lucien Huyse, whose perceptive analyses may be compared with the theoretical essay of Nordlinger, but whose work is, alas, less readily accessible for linguistic reasons).

III

The typological coining of the model of consociational democracy constitutes a major contribution to the literature. It widens our understanding of the variegated possibilities of effective democratic rule, and undermines the assumptions of dichotomous models based implicitly or explicitly on the contrast between Britain and the United States on the one hand and Weimar Germany, the French Third and Fourth Republics, and Italy on the other. But it does not answer the vitally important question why and how such consociational systems developed.

From the literature under review one may derive at least five different lines of argument.

1. Consociationalism as the privilege of small states

A first trend of thought regards consociationalism as typical of the politics of smaller states. Practically all writers single out external threats as a major reason why political elites draw together and deliberately submerge their differences for the sake of the larger interest of preserving the independence of the system. The proposition seems plausible, but it is analyzed in little depth. Different interpretations are in fact possible. (A) One possible argument stresses the importance of imposed neutrality:

Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and more recently Austria, have all had neutrality forced upon them at one time by agreement (explicit or implicit) of the surrounding foreign powers. In this view, the possibility that smaller states might jeopardize international peace by internal conflicts would not be tolerated.
by the big powers. Consociationalism was therefore, so to speak, thrust upon them.
(B) A somewhat similar argument emphasizes anticipatory self-restraint rather than foreign imposition: elites in smaller states who are conscious of the precarious situation of their country might decide to lower the temperature of internal strife so as not to give cause to one power or another to intervene in such internal quarrels. Political elites, in this view, are well aware of the grave dangers to their society from the interaction of internal and external conflicts, and deliberately move to reduce the first in order to lessen the threats of the second. 

(C) A third view runs counter to this argument to some extent. Instead of stressing the overbearing load which a combination of foreign threats and internal conflicts may pose, small states are assumed to carry a comparatively low load in international politics. This position is rather similar to older arguments put forward in the 1930s by writers like Ferdinand Hermens and Carl J. Friedrich, to the effect that institutions fragmenting political authority (such as coalition governments, proportional representation, or a low level of bureaucratic development) were luxuries which small nations might be able to afford, but not states which carried a larger responsibility in international affairs.

(D) Yet another opinion holds that the relatively more exposed and open international position of smaller states would make their leaders aware that many decisions cannot in fact be taken within the confines of the nation-state; *ceteris paribus*, they would therefore be more sensitive to the need to leave specific sectors alone. A sense of self-restraint would be nourished, and the number of sites in which decisions are taken more or less autonomously would multiply. 

This short review suggests that more work must be done to study the interaction of internal and external conflicts. In particular, one should investigate the issue whether (or under what conditions) an increase of external pressure aggravates or lessens domestic conflicts. Comparative studies of this problem in the consociational states and other smaller countries should answer the question whether we are faced with a general property of small states or with phenomena that are particular to consociational societies. Before one concedes the view that consociationalism can only flourish in small states, one should study cases in which small states did not handle their external policies successfully, and contemplate the question whether an active stance in international politics by larger states (with all its consequences for internal politics) is a matter of inescapable fate or of political choice.

The indefinite state of the argument on matters such as these is evident also in the ambiguous treatment of the importance of nationalism among the writers under review. There is a tendency to de-emphasize the importance of nationalism and national identity as an independent explanatory factor. One even finds the statement that a strong sense of nationality might jeopardize the carefully worked-out internal balances which a consociational system allows. Further empirical study of this intricate problem is necessary. One should analyze in greater detail, for
instance, under what conditions and to what degree loyalties to subcultural groups and to the state are compatible with one another. The older literature on ‘subjective’ versus ‘objective’ views of nationality might be helpful for a better insight into this problem.\footnote{13}

2. Consociationalism as a ‘self-denying hypothesis’

A second explanation of the rise of consociational democracy is put forward with great force by Arend Lijphart, who speaks of consociationalism as ‘a self-denying hypothesis.’ This argument grants the supposition of the explosive potential of a society in which cleavages reinforce rather than cut across one another. But, Lijphart argues, as they become aware of this peril, elites may move to neutralize the effect of such divisions by establishing a network of overarching cooperation among themselves. This argument places heavy demands on elite groups, not only in their relation with one another, but also with their followers. In particular, there may be a severe strain on their relation with those secondary leadership groups (Val Lorwin once dubbed them \textit{Lumpenelites}) who may have every incentive to mobilize sectional groups against their own top leaders by fanning hostile ideological sentiments within individual subcultures. This theory puts considerable emphasis on the specific circumstances and conditions that allow elites at a particular moment to work out some kind of lasting compact. Among the factors referred to in the writings of Huyse, Lijphart, and Nordlinger are the following: external threats; a relatively low load on decision-making processes; the existence of a clear balance of power among subgroups in a country; political and economic stakes of all sections, and in particular of leading groups, in the political functioning of the system; a low degree of mobilization and/or a high degree of encapsulation of the masses; and above all, an awareness of clear and present dangers to the system as a whole. Paradoxically, this trend of thought combines a somewhat deterministic belief in the explosive potential of social cleavages and in the ability of autonomous elite groups to thwart their effect. It would seem to offer a better explanation of cases in which a viable state was reconstructed after an actual explosion (as in Austria after 1945) than of societies in which conflicts never reached such heights (as in Switzerland or the Netherlands).

3. Consociationalism and the specific nature of cleavages

A third trend of reasoning concentrates more on the nature of the cleavages than on autonomous elite behavior. This body of thought may be further classified into a mechanistic and a qualitative version.

The mechanistic version seeks an explanation in the ways and frequencies in which cleavages intersect one another. Thus, it makes a considerable difference whether one subculture has any chance of obtaining an independent majority, whether two camps roughly balance one another out in equal strength, whether there is a multiple balance of power between three or more segments, or whether one can indeed speak
of a fragmented political culture in the sense that there are a large number of clearly distinguishable groups. The major differences between Austria and Switzerland, for instance, as Lehmbruch and Steiner convincingly

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show, lie in the much greater number of groups, subcultures, and parties and the much more variegated organizational structure of Switzerland as compared to Austria. In view of the many groups and the large number of crosscutting social differences (in addition to the low degree of exclusive identification with any particular subgroup) in Switzerland, one wonders whether Steiner's characterization of Switzerland as 'segmented pluralism' and Bingham Powell's description of Austria as 'social fragmentation' are not etymological misnomers; it might be more appropriate to reverse these labels.

A second mechanistic argument lies in the attempt to prove that in most of the countries under consideration there are a large number of crosscutting cleavages. These may be found in relation to actual groups or, more likely, in relation to reference groups, or potential groups in the sense of Arthur Bentley and David Truman. An unclear point in these arguments is, however, whether such crosscutting cleavages operate primarily on the elite level or on the mass level. Lehmbrock argues that in Austria the elites are more likely to be ideologically motivated than the masses; the latter have more diffuse ideological positions. Lijphart's version of the consociational model, on the other hand, would seem to emphasize the moderating effects of elite linkages on the potential (but organizationally controlled) ideological separatism of the masses. Nordlinger presents some major objections to using the hypothesis of cross-pressures by itself:

There are thus four reasons for not using the cross-pressures hypothesis to explain conflict regulation:

1. it is not especially plausible, given the limited, weak, and indirect supporting evidence;
2. two necessary conditions - the nearly equal salience of crosscutting divisions and their simultaneous triggering - have been omitted from the explanatory variable, and, if included, they would drastically restrict the hypothesis' applicability;
3. since the vast majority of deeply divided societies manifest only the mutually reinforcing pattern the hypothesis' applicability is further restricted in its applicability to the regulation of severe conflicts; and
4. there is reason to doubt the presence of a correlation between crosscutting divisions and successful conflict regulation (p. 100).

A more promising line of argument may be the one that centers on the qualitative differences of specific cleavages. Somewhat surprisingly (in view of the overwhelming and almost determinative importance ascribed to the existence of divisive cleavages), there is in this literature little systematic reflection on whether particular cleavages are more likely to lead to conflict or accommodation than others. This is perhaps an unfortunate consequence of the loose usage of the term 'cleavages,' which is held to refer indiscriminately to matters of class, status, region, religion, language, race, and so forth - a tendency enhanced by ambiguous expressions such as 'communal' or 'ethnic' divisions.

In addition, as Lucien Huysse shows with great finesse, there is the danger of regarding divisions in society as static properties. Instead, one should pay attention
to the hierarchy of cleavages and to their successive replacement by one another in a process of dynamic change (depending on elite behavior and the solution or non-solution of particular conflicts). The Belgian case, with its combination of divisions of class, religion, and language - all apt to acquire political content - offers an interesting arena for such a study. Even more fascinating would be a study comparing Belgium and Switzerland; in the latter country, similar divisions are present in even greater variety and flexibility, but are causing far less political controversy.

A further reason for investigating the nature of specific cleavages more closely is the circumstance that seemingly insoluble conflicts may sometimes be successfully regulated through package deals in which different groups receive different favors. Both Lehmbruch and Steiner offer interesting glimpses of the importance of such political deals: the literature is full of terms like ‘pacification,’ ‘accommodation,’ ‘entering compacts,’ ‘litizieren,’ and ‘junktimieren.’ Such practices offer interesting material to students of political decision making. They should also be of interest to students of comparative political recruitment and political leadership, as these seem to demand a special kind of politician.

4. Consociationalism and the degree of politicization of social divisions

A fourth line of thought focuses on the degree of intensity of particular cleavages. This is perhaps the most neglected variable in the books under review. All too often, authors assume without detailed political analysis that social divisions are automatically translated into political conflicts. This point is noted by Nordlinger, who criticizes Steiner and Lijphart for confusing the regulation of intense conflict with the continuity of conflict-regulating outcomes. He writes of Steiner:

The author claims to be explaining that society's [Switzerland's] success in regulating its intense religious and linguistic conflicts. Yet, the linguistic conflict never became intense, the intense religious conflict was regulated in the nineteenth century, and [the author] deals almost exclusively with contemporary Swiss social and political patterns. [...] Similarly, in Lijphart's study of Dutch politics, the conflict-regulating explanations refer almost exclusively to the post-1945 period, whereas the severe religious and class conflicts were regulated at the beginning of the twentieth century (p. 15).

Nordlinger distinguishes analytically between (a) social differences; (b) segmental divisions or segments that develop when groups of persons become subjectively aware of their similarity and value that similarity positively; (c) conflict groups that develop when a significant number of individuals believe that their segment's social identity, cultural values, or material interests conflict with the segmental attachments of other individuals, and are inspired to political efforts designed to influence the conflict's outcome; and (d) conflict organizations that are structured relationships among members of conflict groups devoted wholly or in part to the struggle with an opposing conflict group. In the rest of his study Nordlinger devotes little attention,
alas, to the ways in which social differences give rise to conflict behavior, and even lapses into a tautological phrase: ‘If segments take on a high degree of political salience, as they invariably do in deeply divided societies, they will form the bases of conflict groups’ (p. 7).
The force of the canons of sociological pluralism is evident in the fact, therefore, that even their critics remain hostage to them. There is little analysis of the vital issue of which forces make for what degree of politicization (or non-politicization) of what dividing lines. Nor does one find that much attention is given to the question of how the earlier politicization of one particular cleavage line affects the exploitation of other cleavage lines, or how, historically, particular cleavages have superseded or become superimposed on one another.

The neglect of these questions may perhaps be explained by two factors; first, what might be termed the coding tautology, and, second, a lack of historical depth. In comparative research, variables of social background are often more easily collected than attitudinal variables. If they show certain skewed distributions, such demographic variables are often assumed to be of attitudinal importance, with little investigation of the degree to which this is actually true. Lack of detailed historical knowledge leads analysts to single out particular cases of accommodation which are not posed against a background of longer time-perspectives. Perhaps one should, therefore (Nordlinger's counsel notwithstanding), focus after all on persisting regulatory processes rather than on incidents of ad hoc accommodation?

5. Consociationalism and elite behavior: cause or consequence?

A fifth view gives rise to the suggestion that the relation between cleavages and elite behavior should conceivably be reversed: rather than seeing accommodationist practices as an elite response to threatening political divisions, one might argue that earlier consociational practices facilitate the accommodation of new emerging cleavages.

This point may be illustrated by differing interpretations of the Dutch case. In Arend Lijphart's perspective, differences of class and religion threatened to pyramid to such an extent in the Netherlands that, by 1910, there was a real danger to the stability of the system. The elites then acted to forestall the breakup of society by agreeing to submerge their differences, and in 1917 acceded to a package deal in which demands for religious schools, general suffrage, and proportional representation were granted in one great compromise. Consociationalism, then, was an answer to the perils of a real split.

In contrast, one might argue that accommodationist styles developed in the Netherlands in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The absence of a central executive in a confederal state nurtured the development of an accommodationist elite culture in transactions within collegial city councils, among cities, and among provinces. Did not Althusius coin the word ‘consociationes’ in the early seventeenth century to characterize that very process? For this reason, the elites were never internally homogeneous, but at the same time they were very adept at accommodating new groups when a slow process of democratization began to develop. In this reading of Dutch history, Calvinists, Catholics, and Socialists never developed the threatening militancy that Lijphart ascribes to them. By 1910 none of these movements (with the possible exception of the Calvinists, who by that time had
already secured safe cabinet positions) had a well-organized mass base. The great Pacification of 1917 was therefore not a response to

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Dutch *verzuiling*, but in many ways its prelude. Only after 1917 did the various Dutch groups develop their strong networks of subcultural interest organizations. Although such organizations were conducive towards isolating Dutchmen of different ideological origins, none of these segments ever was an effective threat to the Dutch state as such. Consociationalism in the Netherlands should therefore not be regarded as a response to the perils of subcultural splits (as Lijphart argues), but as the underlying reason why slowly developing subcultural divisions never did become perilous when social modernization led to mass mobilization.

If one assumes this point to be of wider relevance than a local dispute between two Leiden colleagues, a number of new questions will follow.

First, one should investigate the historical factors which may account for the development of that special type of political culture at the elite level that allowed the later peaceful transition to modern pluralism. None of the writers (with the exception of Lehmbruch and, in a more abstract fashion, Nordlinger) deals with historical conditioning factors of this kind in any detail. But one may glean certain interesting glimpses from their studies. Lehmbruch refers to the *amicabilis compositio* of the Peace of Westphalia between different religious groupings as one main source. In the Austrian case he attributes further importance to corporate representative traditions and to the deliberate attempt in the Hapsburg Empire to accommodate a large number of nationalities. Steiner emphasizes the importance of a merchant aristocracy in Swiss cities and cantons, as well as old practices of adjustment between different regions and religions in Switzerland. These facilitated the later transition to party proportionality in the Swiss collegial executive, as well as the compact between capital and labor in the 1930s, and above all, the non-politicization of linguistic lines. The low degree of centralization in these states is probably a major factor as political resources remained distributed over many sites. And, in cases where centralization did occur, it was of vital importance whether all segments of society obtained access to executive and bureaucratic positions or not. A corollary of these factors would be the persistence of long-standing pluralist traditions which militated against the individualist and majoritarian assumptions of popular sovereignty, and which allowed the evolutionary development of accountable government and the large number of social organizations which mediate between elites and masses in a modern society.

Second, one should attempt to disentangle more clearly the properties of consociationalism on the one hand and democracy on the other. Most of the books under review tend to take democracy for granted, and only seek to specify the particular features of the consociational subtype of general democracy. Yet, just as there may be democracies that are and others that are not consociational, so consociational societies need not be democratic, though some are. The term consociationalism was, after all, first applied by David Apter in the context of his work on emerging African countries. It is also no accident that some of the authors (Nordlinger in particular, but also Lehmbruch and Steiner) use the general language of the literature on conflict regulation in addition to that of democratic theory. There would therefore seem to exist an imperative need for comparative study of consociational systems (democratic or not), and of democratic systems.
(consociational or not) - if one is to get a closer grip on the specific character of consociationalism on the one hand and democracy on the other, as a prelude to a fuller understanding of their interaction.

Third, the analytical distinction between consociationalism and democracy raises further the important question to what degree a consociational democracy can be the result of choice on the part of particular elites (as is implicit in Lijphart's 'self-denying hypothesis'), or should be regarded more as the product of an older pluralist inheritance. A comparative study of the four European consociational systems under consideration would probably reveal a continuum in which post-1945 Austria would be placed on one end, and the Netherlands and Switzerland on the other, with Belgium in an intermediate position. But a more careful elaboration of the particular factors at work in each case would seem necessary before the model of consociational democracy is extended to the new states generally (as Lijphart and Nordlinger explicitly suggest). If consociationalism presupposes the earlier existence of a special elite culture rather than intelligent choice by particular elites at a critical juncture of a nation's history, its transfer to other societies is likely to meet with greater difficulty. Many of the new states do have old pluralist traditions. But do not most of their present-day elites tend to regard such traditions as obstacles to modernization rather than as a vital inheritance to be preserved in the development of a new pluralist democracy?

IV

Ironically, the consociational model is coming under considerable stress at the very moment at which it is belatedly being recognized on the map of comparative politics. In at least three of the four states treated in the literature under review, recent developments are undermining the neatness of existing structures. In the Netherlands, verzuiling is rapidly breaking down, and so are the parties which are most closely associated with it. In Austria, the rigor of the Lager is also declining, and the grand coalition once thought vital to guarantee the persistence of the state has given way to single-party cabinets. In Belgium, linguistic controversies and centrifugal forces generally are threatening the traditional balance of the families spirituelles of Catholics, Socialists, and Liberals, without as yet providing for a new organizational infrastructure to channel these new divisions. Switzerland shows perhaps the fewest changes; but politics in that country have traditionally been so flexible that one wonders whether it ever really fitted the consociational model: although it might have certain consociational practices at the elite level, it never had the tightness of segmented organizations which the model stipulates.

Do these stresses make the model a matter of the past? Should one conclude that its somewhat static quality makes it of little help in accounting for future developments, just as its main weakness lies in its lack of clarity about the reasons for its genesis? Paradoxically, this need not be so. For the very clarity of the model makes it possible to explain why it is now experiencing such obvious strains.
Perhaps Lijphart's parsimonious analysis is most suggestive here. He divides political systems along two dimensions, one axis being the one of fragmented versus homogeneous political culture, and the other that of coalescent versus com-
petitive elite behavior. He thereby distinguishes four forms: that of centripetal
democracy where political culture is homogeneous and elite behavior competitive;
that of its logical opposite, consociational democracy where political culture is
fragmented and elite behavior coalescent; that of centrifugal democracy where
political culture remains fragmented and elite behavior is competitive; and that of
depoliticized democracy where elite behavior remains coalescent while political
culture becomes homogeneous. Movements of systems in one or the other direction
along these axes would then determine their main future properties.

One may also investigate to what degree particular features of consociational
democracies are breaking down. What about the erosion of strong segmentation? To
what extent do elites begin to reject the assumptions of cartel accommodation? Do
the systems still respect the principle of mutual vetoes, and do they cling to grand
coalitions in preference to simple majority rule? To what extent are we witnessing
the end of ideology, and with it the disappearance of the peculiar accommodational
styles of depoliticized bargaining behind closed doors which seemed to be the
paradoxical corollary of ideological segmentation? What about the effect of elections
that have become more unsettling to elite positions as voters have become more
independent? To what degree is proportional representation (which for two generations
or more ensured stability by guaranteeing entrenched ideological positions) now
becoming a source of political fragmentation? How do linkages between elites and
masses develop now that former organizational links are breaking down? How do
elites behave when they are suddenly faced with direct mass pressures? The neatness
of the model of consociational democracy provides an interesting measuring rod for
the study of its demise.

At the same time, however, the model seems to some extent to be in danger of
being overworked. It was developed as a deliberate counter-model to the
Anglo-American type of democracy, and it should make its mark as such. But it
should not be reified: common dissimilarity from other types does not necessarily
prove similarity. Future work should therefore systematically explore the differences
as well as the common traits of systems subsumed under the label of consociational
democracy. As a control, one should also compare these countries with other small
European democracies which may have fewer social divisions, but which may be
similar in other respects (for instance, in their institutional structure, or in the specific
impact which foreign factors exercise on internal politics). It will be necessary to
incorporate these countries in the general literature of comparative development, so
as to answer questions on the origin of consociational practices and the way in which
different cleavages became or did not become politicized in successive waves of
democratization. The literature on consociational democracy - like other writings
on democracy - runs the danger of aprioristic normative notions. These should be
spelled out in greater detail, and impressionistic evaluations of the democratic quality
of particular states should be tested in studies of actual political performance. Only
then can one speak with any conviction of their relative record in comparison to other
political systems. Finally, one should watch contemporary and future developments.
For if it is true that these systems are more affected by particular historical factors
than the neatness of the model implies,
their present political properties must also influence the way in which they meet the many changes of the contemporary political scene.

For the time being, however, one should be grateful for the very substantial contributions which these books make, each in its different way. There is great intellectual clarity in Lijphart and in Huyse. There is subtle and studious wisdom in Lehmbruch. There are many perceptive remarks in Powell and in Steiner, although neither is free from a certain naiveté. Nordlinger's study presents a courageous attempt to grapple with theoretical issues on a comparative basis. It lacks the advantage of detailed first-hand knowledge of the countries on which he bases his theoretical reasoning; this sometimes gives his arguments a somewhat arid quality. This reader must therefore confess to a preference for the earlier genre of the 'theoretical country-study.' Is the present state of comparative politics not such that a book by a specialist on one country, with a thorough theoretical grounding, is likely to make better reading than the work of the generalist who inevitably must construe his propositions mainly on the basis of secondary sources?

Eindnoten:

2. Harry Eckstein, Division and Cohesion in Democracy: A Study of Norway (Princeton 1966); see esp. the preface, the introductory chapter, and the concluding chapter. See also Robert A. Dahl, (ed.), Political Oppositions in Western Democracies (New Haven 1966), which combines country studies with important theoretical argumentation by the editor. On the subject of the present review article, see also Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven 1971), chap. 7, ‘Subcultures, Cleavage Patterns, and Governmental Effectiveness.’
4. This literature was first discussed in an international environment during the Brussels Congress of the International Political Science Association in September 1967, when Arend Lijphart presented his ‘Typologies’ (fn. 3), and Gerhard Lehmbruch gave a paper on ‘A Non-Competitive Pattern of Conflict Management in Liberal Democracies: The Case of Switzerland, Austria, and Lebanon.’ A further discussion took place during the IPSA Round Table on Comparative Politics at Turin, September 1969, on the basis of an introductory report by Val R. Lorwin, ‘Segmented Pluralism: Ideological Cleavages and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies,’ a revised version of which appeared in Comparative Politics, iii (January 1971), 141 -57.
5. See the Preface and the jacket of Kurt Steiner, Politics in Austria (Boston 1972). Also see section IV of this article.


11. See in particular Lehmburch, ‘Kondordanzdemokratien im internationalen System,’ *Politische Vierteljahresschrift, x* (1969), Sonderheft 1, 139-63.

12. A comparative project on the problems of small modern states in which special emphasis is given to the impact of foreign factors is under way at the Hebrew University and the Jerusalem Planning Group at the initiative of S.N. Eisenstadt and others.


16. See Lijphart, ‘Typologies’ (fn. 3), and his more detailed analysis of changes in Dutch politics in ‘Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek,’ *Acta Politica, IV, No. 3* (1968-69), 231-47.

17. Although Stein Rokkan wrote a preface to Jürg Steiner's book on Switzerland, there is little evidence so far that the work on the consociational democracy model is being integrated with Rokkan's important work on comparative European development generally; cf. esp. Rokkan, *Citizens, Elections, Parties* (Oslo 1970), passim.
chapter twelve | ancient pluralism and modern democracy in the netherlands: The 1989 Erasmus Lectures at Harvard University

Lecture I: ancient pluralism and modern democracy

Introduction

If one scratches the surface of the benign neglect which traditionally has shielded the Netherlands from studiosi in comparative analysis, one finds at most three ‘moments’ of interest. There is, firstly, a substantial awareness of the (albeit transient) importance of the Dutch Republic as both an economic and a cultural power between the late sixteenth and the late eighteenth century - an awareness predating even Annos S.S., the years before Simon Schama was born and wrote.¹ There is, secondly, although restricted to the much narrower community of political scientists, the view that the 20th century Netherlands is the archetype for a particular model in comparative politics, that of a consociational democracy, which has been brought on the map of comparative politics above all by the daunting analytical skills of Arend Lijphart.² And there is, thirdly, the newer stereotype of the Netherlands as a country of pacifism and libertarian traditions gone mad, internationally ailing from what Walter Laqueur has labelled ‘Hollanditis’,³ and domestically suffering from a host of other ‘Dutch diseases’, including ‘heretic’ churches, legalized drugs, and generally errant government.

In the three public lectures which the holder of the Erasmus Lectureship in Dutch History and Civilization at Harvard University is contractually held to give, I shall take each of these stereotyped impressions of the Netherlands as a starting point. But I also intend to tie these three subjects together, by analyzing developments in Dutch politics and society in a long-term comparative perspective. In the process certain dilemmas in our thinking about such weighty matters as state formation and modernization, pluralism and democracy, will, I hope, become evident.

The Netherlands in a decade of bicentennials

In a decade of bicentennials The Netherlands does not fit easily. Of course, there have been celebrations and symposia to mark both the American and the French Revolution.⁴ Such events have rekindled a debate initiated by R.R. Palmer,⁵ on

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* The following pages contain three lectures on Dutch political developments delivered on 20 and 27 November and 4 December 1989 at Harvard University as Erasmus Lecturer in Dutch History and Civilization (1989-1990).

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whether one can speak of a separate Dutch Revolution: a democratic movement in the Dutch Republic during the 1780s which antedates 1789 by a number of years and which, if it had not been quelled by Prussian arms in 1787, might have placed the heralding of modern democracy on the European continent in the Low Countries rather than in Paris, to the chagrin no doubt of François Mitterrand. The American example had undoubted influence on such democratic stirrings. But even regarding this revolution there was in the Dutch Republic a sense of déjà vu which made even the last Orange stadholder in the Dutch Republic - the rather weak and hesitant William V whom Thomas Jefferson had dubbed ‘a half-King’- exclaim on reading the American Declaration of Independence that it was little more than ‘a parody of the document which our ancestors made public against King Philip II of Spain’ two hundred years before. If on the one hand there has been an enduring sense that the Dutch Republic knew many liberties and rights that others were to claim as theirs only through revolutions, there was on the other hand the realization that many properties of a new modern state, let alone of a modern democratic system, did not develop from an autochthonous soil, but were very much the consequence of French imposition after 1795 when in a series of regime changes and written constitutions a new unitary state was established. But this very fact of French influence and domination made neither 1795 when the old Republic fell, nor 1798 when a first somewhat radical constitution was adopted, let alone 1806 when a brother of Napoleon was made the first King of the Netherlands, or 1810 when the Kingdom of the Netherlands was for a short while incorporated into the Napoleonic empire, a suitable date for commemoration. Par contre the growth of nationalism made the ‘liberation’ of 1813 become a much more ardently celebrated event, even though it inaugurated a period of belated enlightened absolutism not known so far in a country which had prided itself on having staved off royal absolutism in the crucial 17th and 18th centuries when absolutism had triumphed in other European lands. Dutch historiography, Simon Schama has rightly argued, has hardly known what to do with the Batavian-French period between 1795 and 1813, its interpretations being haphazard and contentious.

If on the one hand ‘True Freedom’ in the Netherlands predated both the American and French Revolution, while on the other modern state formation and democratic institutions came rather late and owed much to foreign example or even imposition, we clearly face a complex problem if we wish to link ancient Republican pluralism with the advent of modern democracy in the Netherlands. The issue is complicated because among Dutch historians one finds at least two substantially different interpretations.

A Whig or conciliatory interpretation

In what their antagonists have dubbed a ‘Whig interpretation’ of Dutch history, there are immediate and straight links between the traditional liberties of the Dutch Republic and the coming of responsible and democratic government in the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th century. In such an interpretation the following features of the Dutch Republic are singled out as particularly important: the break
in the development of what in the 15th and 16th century had seemed to become a modern absolutist state under a Burgundian-Habsburg dynasty; hence, the weakness of central institutions and the virtual absence of anything like an autochthonous military or a central bureaucracy in the ensuing United Provinces; the early, prominent role of a mercantile bourgeoisie; the emphasis on the right to resistance against unlawful actions of any sovereign and the derivation - at least in theory - of authority from the people; the persistent particularism which required constant accommodation between many actors with inherent rights; the toleration, in practice, of different religions (the privileged position of the Dutch Reformed Church notwithstanding); and the jealous maintenance of rights and privileges which in a cyclical view of history (what else after all did revolution mean) could inspire new freedoms.

A whiggish, gradualist view of history sees a natural continuity between these traditions and the later development of modern democracy. Proponents of this view treat the so-called Patriot Movement of the 1780s and the Batavian-French era between 1795 and 1813 with some ambivalence. They recognize the need for reform of the deadlocked Republican confederal structures, but castigate the strong drive for unitary government which radical reformers sought to obtain after 1795. They appreciate the desire for inclusion of new bourgeois strata in government but retain a strong suspicion of popular action. They show a grudging appreciation of the work of new activist reformers in areas such as taxation, education, and the unification of law after 1795. As regards the new constitutions of 1814 and 1815, which accompanied the establishment of the new independent Kingdom, they tend to emphasize not so much their centralizing and authoritarian features as their recognition of rights of individuals and restrictions on absolute power. These constitutions thus maintained some old liberties from which eventually opposition could develop against an all too activist and personalist, near-absolutist King William I. In this view it is telling that the first articulate opponent of the King was Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp, a typical old patrician regent whose various constitutional drafts (written during the French period when he was without office) had formed the basis of the new post-1813 constitutions. And it was as telling that full ministerial responsibility was adopted as early as 1848, admittedly in a period of a still very restricted franchise, but also through a constitutional revision which greatly expanded the number of political and individual rights, and which replaced a rather weak Parliament (in which the Lower House was only indirectly elected and the Upper House consisted of royal appointees) by a directly elected Lower House with much increased powers and an Upper House elected by the provincial councils.

Admittedly, the political system after 1848 remained for very long rather oligarchic, with suffrage extensions coming in stages only in 1888, in 1896 and full manhood suffrage in 1917 (extended to women two years later). The very word ‘democrat' retained a connotation of ‘radical’ or ‘populist’ until at least the end of the 19th century, those in the pays légal preferring to speak of constitutional and responsible government. Yet the system remained so pluralist that eventually, through a combination of organization from above and below, modern mass move-
ments were formed, of Calvinists first, of Catholics and Socialists later which were to strengthen the pluralist, and associationalist, character of Dutch society to such an extent that it became internationally known as a ‘segmented’ society. I shall return to this phenomenon which the Dutch came to call Verzuiling or ‘pillarization’, and to the consociational model and other interpretations to which it gave rise, in my second lecture. Let it suffice for the present that in a ‘Whig’ view of Dutch history there are direct links between the ancient pluralism of the Dutch Republic and the gradualist evolution of a new pluralism which Dutch society retained in a new unitary state.

Such a ‘Whig interpretation’ meets undoubtedly with substantial objections. Thus, the period which separates the high tide of the Dutch Republic (which is the seventeenth rather than the eighteenth century) and the introduction of a full modern democracy (which one should probably date in 1917 when the principle of responsible government of 1848 was supplemented by universal suffrage), is rather long even for those of us who see the impact of history as the most important factor in the development of a political culture. The ‘Whig’ view offers a rather selective picture of the history of The Dutch Republic which could hardly be described as a protodemocracy. Republican political theory of the time of the Republic might honor tenets of natural rights, a mixed state, a certain constitutionalism, the right to (corporate) resistance, and the value of diversity, this did not gainsay the fact that effective political power was concentrated in the hands of closed oligarchies, denying any representative role or accountability to the remainder of the people whatever lip service might be paid to a popular origin of public authority. Though many leaders of the Dutch cities were of bourgeois origin, in the 18th century a process of increased oligarchization and aristocratization increasingly excluded aspiring new strata from any political influence. In fact, the very notion of ‘bourgeoisie’ (or burgerij) is in danger of being used in an altogether too comprehensive and anachronistic manner to serve adequately as descriptive categories or possible explanations. The role of the Orange princes became stronger over time (even though the power of city rulers was sometimes so strong as temporarily to dispense with the appointment of stadholders). Notions of collective freedoms were hardly the same as the recognition of individual rights. More generally, the gradualist view of Dutch history tends to gloss over important cutting-points such as the period of the Patriot movement (1784-1787), the turbulent period of 1795-1798, the particular options taken in 1813-1814, the sudden reforms of 1848 which owed as much to the then King William II's royal nervousness as to the ingenuities of the Liberal lawyer Johan Rudolph Thorbecke who was its auctor intellectualis.

Let us therefore now investigate the alternative, more ‘Radical’ reading of Dutch history.

The Radical reading of the record

The ‘Radical’ reading of Dutch history is substantially different from the preceding ‘whiggery’. First of all, ‘Radical’ Historians emphasize the oligarchical nature of
the Republic which soon after the initial successes of the Revolt excluded all but the most narrow circles from any effective role in government, for all its refer-
ences to burghers or the people. The pluralism and conflicts of the Republic were mainly expressions of factional strife, in which lower strata were either manipulated from above by rival regent groups or burst out in short-term violence that was rigorously suppressed. Such ‘democracy’ as there was could only come out in the open with the radical wing of the Patriot Movement in the late 18th century which indeed might have carried off a Dutch revolution, were it not for the tweespalt (dissension) caused by the betrayal of the democratic cause by those aristocratic, oppositional regents whose radicalism in 1784 was little more than an expression of antagonism towards the Orange princes, and by the repression by Prussian arms. In the ‘Radical’ interpretation real progress was only ensured by the intervention of radical innovators after 1795 who against the intransigent resistance of ‘federalists’ and so-called moderaten enforced a unitary state and were behind the adoption of the first real constitution in Dutch history, that of 1798, which received massive support in a referendum, and which contained many of the properties that a constitution in a modern democracy would demand. In that view the promises which such a constitution contained were foiled by counter-revolutionary forces which in a series of counter-coups in July 1798 and 1801 forced a return to earlier oligarchical politics. If in the end the Batavian-French era brought yet lasting innovations, this was as much due to the direct effect of Napoleonic reforms, and the refusal of the new King William I after 1813 to honor the restorative intentions of the regenten who had wished to return to the status quo ante of Republican days, to old liberties which had in fact been mainly the privileges of the few. The ‘Radicals’, then, see also direct lines between conditions under the Republic and later democratization, but to them such lines run from the ‘democratic’ opposition in the Patriot Movement in the 1780s, via the radical reformers after 1795 and the constructive innovators who continued to lay the groundwork for a new unitary state under different regimes after 1798, to William I who as King did much to modernize government and society, and to the Liberal opposition under Johan Rudolph Thorbecke who as a typical representative of all too long excluded social strata gave shape to a new system of responsible government in 1848 and following years. This ‘Radical’ reading of the record also noted the later process of social segmentation during which Calvinists, Catholics, Radical-Liberals and Socialists mobilized. But they see this process less as the recasting of traditional diversity and pluralism in a process of social modernization, but as a conscious effort at social control by sections of a ruling class which feared the threats of secularization and socialism. Throughout their analysis their main concern is with lasting inequalities rather than with pluralist freedoms. Existing hierarchies and social bonds are seen to stand in the way of genuine freedom and real equality for all.

Needless to say, such a ‘Radical’ interpretation also meets with objections. There is more than a bit of anachronism in their use of terms like burgerij, volk and democratie in an analysis of conditions under the Dutch Republic. Following that era one encounters rather a strong element of teleological and determinist reasoning. This leads to many aprioristic value judgments, and to a grouping of actors in mutually exclusive categories of ‘reactionaries’ and ‘progressive’ elements which makes for rather strange bed-fellows. Unmistakably authoritarian
figures, including Napoleon and King William I, are portrayed as unwitting builders of democracy, whereas proponents of ancient liberties are seen as incorrigible defenders of privilege. The importance of constitutionalist provisions, even in the admittedly rather ‘royalist’ constitutions of 1814 and 1815 are belittled. Against this the constitutional revision of 1848 is too much seen as the work of only a few like Thorbecke, without due emphasis on certain continuities which were there also, and the great importance that the co-existence of different interests (e.g. the wish of Catholics to obtain greater guarantees for freedom of education and church organization, for instance) had in its passing.

Rival conceptions of democracy

In evaluating these two rival interpretations of Dutch history, one should distinguish, I submit, between two rather different questions: democracy as a theoretical notion, and democratization as a long-term historical process. Whereas the first should be solved by reference to political theory, the latter is more a matter of comparative empirical analysis.

The ‘Whig’ and the ‘Radical’ interpretations would seem to reflect rather closely different views of what democracy is all about. On the one hand we find in democratic theory an insistence on the need of a social as well as a constitutional ‘balance of powers’, apt to restrain absolute power from whatever source. On the other hand there is the equally strong tradition of popular sovereignty which emphasizes the participation of equals. It is an old dilemma in political thought known from the days of Plato and Aristotle and particularly salient in the Enlightenment. On the one hand there is the honored theory of the ‘mixed constitution’ elaborated in particular by thinkers like Locke, Montesquieu and Madison and later, notably after the French Revolution, by numerous politicians and lawyers analyzing political systems in terms of ‘powers’ and ‘fundamental rights’. On the other hand there are theories starting from notions of absolute sovereignty in which a clear connection is seen between absolutism and individualism (the one being to some extent the logical presupposition of the other) and which wishes to do away with all ‘corps intermédiaires’ - to Montesquieu the essential protection against despotism, to Hobbes on the contrary ‘worms in the entrails of natural man’ and to Rousseau dangerous ‘associations partielles’. In the latter, more radical view it is necessary to free individuals from existing social bonds which serve only to protect privilege and hierarchy, so as to allow every one to participate equally in the formation of the general will. ‘One and indivisible’ - a notion already theoretically present in the canons of royal absolutism - received its full emotional expression in the eschatology of Jacobin revolution. It was a notion which fitted ill with the ancient pluralism in Dutch society, and which was resisted as such also after 1795 by those who regarded too much unification as a real threat, to liberty as much as to established positions.

Proponents of the two different interpretations of Dutch history would therefore have done well to read for instance that small Tractatus of Robert A. Dahl's A Preface to Democratic Theory (Chicago University Press, 1956) which would have brought home the dilemma's inherent in both ‘Madisonian democracy’ and
‘Populist Democracy.’ And if they had followed through on Dahl's writings they would also have turned automatically to a more systematic analysis of the processes of democratization. Dahl has analyzed the coming about of democracy as the product of change along two distinct dimensions: on the one hand that of ‘hegemony’ versus free and open competition, and on the other hand that of a lesser or greater inclusiveness, i.e. the more limited or extensive possibilities of political participation. One cannot help feeling that the ‘Whig’ interpretation lays too exclusive stress on persistent pluralism as the guarantor of open competition to the neglect of patent inequalities, whereas the more ‘Radical’ view stresses individualism and equality taking authoritarian elements in its stride as presumably necessary, but transient and hence not very worrisome, stages on the road to a participatory democracy.

The argument thus shifts to the comparative, empirical level of democratization as an historical process. The question to be answered becomes which road to democracy is more likely to be the more enduring. One which starts from ancient pluralism (in the Dutch case: the Oud-Republikeinse Veelheid) characterized by ineradicable diversity in which initially narrow circles of elites live per force in a climate of both conflict and accommodation, to broaden gradually over wider social strata. Or one in which, existing privileges are broken by unitary state power in which an initial authoritarianism is eventually replaced by a system of open competition.

Clearly, the ‘Whig’ interpretation underwrites the first argument, whereas the ‘Radical’, or let us call it: more Jacobin, interpretation embraces the second one, discounting in the name of popular sovereignty and a desirable social equality the need for free and open competition which in their view is likely to develop automatically once an effective central sovereign has laid the real foundations for individual rights and participation. In a comparative European perspective there would seem little doubt that ‘gradualist’ developments such as took place in England, Scandinavia, the Netherlands and Switzerland have led to more stable democratic regimes in the 20th century than countries with greater Jacobin ruptures, such as France or Spain. Dutch ‘Radical’ historians rightly demand a more open and positive approach to the undoubted importance of the democratic wing of the Patriot movement before the French period, and of the substantial achievements of the initial builders of a unitary state after 1795. But ‘Whigs’ are equally right in emphasizing the relatively ‘moderate’ character of that period in a comparative European perspective, and to see rather more continuity between old Republican pluralism and later constitutionalism than the radicals tend to grant. In the light of comparative developmental analysis, the Netherlands clearly fit two generalizations put forward by the much-missed Norwegian scholar Stein Rokkan:

1. the stronger the inherited traditions of representative rule, whether within estates, territorial assemblies or city councils, the greater the chances of early legitimation of opposition;
2. the stronger the inherited traditions of representative rule, the slower, and the less likely to be reversed the processes of enfranchisement and equalization.
On the basis of the contrast so far presented of conflicting ‘Whig’ and ‘Radical’ interpretations of Dutch history, let me illustrate the argument with a more detailed analysis of three themes: (1) the relation between corporate and individual freedoms in Dutch history; (2) the nature of the notion of ‘state’; and (3) the special composition of the Dutch political elites.

Corporate freedoms and individual liberty

‘Whigs’ and Radicals' would undoubtedly agree that claims for, and the recognition of, group rights and collective freedoms preceded the full recognition of individual rights in Dutch history. Existing privileges and rights were evoked to justify the Dutch Revolt. Both medieval organicist conceptions and natural right traditions provided ample arguments. The major historian of Dutch political theory in the 17th century, Ernst H. Kossmann, has therefore stressed the conservative character of much of the right of resistance literature (initially of Catholic origin, but later extensively elaborated by Calvinist writers). They generally remained ‘within narrow hedges’, he argued, containing a mixture of Aristotelian, Humanist, Calvinist and Natural Law reasoning.

He sees a much more real breakthrough in later theories, analyzing a development in the 17th century from Althusius (whom he regards as a far from modern thinker compared to, for instance, Bodin) via Spinoza, to Willem Van der Muelen and Ulrich Huber whose theories preceded Locke, in a development which antedates by at least one century a similar evolution of thought during the Enlightenment from Montesquieu via Rousseau to Constitutionalists of 1789 and the post-Napoleonic era.

Kossmann uses criteria of modernity, including an explicit recognition of individualism, which would seem to do insufficient justice to the importance of corporate freedoms also for later developments. Ancient Calvinist conceptions of pluralism (as developed notably in the Dutch Republic) would inspire later neopluralist analyses, both in the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th century, as well as in Germany (e.g. the work of Otto Von Gierke) and in Anglo-Saxon political thought (e.g. the work of the so-called ethical pluralists: J.N. Figgis, F. Maitland and the younger H.J. Laski who were to influence pluralist political theory also in later days).

But does this imply that early corporate freedoms also led to early individual rights? On this the answer must be rather more tentative. There was the important article XIII in the Union of Utrecht of 1579 which stipulated that ‘any one particular person should remain free in his religion’, but this clause was as much a ban on Inquisition as it was the recognition of an individual right. The right to property was obviously well-understood. But if one scrutinizes Kossmann's survey of 17th century political thought in the Netherlands one does not encounter a developed doctrine of individual rights among mainstream theorists, but rather among outsiders who had elaborated ‘a new individualist foundation of absolutism’. Such an argument would bring Kossmann unwittingly rather near to the position of the ‘Radicals’, who tend to regard the old Republican diversity more as props of privilege than foundations of individual right.
Should we then conclude that actual individual rights (as distinct from theoret-
ical argumentation) originated only with the change of political regime after 1795, and that they resulted from an imitation of American and French declarations rather than that they grew in domestic Dutch soil? There are strong pointers in this direction: a direct tie between state and subject was only laid after the arrival of the unitary state in 1795, and such important elements of a modern democracy as citizenship, equality before the law, a recognition for the need for a unification of laws and one common judiciary were undoubtedly the products of the Batavian and French periods. It would be too simple, however, to regard the formal enunciation of fundamental human rights as essentially the product of radical political action, and to remain blind for the much longer gestation which preceded it. In the Netherlands, just as much as in Britain or America, vested corporate interests played an important role in the elaboration of concepts of inherent rights. It is no accident that old regenten in particular thought fit to secure constitutional rights at the very moment when they hoped for a restoration of Republican privileges in 1813. The constitution of 1814 guaranteed the liberty of the person, access to the judiciary, public court proceedings. The Constitution of the new Dutch-Belgian Kingdom of 1815 added equality before the law, freedom of petition, freedom of expression, the inviolability of private homes and the right to property. Significantly, many erstwhile radical politicians nestled comfortably in positions of authority and privilege, whereas some of the old regenten were to develop from defenders of old privilege into more modern liberals.

In fact, the relation between collective and individual rights was to remain on the political agenda for centuries to come. It presented substantial problems in the emancipation of erstwhile discriminated groups, such as Jews, Dissenters and Catholics, with some preferring an individual road to freedom and equality, but others desiring much more collectivist ways. It would reveal itself in crucial conflicts of policy, e.g. on the control of schools, the position of minorities (including that majoritarian minority of women, and homosexuals), and the handling of issues like abortion and euthanasia.

The notion of state and the development of state institutions

The rather ambiguous use of the term ‘state’ when applied to Dutch developments shows up similar dilemmas as the terms rights and freedoms. Its use, notably in the days of the Republic, reveals rather different and variable meanings. Independence as an actor on the international scene was clearly implied, but internally the situation was rather more obscure. Hence, to quote Kossmann once more, there was ‘little relevance in French or English theories in a state which seemed destined for an entirely different future and which had a wholly different foundation.’ The term ‘state’ might mean something like commonwealth, a polis, a manner of living together. But it could not easily be identified with one central sovereign authority. It could even be doubted whether there was such a sovereign center at all, or whether one should rather speak of ‘Seven Sovereignties’. And even the latter notion would do little justice to the congeries of public and private arrangements which led to rather different titles to authority in different areas of the Republic. Perhaps the best generalization would be that there was a system of varying cor-

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porate offices and authorities loosely linked together in collegial bodies in which those at the apex might enjoy titles like High Mightinesses and would represent the Republic externally, while having only very limited direct control over authorities and individuals lower down.

Hence it is not wrong to speak of events after 1795 in terms of state building, given that only then a true central government was established which exercised direct control over individual subjects, now turned citizens. The process is too often glossed over in blanket statements about the establishment of a unitary state, without detailed analysis about actual organizational developments. One speaks of measures taken in particular areas of government policy such as a pooling of debts, the introduction of common taxes, new government measures on sea and river defenses (waterstaat), agriculture, education, the postal services, the introduction of population registers, etc. There are general references to the influence of French institutions and administrative procedures. There was a Wholesale borrowing of French legal codes. But on the whole the importance and the impact of such reforms have remained obscure, with much greater attention being given to the formal institutions of government (notably the relations between King and Parliament as laid down in successive constitutions after 1813) than to the realities of administration and government activity, whether centrally of locally in the early 19th century.

As a result mistaken views could arise on the actual meaning of reforms. General references to the Napoleonic model, and to superficial resemblances between France and the Netherlands in such matters as central government supervision of provincial and municipal government (including in the Netherlands the central appointment of provincial governors and mayors which continues to exist to this day), gave an exaggerated impression of the extent of bureaucratization and centralization after 1795. In fact, the number of central government officials remained very small. Appointments to official positions were largely a matter of patronage rather than competitive entry on merit. The actual as distinct from the legal autonomy of municipalities remained very strong indeed. There is no doubt that French and German legal doctrines had an important influence on conceptions about government authority and on jurisprudence (even though the Dutch term Overheid never assumed the full force of the German Obrigkeit). But even so, older traditions, notably the view that many government tasks were the responsibility of holders of offices with inherent autonomy rather than of central government officials, retained a strong influence. In practice, a combination of ancient particularism and inherent right deflected therefore much of the unitary forces of a deliberate establishment of central government agencies and central government supervision of lower levels of government.

Here again one meets with potentially rival interpretations. Those who insist, with reason, on the clear break with the institutions of the Republic which the establishment of a new unitary state after 1795 implied, see on the whole little continuity with older conceptions of public authority. In their view modern administration is a far cry indeed from Althusius' attempt to establish all government authority on the principle of consociationes, corporations freely arrived at

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by interested parties which attribute to such bodies preferably minimal authority. On closer analysis, however, there is rather more continuity than a ‘French’ or ‘German’ view of government as essentially hierarchical and bureaucratic would imply. In actual practice, the Dutch ‘state’ has remained brokkelig (multifarious). One finds a perennial resistance against one man authority, and a strong reliance on collegial forms of decision-making. Holders of independent offices (provincial and local magistrates including notably mayors, judges, professors, professional men in general) retain a much higher social prestige than even high-ranking departmental officials. As regards the bureaucracy proper there still is a great deal of particularism. There is indeed a high degree of independence in both government policy-making and civil service recruitment. The Dutch administration remains therefore very different from a Weberian bureaucracy. The borderline separating politicians and officials, too, has remained rather indefinite.

What is true within the administration, and between different levels of central and local government, tends also to be true in the relation between government and private actors. Many government tasks are in practice left to private groups working under government authorization and with government funds. The borderline between public and private has become so blurred that experts on public administration spoke of ‘osmosis’ long before neophytes in political science taught them to speak rather of neocorporatism.

**Political elites**

Ancient pluralism, finally, has also left clear traces on the recruitment and behavior of political elites. Both our ‘Whigs’ and our ‘Radicals’ tend to concur in describing Dutch society as being emphatically ‘bourgeois’ and ‘mercantile’ in character. Although there is truth in such characterizations, it does tend to obscure certain important facts, notably the long-lasting influence of more aristocratic milieus in the Dutch elite, the limited share of persons with direct involvement in industry or commerce, and the entry of new social strata mainly at the hands of the mobilizing religious groups of Calvinists and Catholics and later the Socialists. Studies of Dutch Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament make it clear that the share of members belonging either to the nobility or to the traditional Patriciaat remained very strong in what Italians would call the classe politica, until well into the 20th century. On the contrary, the recruitment of persons with direct experience in banking, commerce or manufacturing remained very low. Government remained for very long in the hands of families whose ancestors had occupied public office of one sort or another. This factor contributed substantially to the continuity of a rather traditional elite political culture which could maintain itself in a society which in a comparative European perspective remained rather static in the 19th century. It also may have contributed to a certain degree of dissociation between the realities of government, and the realities of economic enterprise. Although the latter might be regarded as the nervus rerum by all, ‘business’ has on the whole remained remarkably aloof from direct involvement in government, and so have government and administration from business.
The break with older ‘patrician’ styles has tended to come mainly from the
effective mobilization of the later minority cultures of Calvinists, Catholics and Socialists, generally representing the world of what the Dutch have called ‘smaller men’ (kleyne luyden) in cities and rural areas, rather than large scale economic units which anyhow developed comparatively late in the Netherlands.

The successful entry of new milieus has added to the diversity and pluralism of Dutch government and administration. Perhaps, then, Althusius should after all be regarded as more in consonance with Dutch traditions than either a French ‘Napoleonic’ or a German ‘Weberian’ view would make us think.
Lecture II: the Netherlands: prototype of consociationalism?

Introduction

In the fall of 1966 I was asked by the University of California Press to read a manuscript entitled *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*. It was written by a young Dutch-born, American-trained political scientist, Arend Lijphart, then an Assistant Professor at Berkeley. The manuscript contained not so much a monograph on the Netherlands as what the author called ‘an extended theoretical argument based on a single case of particular significance to pluralist theory’.  

It seemed to me to contain an exceptionally lucid and intelligent book. I recommended publication with enthusiasm. Fortunately, my advice prevailed over that of a second reader who did not think much of it. Neither of us probably realized at the time, how influential Lijphart's book was to be, both in its analysis of Dutch politics and as a catalyst in a revision of prevailing typologies of European political systems. Such typologies had traditionally been formed in the light of a cross-channel comparison between a stylized Britain on the one hand, and a rather less virtuous ‘continent’ on the other - the latter mainly reflecting the image of the unstable and immobile politics of Weimar Germany and the French Third and Fourth Republic, with post-1945 Italy being thrown in for good measure.

Lijphart's book provided a succinct analysis of a system which had generally been passed over by analysts of comparative politics. Its fate was to be written off as a small state which unlike larger European countries did not have to face the ‘real’ problems of international politics, one of the ‘sober parliamentary monarchies’ of North-Western Europe, a ‘mixed’ case combining features of what Gabriel Almond had termed the Anglo-Saxon systems on the one hand, and the European Continental system on the other. Let me add that the usual Dutch reaction in contacts with foreign observers, too, has been one of belittlement, of an apologetic and jocular embarrassment. More than any other Dutchman writing then or now, Lijphart was steeped in the writings of American political scientists. He had studied at Yale University, choosing Gabriel Almond and Karl Deutsch as members of his Thesis Committee, and being fully aware of the writings of David Truman, Robert Dahl and others in a ‘pluralist’ mould. He knew therefore at first hand the force of a well-known theorem in pluralist theory: that political moderation owes much to cross-cutting cleavages in a society, in contrast to a situation where different cleavages run parallel and reinforce one another - the latter being a condition likely to lead to explosive tensions. The Netherlands seemed to present a clear case where society was deeply divided, split among distinct subcultures of Calvinists, Catholics and Socialists in addition to the rather less organized Liberals. The country would therefore seem to be a candidate for great political strife and instability. I had been exposed myself to the full force of the pluralist argument, when a leading American colleague had once said to me, only half-jokingly: ‘You realize your country theoretically cannot exist!’ Lijphart had set out to answer that dilemma, and had come up with his famous ‘self-denying prophecy’. Political elites, con-
scious of the dangers inherent in the simultaneous presence in one country of potentially hostile subcultures, could act to contain conflict provided they acted according to certain definite rules. In the Dutch case, Lijphart had listed as many as seven such rules: government as ‘business’ (instead of a ‘game’), agreement to disagree, summit diplomacy, proportionality, depoliticization, secrecy, and the Government's right to govern. While he developed the model originally as a footnote to prevailing pluralist theory, the consociational model soon became both an ideal type in comparative analysis and a prescriptive theory, deliberately challenging the assumptions of ‘majoritarian’ democracy developed from a British and to a lesser extent an American prototype.

The problems at issue

I shall not try to follow the full ramifications of the ensuing debate about consociational democracy for which there are other forums and other sources. My subject is rather whether the Netherlands does (or more accurately, did) fit the model through which so many foreign observers have learnt to see and interpret the country.

To do so we should first agree on the time-period under consideration. This cannot be the present. For many of the features of a segmented society which the Netherlands still showed when Lijphart analyzed the country in the mid-1960s have now become history. Lijphart had of course recognized this. Already in the first edition of *The Politics of Accommodation* he had added a chapter 11 entitled: ‘Dutch Politics in Transition;’ and in the later, manifold Dutch editions of his book he deliberately turned present tenses into past ones whenever relevant to mark the fact that his model really fitted Dutch politics until the 1960s rather than the period since then. The heyday of *Verzuiling* (the Dutch term for the process of the formation of strong ideological subcultures) has generally been placed either in the 1920s and 1930s, or in the two decades 1945-1965 which followed the Second World War But at the same time Lijphart lays particular emphasis on conditions before World War I. To quote Lijphart directly:

> Around 1910 the political situation looked quite serious. The three major issues [i.e. conflicts over education, the extension of the franchise, and the role of labor in society] had reached a peak of tension, and the lines between the rivals were sharply drawn. Especially the issues of the schools and the right to vote remained fundamentally unresolved with all of the contending groups hardening in their intention not to yield (p. 110).

In Lijphart's interpretation both the perils to the system, and the deliberate action of elites to meet these, predated therefore the period which most observers have regarded as the high tide of social segmentation in the Netherlands. On closer inspection we are faced therefore with a number of complex questions: we should first indicate the nature of social cleavages in Dutch society; we must then ask ourselves whether such cleavages were cross-cutting one another or not, and to what extent they jeopardized the system; we should then analyze the reasons why political leaders of different...
subcultures could resort to what Lijphart explicitly calls their ‘courageous’ decision to seek an accommodation, without endangering
their own position as regards possibly competing elites in their subcultures; this analysis will automatically make us inquire into the historical sequence of events, notably into the issue whether the conditions of 1910 did imperil the system, and whether the ‘consociational’ solution was therefore a response to a real challenge or rather, as I shall argue, the major reason why such a challenge never did assume the perilous nature which Lijphart ascribed to it; this implies that we must investigate the relationship between ‘consociational elite behavior’ on the one hand, and social segmentation (verzuiling) on the other. To the extent that we must conclude that the Lijphart analysis tends to portray too mechanistic a picture of closed rival blocs pitted against one another, we should restore history to its rightful place, as the only discipline which can do justice to the rather substantial differences which actually existed among the different social movements and subcultures, including differences in their relations to one another and to the nation of which they formed apart.

Which social cleavages?

Pared to its essentials the Lijphart model of Dutch politics is very simple: it is based on the simultaneous existence of two cleavages, religion and social class. On the religious dimension the distinction is between the latitudinarian, indifferent and agnostic groups on the left, the church-going Calvinists and Catholics on the right. The latter division accounted for two subcultures: a Calvinist one consisting of orthodox members of the Dutch Reformed Church and smaller Calvinist denominations (Gereformeerden) which together accounted for some 25% of the population, and a larger Catholic one of one-third of the population or more. Jointly, the two religious minority groups therefore represented a majority of the population. On the secular-left side, class made for a split between Liberals and Socialists. Of these two groups, the latter were the larger and more organized (eventually incorporating somewhere between a quarter and a third of the population), leaving the Liberals in a real minority position of little more than 10%. Using only the two criteria of social class and religion (the latter checked for church attendance), Lijphart showed that for the mid-1950s, one could account for as much as 72% of the variance in Dutch voting behavior.

Of course social cleavages were relevant much beyond voting. On the basis of existing and new research data Lijphart showed the relevance of the two major cleavages for many social spheres, including patterns of marriage, the schools system (including eventually also the higher levels of education such as the universities), unions of employers and workers, the media, and a host of new welfare organizations including hospitals and organizations for family help, etc, and many leisure time activities. In fact ‘a Roman Catholic goat breeders’ association' has now become as much a Standard feature of Dutch folklore as the mythical Hans Brinkers or the boy with his finger on the dyke. The extent of social segmentation might differ according to particular sectors of society. (Not unimportantly: the workplace, the bureaucracy or the printed press were generally less, or differently, divided than other sectors.) This did not affect the conclusion that Dutch society showed strong divisions, and that indeed such divisions tended to reinforce one
another to such an extent that many people seemed to live in separate subcultures from the cradle to the grave. Lijphart also looked into the background and associations of leadership groups, and documented the fact that they, too, fitted the ideological divisions just described. So far, so good.

Cross-cutting cleavages or not?

Did this imply that there were no cross-cutting cleavages in Dutch society? Lijphart denied that statement (although a superficial reading of his book could convey that impression). He spoke explicitly of ‘the fact that the basic cleavages in Dutch society - religion and class - do cut across each other at an almost perfectly straight angle,’ adding:

The Catholic and Calvinist blocs are true cross-sections of the Dutch people, resembling the class composition of the population as a whole very closely and differing only in religion. Moreover, in these two blocs the religious commitment is sufficiently strong to override class differences to a large extent (p. 205).

And he specifically concluded that the heterogeneous class composition of the religious parties (*in casu* the Catholic Party) implies that:

The party leaders are under constant cross-pressures from the different wings of the party, which predispose them to moderation and compromises, both in intraparty and interparty relations. It is impossible to account for Holland's stable democracy without reference to the crucial political role of the religious parties, particularly the Catholic party (ibidem).

But such cross-cutting cleavages did not gainsay, in his view, that the overriding importance of religion as the most salient cleavage kept groups fundamentally separate, with class only playing a dominant and decisive role in the secular parts of society.

Hence, the coexistence of separate subcultures is not invalidated by the effect of cross-cutting cleavages. The Netherlands typically was a ‘plural’ society with little communication between the different segments, not a ‘pluralist’ society in which each individual was exposed to many cross-pressures and in which social groups were specialized and autonomous rather than part of an overriding ideological community. The very separateness of different ideological blocs thus necessitated conscious elite accommodation to offset the dangers inherent in the sharp cleavages between them.

The grand compromise of 1917: how much peril?
The ‘center piece’ in Lijphart's portrayal of Dutch society was very much the so-called Pacificatie, the grand compromise of 1917 during the first World War, when all major groups agreed to meet each other's demands: the wish for Liberals and Socialists for universal suffrage, the desires of Calvinists and Catholics for their own fully subsidized schools; all this to be based on a deliberate principle of proportionality: proportionality in the counting of votes by the introduction of an extreme system of national proportional representation; and proportionality in the
granting of subsidies to private schools on a par with public schools - subsidies which were to be based simply on the numbers of pupils pledged for a particular type of school.

Lijphart's description of this ‘grand compromise’ has been so persuasive that we at Leiden have received a constant flux of letters by Ph.D. students from all over the globe who in their search for a suitable dissertation topic thought the subject worthy of detailed study. Alas, we have tended to disappoint them, suggesting that this miracle Hollandais really was somewhat of a mirage.

Why? For two specific historical reasons: first, the process of mobilization of different ideological subcultures had not yet reached the level of political mobilization by 1910 which makes it appropriate to speak of rival blocs confronting one another; and second, the elite behavior which Lijphart explained above all in terms of a ‘self-denying prophecy’, as a reaction to a genuine fear for a break-up of the nation, would on closer analysis appear to be the major reason why such political mobilization was never fraught with the dangers which Lijphart tended to ascribe to it.

Let us look more closely at each of these two issues: the challenge of blocs and elite behavior.

If one reads Lijphart's analysis of the Dutch case, most of the empirical data he presents are taken from the 1950s or 1960. This is, in itself, understandable, as social science research had only then begun to prosper, and to offer evidence from new research methods (notably social survey analysis) which had not been available in earlier days. The system Lijphart studied was therefore the system as it had developed after 1917. He studied the consequences of social segmentation, not its origins or the manner in which had developed. And this led him to get the sequence of events wrong. For by 1910 none of the indicators of social divisions along ideological lines had reached such strength that one could legitimately speak of conflicting blocs. Party organizations had not yet crystallized into strong movements nationally, with only two parties (the major party of the Calvinists, and the Socialist party) beginning to show some features of a mass party. There had been some important strike actions, and mass demonstrations, notably in support of suffrage extension. Yet, industrialization had not yet reached levels anywhere near those of more advanced industrial countries in Europe. Unionization of workers only affected limited numbers. Notwithstanding decades of agitation for religious schools and a beginning of subsidies to such schools, which were introduced already in 1889 by the first coalition government of Calvinists and Catholics, the great majority of the children at elementary school still went to the same public schools. Lijphart's portrayal of a society with strong mass cleavages and mutually exclusive ideological organizations reflects, in other words, the eventual results of the 1917 settlement, rather than the challenge which that settlement was supposed to counter. With some exaggeration, therefore, one might say that Lijphart found a solution for a problem which did not exist. He was, I suggest, in that respect a victim of the determinist canons of pluralist theorizing which had brought him to his analysis in the first place, even if his analysis would lead him to propose an ‘elitist’ amendment to it.
Yet, that ‘elitist’ amendment itself would seem to be in need of explanation. For if centrifugal forces were so strong as Lijphart implied, why would elites be as sagacious as he portrayed them? Or assuming that top leaders were; why were they able to carry their followers along? As another expert on ‘segmented societies’, the historian Val Lorwin once exclaimed in a conference debate: what about the Lumpenelites who would presumably not have that sharp eye for the need to contain ideological strife which their betters must have had when they resorted to their ‘self-denying prophecy’ to save the nation?

To discuss this question we should first turn to a short sketch of different interpretations of the Dutch verzögling phenomenon as developed by Dutch historians and social scientists. In addition to Lijphart's explanation one finds at least three other interpretations in the literature on verzögling: (1) an emancipationist perspective; (2) an analysis in terms of social control; and, (3) an explanation through traditional pluralism.

The emancipationist approach

The ‘emancipationist’ approach sees verzögling not as a problem but as a triumph. As Calvinists, Catholics and Socialists came to develop their own full-blown subcultural organizations in the 1920s and 1930s an elaborate literature sprang up within each of these subcultures describing the heroic struggle for freedom and emancipation which their pioneers had fought. Many books appeared under titles such as: When We Became Free, In Freedom Reborn, To the Good of the Nation, The Dawn of Liberation, That Which Awakened Our Strength, etc. Such books sought to portray the particular subculture's repression of yesterday, they chronicled past struggles and extolled present achievements. One should note that I have taken these titles from the writings of different ideological families, suggesting at a minimum a parallel perspective. Being written from the inside, on the basis of hindsight, this literature can be read as a sign that each subculture accepted its status as an autonomous part of one nation, whatever its past grievances.

The social control perspective

The second body of literature has stressed social control rather than emancipation. Sympathizers of the religious movements have emphasized the overwhelming importance of a secular climate in the 19th century which dominated all sectors of society, including the then still dominant Dutch Reformed Church. Only a powerful ‘Antirevolutionary’ movement (to use the title which the Calvinists were to choose for their major political party) could stem this baneful influence. Left observers have interpreted this same drive of Calvinists and Catholics to form well-organized subcultures as motivated above all by a wish of elite groups to insulate their potential followers from the siren songs of secularism and socialism. They saw the formation of Calvinist and Catholic subcultures as parts of a deliberate attempt by ‘fractions’
of capitalist ‘ruling class’ to encapsulate religious workers. In essence, they have echoed the hoarse cry of early socialists who spoke of the conspiracy of Koning, Kapitaal, Kerk, Kroeg, and Kazerne - the Dutch alliteration of the 5 Ks is more telling than the English translation as King, Capital, Church, Pub
and Barracks - with the single goal of combating the emancipation of workers.

The whole process of verzuiling, in other words, is seen as consisting above all in attempts to ensure exclusive group Controls, to the detriment of mutual recognition and individual freedom. The social control perspective has found particular favor with sociologists and left-oriented writers. They have emphasized the importance of deliberate organizational action as an independent power resource. If the emancipationist writers saw whole groups moving to self-awareness and eventual mutual recognition, the social control writers might even explain elite action as above all motivated by self-interest. Thus, one writer has sought to put Lijphart on his head: rather than elites seeking to contain the dangers of social divisions in order to retain a peaceful society, he has argued, elites have deliberately exaggerated social cleavages in order to secure their own profitable leadership positions. Similarly, another writer has equally stressed the importance of verzuiling as instruments for aspiring elites to acquire monopolistic control positions in society.

The perspective of persistent pluralism

A third perspective (which is in fact rather close to the ‘Whig’ approach which I discussed in my first lecture, and which I have myself tended to present at least as far as the process of verzuiling is concerned) takes neither ‘emancipation’, nor ‘social control’ as its main lead, but the traditional pluralism of Dutch society and the political culture at the elite level which it created.

The starting-point of such an analysis is the strong regional and religious diversity which existed of old in Dutch society, the latter to some extent being the consequence of the first. Regional diversity had required constant accommodation and acceptance of autonomy, two features singled out by Lijphart as typical and vital for consociational elite behavior.

A second characteristic was the stepwise ‘pluralization’ of Dutch society in religious terms. During the Republic the Dutch Reformed Church had occupied a privileged position, becoming the church of the majority of the population. Even then there had been considerable differences between more latitudinarian and more militant Calvinist Protestants within the Church, and there had been practical recognition of the reality of massive numbers of Catholics in Dutch society, just as there had been an awareness of the role of smaller groups of protestants which I shall lump together under the label of ‘Dissenters’. Catholics, ‘Dissenters’ and Jews were given formal equal rights after 1795. This did not imply that their place in Dutch society was one of immediate recognition or emancipation. For, the dominant elites remained heavily Dutch Reformed even if divided between what would become Liberals on the one hand, and more fundamentalist Protestants on the other. But it did imply that once definitely discriminated minorities were increasingly free to organize openly.

A third element of the explanation is the very traditional - not to say, stagnant - nature which characterized Dutch society into very late in the 19th century. This could account for the circumstance that traditional political elites (whether national

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or local, Protestant or Catholic) were hardly challenged, however restricted the *pays légal* remained. It also meant that responsible parliamentary government
existed before modern mass organizations were formed.

This leads to a fourth point. Once modern mass organizations did come about, they tended to show two characteristic features: in the composition of their leadership, elements close to traditional elite circles played a dominant role; and within each subcultural group there was considerable difference of opinion on the extent to which a militant course should be chosen to promote its interests. Hence, the challenge they represented to the system remained on the whole moderate. Each group demanded the recognition of minority rights rather than that it sought to capture undivided political power.

As a result, in the fifth place, the process of *verzuiling* was basically gradual: although subcultures developed increasingly dense networks of their own, these did not destroy existing patterns of elite cooperation. Lijphart's picture of separate elites coming together *ad hoc* in the second decade of the 20th century to save the system, does insufficient justice to the pre-existence of a pragmatic, pluralist elite culture which provided common forums, which had long arranged partial compromises, and which did much to socialize newcomers in traditional modes of decision-making.

Sixth, the building of separate subcultures proceeded at a rather different pace for different ideological groupings. The earliest and most self-confident organization had been that of the militant Calvinists but their efforts at organization had never led to a unified bloc of all fundamentalist Protestants. Whereas some preferred not too move too far from earlier established elite positions, others chose to organize in outspoken minority organizations, characterized by the ringing phrase of their first intellectual leader, G. Groen van Prinsterer: ‘in our isolation lies our strength!’ The Catholics succeeded eventually in bringing together a proportionally very much higher percentage of their nominal followers. But not least because of the discrimination Catholics had experienced for centuries, their action had remained deliberately introvert, with the Church rather than political organizations providing the guiding element. Catholic politicians had generally accepted the practical leadership of Calvinist politicians in the Coalition of Calvinists and Catholics which eventually formed on the basis of common but separate subcultural interests. In fact, a genuine Catholic Party was formed only very late, and it remained a very much weaker actor in comparison to the re-established Church Hierarchy than the two major protestant parties - the *Antirevolutionary Party* (established in 1879) and the *Christian-Historical Union* (1908) - were in relation to the church organizations in which these parties found their followers.

If the major religious parties jointly rose to a majority position, albeit as a Coalition of distinct minorities, this left only a modest terrain to Liberals and Socialists. Their response was to be rather different. The Liberals having been used to being a dominant force in 19th century politics without much formal political organization organized too little and too late to weather effectively what development theorists call ‘the crisis of participation’. The Socialists, on the other hand - given the late social and economic modernization in the Netherlands - were late in forming effective mass organizations. Their potential market was substantially restricted by the early mobilization of Calvinists and a revitalized Roman
Catholic Church. For a time before World War I Liberals and Socialists entered into electoral pacts for joint secular causes, but such pacts faced serious problems. No lasting ‘left’ majority was secured. The cooperation was hardly popular with conservative Liberals. Socialists proved eventually to be rather more hesitant than the Liberals had been to confront the religious parties as this was likely to alienate Calvinist and Catholic workers whom they set out to woo. They hoped for an independent majority mandate once universal suffrage was achieved. But when universal suffrage and proportional representation came, their hopes were dashed. They remained in a virtual ghetto position of under a quarter of the national vote, and were not admitted to cabinet government until 1939. In the meantime they had to be satisfied with the formation of a subculture of their own which some have dubbed a ‘Church for the churchless’.

Finally, one should note that differences occurred not only in the formation of the different ideological blocs, but also in their eventual demise. The Liberals being little organized had also little to lose. The Socialists consciously began to divest themselves of ideological barriers which severed them from the Nation and other parties as early as the 1930s. They came out of the Second World War with the clear intent to break through barriers which had for so long separated religious groups on the one hand, and Socialists on the other. While Calvinists and Catholics continued to build, or at least husband, their separate organizations in the 1950s and 1960s, the Socialists shed what had remained of them. A clear difference was to mark the later development of the Calvinist and the Catholic subcultures, moreover. The Catholic bloc broke down earlier and much more drastically than the Calvinist one. Its effects will concern us in the next lecture when we must face the problem whatever happened to the ostentatiously ‘sober’ Dutch.

The acceptance of prudent leadership

Having discussed three alternative approaches to the phenomenon of Dutch *verzuiling*: an emancipationist view, a social control view, and an historical-pluralist view, let us return to the question why prudent leadership was so readily accepted in Dutch society, the problem summarily indicated as Lorwin's problem of the Lumpenelites.

There is little in Lijphart to explain this, although he emphasizes the conscious wish to save the system on the part of elites, a widespread element of deference to authority in Dutch society, and the functional importance of insulating organizations to keep potentially conflicting social groups apart - a view tellingly summarized in his statement: ‘good fences make good neighbors!’

In the emancipationist literature there is not much recognition of the problem: for all their colorful descriptions of past injustices and their blaming of others, their satisfaction with the end results generally prevented them from raising issues of internal dissension. If all good men are seen to have worked for the same cause, why would moderating leaders have had difficulties in restraining potential militants?

The view is hardly so rosy in the social control literature. Their emphasis is on the repressive nature of leadership. If there is cooperation between elites, this
is explained by the common interests of a presumed ruling class whatever the differences of religion. Logically speaking, the increasingly moderate position of Socialist leaders can similarly be explained: their tendency to exchange Socialist ideologies for comfortable positions in government and the economy is little more than an adjustment for personal gain, not unknown in the history of Labor. While social control theorists can explain the development of accommodation and political stability, their heart is not in it. Whether in the form of a Stamokap version, or one of neocorporatism, the real interests of the working class are deemed to have been sacrificed. As we shall see, such sentiments led many of them to greet the demise of the religious subculture with glee, just as they saw in the apparent weakening of institutional structures new opportunities for politicization and polarization, so as to bring the real issues out into the open and have ‘democracy’ and the ‘people’ triumph at last.

The historical-pluralist theory remains: as compared to Lijphart's elites who appear as dei ex machina to offer a consociational solution for a society that pluralist theory would not otherwise deem feasible, elite strength would seem to offer few problems of explanation. Elites were in place, on the basis of traditional pluralism. In fact, all Lijphart's ‘rules of the game’ were present in Dutch society before the different ideological groups organized. Do we really need a ‘self-denying prophecy’ to believe that the Dutch regarded politics as business, that they were prepared to agree to disagree, that they excelled in collegial decision-making (including summit diplomacy), that they saw much merit in proportionality, that secrecy and depoliticization were used as appropriate devices of government, and that governments (not only the cabinet, but also authorities at all lower levels) claimed a virtual right to govern?

Conclusion

Let us try to summarize where this second lecture on the pluralism of Dutch society has led us. There is agreement on the strong degree of social organization along ideological lines which developed in the 19th and the 20th century, which has made the Dutch speak of verzuiling, and foreign observers of segmentation.

There is disagreement on two fundamental issues. One is the reason for the initial formation of separate blocs, and the other is the degree of danger which the degree of separate subcultures actually posed.

On the first of these two issues, social control writers explain the formation of the religious subcultures as on the whole a defensive movement successfully organized by ‘fractions’ of the ruling class to prevent workers from falling for the temptations of secularism and socialism. Such a view meets with problems in the actual historical record: notably the Calvinists organized before we can speak of a genuine challenge by Socialists, and the Catholics lived for a large part in regions which still remained traditional for decades after the Socialists had mounted an effective challenge in other, more modern areas in the country. The social control view would also seem to do too little justice to the authentic ‘emancipationist’ and ‘democratizing’ elements
which the mobilization of the religious subcultures represented. One would be far off the mark in one's interpretation of Dutch history,
or of contemporary politics for that matter, if one were to treat the organization of Calvinists and Catholics in the Netherlands as one of a kind with that of a Catholic right in France, for instance.

On the second issue, that of the danger which segmentation in the Netherlands might have presented to the nation as a stable political system, it is suggested that Lijphart fell victim to the theories which prompted him to bring the Dutch case forward as a deviant case. There were important cross-cutting cleavages as he himself recognized. Yet by 1910 there was neither the full organization of blocs, nor were there the real challenges to the system which he tended to see. The consociational ‘solution’ he saw adopted, and the ‘rules of the game’ which he described were not developed as an answer to real dangers, but consisted mainly of elements of a traditional elite culture of accommodation. Older pluralism proved fully compatible with the increasing pluralization and organization which occurred in Dutch society, and was a major reason why each group was satisfied in achieving recognition as minorities rather than that it strove for majoritarian power. Lijphart offered a solution, I have suggested, for a problem which was partly of his own making. To the extent that consociationalism in the Netherlands is deemed to offer possible lessons for other countries one would do well to take into account that it was not a feat of successful political engineering, but the outcome of centuries of pluralism and accommodation.

Finally, one should remain aware of the dangers of an analysis in terms of interchangeable blocs. For there were very real differences between Calvinists, Catholics and Socialists, not to speak of the Liberals, in the timing and manner of initial organization, the particular groups they organized, the different place they occupied with regard to one another and the nation, and the circumstances by which they would eventually enter as fully recognized participants in national decision-making. History, in other words, contains rather more variety than simple models tend to portray. Some of us might find that a profoundly satisfactory thought.
Lecture III: ‘hollanditis’ and other Dutch diseases: myths and realities

Introduction

So far the main theme of my lectures has been the evolution of the Netherlands as a highly pluralist society, governed by what Lijphart termed ‘prudent elites’. The picture I have presented was one of gradual evolution and persistent diversity. That picture may have been convincing until as late as the 1960s. But then a series of parallel changes occurred which to many seemed to imply a fundamental break with the past. The once rock-like structures of the two major religious subcultures crumbled. In a society in which compromise and depoliticization was ingrained, new groups suddenly spoke of the need for politicization and polarization. In the name of democracy prevailing institutions and accommodationist practices were challenged. Direct democracy was held to legitimate all manner of direct action. Traditional styles of secluded leadership (nurtured by centuries of regenten rule) gave way to demands for open government and populist posturing. In short, Dutch politics seemed in a few years to have changed from dull administration to conflict galore.

Occasionally, the country would now even reach the foreign press. There was Provo in Amsterdam before students marched in Berlin or Paris. There was rumor around the Royal Household, with two disputed marriages (one a ‘smoke-bomb wedding’ of the then Crown Princess Beatrix in March 1966). Amsterdam suddenly became the alleged ‘drug capital’ of Europe, to an extent that even those who were aware of its libertarian traditions had not been fully prepared. The Dutch Catholic Church became known the world over for its near-heretical New Catechism and Progressive utterances on controversial issues such as marriage of priests and birth control. From being a faithful ally in NATO, the country seemed to move towards neutralist stances, meriting a new brand name of ‘Hollanditis’. Nowhere else had so many (proportionately) marched in the 1980s against the decision of stationing Pershings and Cruise missiles in Europe. These mass actions were organized by an Inter-Church Peace Council in which all major churches had their own representatives. Decision-making in the Netherlands acquired such importance that for once Washington deemed it necessary to send a capable ambassador to its Hague Embassy.

Whatever, then, happened to the once sober Dutch? One might evade that question by either of two escapist answers. One answer would be that the media are the message: sober Dutch are hardly newsworthy; if only the antics are reported, this does not imply that not much remains ‘normal’ in the Netherlands. A second way out is to argue that the Dutch never were that sober. Already Montesquieu complained bitterly of Amsterdam youth, spitting from the bridges when passenger barges passed through Amsterdam canals. One could easily collect a volume of negative portraits of the Dutch by foreign visitors, decrying ill manners over the ages. The very circumstance that Dutch is associated with so many unfavorable

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expressions in the English language might be explained as much in terms of a centuries-old rudeness and crudeness of the ‘natives’ as through ancient rivalry felt in England towards the Dutch Republic.

Escapist answers make no lecture. We should face the issue whether our traditional understanding of the Netherlands as a well-governed pluralist country is becoming dated. To the extent that there have been structural political and social changes these should be explained. And one should inquire whether there now is something like a new political system and a ‘new politics’ that represents a real break with past institutions, past alignments, and customary political behavior - unless there is after all more continuity than meets the eye.

**General structural changes**

Of course, many of the changes which have occurred in the Netherlands are not peculiar to it. As in other countries of Western-Europe the ravages of war and the efforts of reconstruction gave way to economic affluence. The country became for the first time a fully industrialized economy. Urbanization and suburbanization fundamentally changed the balance between cities and rural areas. New systems of social security and welfare were built up (if these were to reach one of the highest levels in the world, it should be noted that this happened in periods when Christian-Democrats and Liberals normally formed the government and the Socialists were in opposition.) Youth gained a new prominence, due to a combination of much higher levels of education and their increased buying power. From an early moment the Netherlands was involved in new international structures, ranging from Benelux to the United Nations, from the Marshall Plan organization which became the OECD, to the original European Communities of the Six and NATO. New means of communication including television, cars and air travel challenged domestic self-sufficiency. And so forth and so on.

Although such processes did reflect developments elsewhere in Europe, they nevertheless often took on a rather special form in the Netherlands. This should become clear by a short analysis of five areas of change: the special role of television, the changes in the ideological subcultures of Catholics and Calvinists, the challenge to existing authority, attitudes towards international affairs, and changes in political discourse and behavior.

**The coming of television**

Television came relatively late in the Netherlands. In the 1920s the principle of segmentation had created a licensing system under which radio was controlled by membership associations of the different ideological families. That principle was extended in the 1950s and 1960s to the new electronic media: a challenge of commercial television interests, which appealed in 1964 in vain to Grotius *Mare Liberum* in an attempt to broadcast from a platform in the seas, was foiled. But the licensed broadcasters, of Calvinists, Catholics, Socialists and one other more ‘general’
organization originally had to share one channel between them, so that viewers of all groups of the population looked in at each other's programs. This increased cross-cultural communication greatly. As a new medium, moreover,
television tended for some time to be disproportionately the province of younger
television makers. In mutual competition with one another, egged on by a special
public of rival journalists and other broadcasters concentrated in the libertarian climate
of Amsterdam and Hilversum, they deliberately wished to break with many of the
staid habits of traditional social life in the Netherlands. One element of this was a
deliberate challenge to political leaders who were increasingly subjected to so-called
‘hard’ interviews. Dutch regenten, not normally used to publicity and direct challenge,
initially found it difficult to react adequately. Thus, traditional authority patterns
came increasingly under fire. What happened in the electronic media had an immediate
effect on the printed press. The pace of political debate quickened and became more
nervous as politicians and journalists of different persuasion came to react to one
another in increasingly eager, competing media. Some observers began to talk of a
‘parliamentary-media complex.’

Television grew fastest in the early sixties. This meant that it coincided with the
quickening Vietnam War. American forms of protest (pioneered in student protest
on American campuses as well as freedom rides in the South) had an immediate
impact in the Netherlands where they found ready imitation. At least for a time,
colorful youth protest provided much better ‘pictures’ than the routine of
institutionalized decision-making. Publicity thus fed a resorting to direct action
tactics. To the extent that leaders overreacted to such protests - magnified as direct
actions temporarily were by their newness and by unprecedented levels of reporting
- this helped to erode existing understandings about political action and policy-making.

The weakening of subcultural bonds

Also in the 1960s the seemingly ‘closed’ ideological communities began to show
visible strains. At least three distinct factors were responsible for the process of
ontzuiling (desegmentation).

One was the paradoxical result of success. Ideological subcultures had formed to
obtain recognition for special demands. Once the principle of such demands had
been agreed on, meeting them in practice became a matter of increasingly routinized
allocation procedures, covering a growing array of government policies. The normal
pattern became that there were at least three types of organizations for any given
social activity: Calvinist, Catholic, and ‘general’, the latter term standing in practice
for Socialist, Liberal, or both combined depending on the sector at stake. Such
‘sectoral’ organizations became increasingly interwoven with specialized sections
of the government bureaucracy - the chief linkage being advisory agencies and public
subsidies to private organizations for fulfilling semi-public functions. As a result
each of the specialized sector organizations developed a growing autonomy from
the subcultures within which they had originally developed. Having secured routine
access they were no longer dependent on general subcultural organizations, such as
the related party organizations, for legitimation or support. As sectoral organizations
formed increasingly tighter forms of cooperation with opposite numbers in other
subcultures, the salience of ideological boundaries and the cohesion of ideological
blocs declined.
Secondly, these blocs at the same time also experienced the effects of a grow-
ing individualization, secularization and indifference on the part of their membership. Church attendance dropped massively. So did the circulation of a number of specifically ideology-based newspapers which found it increasingly hard to compete with more ‘general’, commercial newspapers at local and national level. There was a substantial increase in electoral volatility, and notably the Catholic party and one Calvinist party (the Christian-Historical Union) lost many voters they had once regarded as certain.

But thirdly, and most important of all, there were increasing signs of doubt and dissension among the elites of the different ideological families. This affected different groups differently. Liberals had generally been averse to the idea of segmentation altogether. Many Socialists had found their partly imposed apartheid already uncomfortable since the 1930s. They had attempted a deliberate breakthrough of political and social alignments in 1945-46, and had generally de-emphasized links with sectoral groups which had once formed part of the Rode Familie. In the years after 1945 Calvinists and Catholics had, on the contrary, substantially extended their organizational hold on society, pari passu with increased government action in particular sectors. But behind their successful organizational actions there was growing uncertainty and disagreement about the precise role of church and religion in temporal affairs.

Such doubts may be traced back at least as far as the 1930s, when the misery of the depression and the threat of the two new totalitarianisms of communism and Nazism seemed to earnest believers to challenge the hitherto existing separation between the mainly otherworldly concerns of religion and the inevitable imperfections of a ‘worldly’ order. Such doubts had been sharpened by the experiences of occupation, and were strengthened by the horrors of nuclear war and the growing poverty of the Third World which seemed to require a more active involvement than missionary work alone. But a turning to the world also led to growing disagreements about practical political choices. Such disagreements became increasingly bitter and divisive as all might appeal to the Lord and the teachings of the Church. Of course, such developments were not unique to the Netherlands. But to the extent that churches had developed as more important social structures in the Netherlands than in comparable European countries - intimately tied in as they had been with the general zuil structures - the effect of the new turn to the world was proportionally stronger. Beliefs in destiny and mission by the elect hardly died when the churches shifted from theology to mundane politics. Disagreements became passionate. Dissension weakened authority and social control. If some wished to move into revolutionary new ways, others reacted in the name of traditional doctrine, leaving many less active proponents in a process of drift and uncertainty which fed a growing abstention and indifference among ordinary folk.

A general weakening of authority

Authority became weaker over a wide field. In fact, we have already singled out three factors leading to such developments: the new challenges of regenten by the
media which probed persons behind political authorities; the decline of the social control function of the churches by a combination of self-doubt and dissension;
and clear processes of individualization due to the breakup of traditional community life and the increasing independence of sectoral organizations.

A very important aspect of such changes consisted in changes in family structure and parental authority. Both had been strong in Dutch social life. Paternal authority was not easily questioned, and especially the religious groups had done everything possible to keep women at home applying in addition to moral pressures legal measures (e.g. compulsory dismissal of women from the public service on marriage) and financial incentives (such as generous children allowances and taking the family unit as the basis of taxation). Once the challenge to such long-standing arrangements came, it took often particularly strong forms. Youth rebelled on all fronts - a very substantial amount of modern Dutch literature has such conflicts as its main theme. Notably students in tertiary education - for the first time ‘free’ from home, and if not already sons and daughters of present elite groups part of the *spes patriae* - were particularly visible. The measure of student success is well illustrated by the very radical reforms in the governance of the universities which Dutch politicians of all walks of life were prepared to grant at the first sign of student rebellion (which, one should note, was particularly noteworthy in two Catholic universities).  

Women followed suit, marking their entry into direct action with a well-publicized invasion by women into a gynecological conference where they performed a belly-dance, baring the inscription: ‘Boss in own Belly.’ On the long mn neither the women's movement, nor the youth movement, proved particularly numerous, but this did not prevent either group to assume a new categorical importance in government policy. One response consisted of a deliberate policy of women's emancipation facilitated by an individualization of the base of taxation and social security.

Attitudes of protest against family authority were carried over easily in a Wholesale rejection of authority in politics and society. A call for more democracy was heard in all manner of organizations, often leading to a large-scale replacement of existing elites by aspiring newcomers disproportionately drawn from what some have called the ‘new class’ of the service sector. If Harry Eckstein is right that stable democracy requires a congruence of authority structures, this would explain why developments in Netherlands seemed to some particularly promising and to others particularly unsettling.

**The new internationalism**

Social changes were also influenced by processes of internationalization. I mentioned already two examples of the impact of foreign developments on social life in the Netherlands: the domestic application of anti-Vietnam protest methods; and the new involvement of churches with war and the Third World. One should generalize the argument further.

Traditionally, there had been an apparent paradox in Dutch attitudes regarding international affairs. On the one hand the country had been involved from the very beginning of its national existence in international commerce and intellectual exchange; it had been correspondingly open to foreign ideas and foreign migrants.
On the other hand, there had also been a tendency to contract out of international politics, a withdrawal as far as possible into a policy of neutrality and non-committal comment on the strange world outside Dutch borders. Such traditional attitudes were not easily broken, even after 1940 when the realities of power politics and the increasing density of international organizations imposed a more active stance in international affairs. The assumption that the Netherlands had much to offer in matters of peace and international law persisted. The country seemed still destined to be a Gidsland, a ‘pilot country,’ brandishing the promises of peace and altruistic behavior on the international scene. Such attitudes remained conspicuous in at least three ways: the feeling that the Netherlands were a particularly reliable and honorable member in international alliances; a belief in the country’s special mission for peace; and an outspoken Tiersmondisme. All three have a strong moral element in common; hence, the tendency for many ideological groupings to participate in debates on international politics, with the churches often taking prominent stands. It has led to the development of new ‘attentive publics’ in foreign policy-making, often suspicious of ‘official’ government policies as being too much tied to vested economic and political interests to live up to the ‘moral’ necessities of the age. Such policy makers might themselves be split between ‘idealists’ and ‘realists’, with different divisions of the ministry of Foreign Affairs and different parliamentary committees talking different languages. In groups proclaiming the need for alternative policies, persons with church associations often take a prominent role. In fact, both the Catholic Church and the Synods of the major Protestant Churches have come out with a specific rejection of nuclear arms, and detailed policy stands on other armament issues. They committed representatives to an Inter-Church Peace Council (IKV) which took the leadership in the fight against the 1979 decision to station new missiles in Europe. Formally, the actions of the IKV did not represent the position of the churches as such, and there was constant controversy within the churches about particular actions taken. Even so, the actions of the IKV against the stationing of intermediate nuclear missiles on Dutch soil posed special problems for the government, not only because it staged massively attended rallies and organized the greatest petition of Dutch history, but because movements within the churches posed special problems for Christian-Democratic politicians. Their effect was eventually countered by a combination of two tactics: deliberate delays in the making of final decisions, and a conscious posturing of bridge-building to Eastern Europe: in August 1984 the Cabinet indicated that it would decide in favor of stationing missiles on Dutch soil in November 1985 unless the USSR would have frozen the number of INFs at its present level: a kind of ‘Russia be good as we are or else!’ In November 1985, the Cabinet and Parliament (although the latter with narrow margins) concluded that the special peace efforts of the Dutch had failed and decided to allow the stationing of missiles, only to be overtaken by international events shortly afterwards.
Democracy and Democratization

The different social changes - most notably the apparent waning of traditional authority and the rapid changes in the religious groups which showed up also in large-scale electoral losses for two of the three religious parties - seemed to make a wholly new politics possible. Never did a call for ‘democratization’ sound louder in the Netherlands than in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Under the label of ‘democratization’ very different notions existed, however. There was, as elsewhere in the western world, a revival of the hope for small scale, communitarian groups replacing authoritarian and bureaucratic organizations. Tellingly, one vociferous anarchist group grown from the ranks of the original Provo proclaimed an independent Republic in Amsterdam named with some deliberate irony the Oranjevrijstaat; its citizens appropriately presented themselves in Amsterdam municipal elections in 1970 as the Kabouterpartij: a party of pygmies, which obtained a substantial vote.

Demands for ‘democratization’ were made in a host of social organizations, notably in educational and social welfare institutions; some were rent for years by bitter struggles.

There was also, as mentioned, a widespread resort to direct action. Actions of protest easily led to a deliberate provocation of existing authorities and a conscious overstepping of legal rules. Lest it be thought that all such protest actions were rooted in student activities and ‘Left’ circles and ideologies only, one should note that direct action spread rapidly to entirely different groups of society, ranging from such different groups as barge shippers and lorry drivers, to peasants, firemen, policemen, medical specialists, nurses and others. Two factors explain such developments: imitation and considerations of cost-effectiveness. For confrontation could mean a short-cut to rewards as long as authorities preferred compromise to contestation and did not know how to cope adequately with publicity.

Yet, neither the experiments with small-scale forms of group organization, nor the resort to direct action, could be the basis of a democratic polity nationally. In fact, the whole political system seemed to be in crisis. In the 1967 elections virtually all system parties lost votes, the Catholics and the Socialists as the two largest parties the most. New political parties appeared on the scene, finding an easy entry into Parliament through the extremely low electoral threshold which exists in the Netherlands. A Poujadist Peasant Party (Boerenpartij) scored remarkable successes in 1963 and 1967. In the latter year it was joined by a radical reform party, Democrats '66 which propagated an institutional overhaul of the existing parliamentary regime and declared all existing ideological divisions outdated. One year later (1968) disappointed radical ‘Christians’ walked out of their parties to establish a new Politieke Partij Radicalen which optimist observers on the Left hailed as the end of the religious parties as the dominant center of Dutch politics. Such new developments seemed to spell possibilities for a new Left majority, provided all forces of reform and protest could be combined in a direct challenge of the parties of yesterday. Given their size the Socialists would have to provide the basis for such a combination of all Left forces. Such a development was not unlikely, as New Left groups acquired increasing influence within the Socialist Labor Party.
Not all Socialists were equally happy about such developments, which implied an exchange of traditional coalition politics for a new politics of polarization, in which only smaller traditional Left and neophyte parties (such as the Christian Radicals and Democrats '66) were available as unproven allies. Some eventually walked out of the party to form a Democrat-Socialist '70 party which wished to preserve traditional Socialist politics as well as the traditional coalition practices.  

In this climate of fragmentation and eager ‘democratization’ two major reform proposals of Dutch political life came to the fore. 

One, most actively canvassed by the new Democrats '66 party, pleaded for drastic institutional reforms, inspired no doubt by a combination of American examples and recent events in the French Fifth Republic (which had led to the introduction in 1962 of a directly elected President). They criticized the existing political system for its highly divisive form of proportional representation which implied that multiparty coalitions in Parliament were formed only after elections had taken place, hence in interparty bargaining without direct voter decision. They wished to replace the existing arrangements by a new system in which the voters would be given an opportunity to elect a Prime Minister in a direct national vote, and to vote separately for Parliament preferably in single-member district systems.  

Admittedly, such a direct mandate for an executive prime minister would do away with the existing parliamentary system. Yet, a Parliament which no longer needed to sustain a Cabinet, and which was not tied by coalition pacts, might well be the stronger by gaining a new independence. The early success of D'66 in the polls in 1967 led to the establishment of a Staatscommissie (comparable to a British Royal Commission) composed of experts from all major parties.  

It soon became clear that the proposal to do away with the parliamentary system found little support in the new Staatscommissie. The original proposal for a directly elected Prime Minister was watered down to one for the election of a cabinet formateur who - if given an absolute majority at the polls - would be entrusted with forming a government. That proposal (which had obtained only a bare majority in the Staatscommissie) was dismissed by the existing government of the major religious parties and the Liberals, and was voted down in Parliament in 1971 when three Left parties introduced it as a parliamentary initiative. Basically institutional reform was a closed route in the Netherlands from then onwards. 

Another attempt at forcing a deliberate dichotomy in the Dutch Party system - and hence to substitute coalition building by parties after an election by the possibility for the electorate to make a clear choice before an election - concentrated on a change in party strategies. Such strategies were given a new rationale by an influential young political scientist working in the research division of the Dutch Socialist Labor Party, Ed van Thijn, who was soon to become a leading practicing politician - for a time leader of their parliamentary group when other front bench Socialists entered a Left-Center cabinet between 1973 and 1977, for a short while in 1981-1982 himself a Minister of the Interior, and at the time of this lecture the (appointed) mayor of the City of Amsterdam. Van Thijn had read most international party theorists in the 1960s, notably Giovanni Sartori and Otto Kirchheimer. He was particularly concerned with the dangers of an increased fragmentation in
the Dutch party politics. He distinguished between three different party systems. In a good ‘pendulum democracy’ voters could choose between alternative teams; they would thus have a real choice and could hold governments accountable. He opposed to such a democracy a *waaiterdemocratie*, a system having a large number of parties ‘fanning’ out. In such a system voters lacked a direct choice, the formation of government being left to varying and possibly instable coalitions formed only after elections. Being unable to deliver a very effective vote, dissatisfied voters might well turn towards protest parties and strengthen extremist parties. This then could lead to a *tangdemocratie*, a ‘pincer democracy’ in which parties on the extreme end would maul the democratic center. To stop such potential threats, parties should change their strategies. Rather than each party fighting on its own, and competing mostly with parties nearest to it on the political spectrum, parties close to one another should enter into an electoral pact seeking a clear mandate from the electorate to govern on the basis of a joint electoral manifesto and a list of possible ministers. In that manner a system of alternating blocs might arise which would ensure both effective electoral choice and truly accountable government, much as the simpler two-party system was thought to provide.\(^{76}\)

Van Thijn's analysis was heeded. The Socialists entered into a pre-election compact with D'66 and the PPR-radicals, and when all religious parties refused an invitation to join such a bloc (they formed the government at the time in coalition with the Liberals), the Left parties began a conscious policy of polarization.

The effects of this policy form a complicated story, covering almost twenty years of Dutch parliamentary history. Rather than trying to tell it in detail,\(^{77}\) let me try to make up the balance sheet, using Figure 1 to make the story as clear as possible for anyone not familiar with the complexities of a multiparty system.

The figure shows parties arranged roughly along a left-right axis. The numbers indicate the number of seats each party had in the Lower House of Parliament (which until 1956 had 100 members, since then 150 members). The shaded areas indicate parties which had ministers in any given cabinet.

The figure indicates the participation of Socialists in all governments since 1958, the constant presence of religious parties in all cabinets, and the much more frequent share of the Liberals in governments after 1959.

The bar for the 1967-1971 Parliament shows the process of party fragmentation on the left, the left-center with the arrival of D'66, and the right.

The deliberate policy of Left polarization started in 1971, the steps descending to the right of D'66 from left to right indicating the increase in the combined seats for all Left parties including D'66.

The policy of polarization seemed at first sight successful. The total seats of the Left grew in numbers. The three religious parties and the Liberals lost their parliamentary majority in 1971 and more so in 1972. In the latter year a cabinet was eventually formed under a Socialist Prime Minister, Joop den Uyl, in which the Left parties had ten of the sixteen seats, and the two religious parties had only six ministers, finding themselves in an unwonted minority in the cabinet, and enjoying only passive support from their own parties. The 1977 election seemed a clear
success for the Socialist Partij van de Arbeid in that it made a large advance of no less than 10 out of 150 seats, while becoming the clearly dominant party within the Left bloc.

Yet, certain weaknesses of the Left position can also be seen. At no time did the aggregate Left gain an independent majority. The closest they came to this was in 1981 when they obtained jointly 70 seats. But by that time the D'66 party had deliberately removed itself from the Left bloc, posturing as the ‘reasonable’ alternative to the Left, religious parties and Liberals alike. The aggregate strength of the Left parties minus D'66 did not show much of a secular increase - and this in a period when the religious parties lost heavily at least in the elections of 1967, 1971 and 1972. Also, the gains of the Socialists in 1977 were clearly at the expense of their coalition partners, the smaller Left parties losing as many seats as the Socialists won.

As important were changes in the position of the religious parties and the Liberals. The religious parties eventually countered polarization by the Left with the presentation of one joint electoral list in 1977, followed by a merger of the three parties into one party, the Christian-Democratic Appeal (CDA) in 1980. This strategy largely stopped the hemorrhage they had suffered in preceding elections. The Liberals which had traditionally been a rather weak party until the 1970s prof-

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ited from a deliberate anti-Socialist vote, and consciously chose a more populist stance which made the Liberal Party for the first time into something of a mass party in the 1970s. As Figure 1 shows, they substantially increased their vote and share in parliament, the steps on the right descending to the left making them apparently a more important winner of votes lost by the religious parties than the Left bloc notably in 1977 and 1982.

In fact, since 1977, the CDA and the Liberals formed all governments, except a short-lived cabinet in 1981 which fell almost as soon as it was formed by bitter, sometimes personal conflicts between the CDA premier Van Agt and his Socialist deputy Den Uyl. In fact, the cooperation between the CDA and the Liberals became so close and powerful that it seemed that they were the ones who successfully applied Van Thijn's lesson of dichotomous politics, not the Left parties. As the latter were not able to oppose the combination of CDA and Liberals with an alternative majority, a two-bloc system would seem to develop without any real chance of political alternation.

The new coalition led since 1982 by an increasingly powerful and popular Christian-Democrat Prime Minister, Ruud Lubbers (often unwittingly called by the BBC ‘Rude Lubbers’) provided stable government. It chose a policy of deliberate financial retrenchment and a governing style which was both plebiscitary and managerial in tone. The new course was upheld in the new 1986 elections when the Christian-Democrats scored great electoral gains, albeit at the expense of their smaller Liberal ally.

Being locked out of power (effectively since 1977 as the short interlude of the Van Agt II Cabinet from 1981-1982 proved a traumatic disaster for Socialists and D'66 alike) the Left parties fell into a position of considerable disarray and malaise. The Radical Christian PPR became virtually indistinguishable from other small Left parties (such as the older Pacifist-Socialist Party). The Communist Party was taken over to a substantial extent by radical feminists, and lost so many votes that it disappeared from Parliament in 1986 for the first time since 1918. The weak position of all and any one of the smaller Left parties eventually led them to merge their differences and to present one common ‘Green-Left’ electoral list in the elections of September 1989. If they doubled their seats from 3 to 6, this was due as much to the advantage which a larger group gains under the d'Hondt system of proportional representation as to a clear gain in votes. Meanwhile, D'66 maneuvered back into a position of a non-aligned party in the center without wishing to enter into durable pacts with any one. The Socialists, feeling increasingly frustrated in opposition, entered a stage of internal debate and revision which eventually led to a jettisoning of even the last vestiges of their erstwhile belief in the promises of ‘democratic polarization’. Having returned to being a party which accepts the normal practices of coalition politics in a multiparty system, they became once more an acceptable coalition party for the Christian-Democrats when in 1989 the Christian-Democrat-cum-Liberal coalition broke up. Dutch politics, so it seems, had come full circle.
How ‘old’ or how ‘new’ is Dutch politics?

If we seek to summarize the changes which have taken place in Dutch politics and society, we face conflicting views and at first sight contradictory evidence. There is the image of an increased democratization on the one hand, one of restoration and neo-conformism on the other.

Let us review each of these images in turn. There is no denying the substantial changes which have taken place in Dutch society, notably the rather fundamental changes in the churches and the religious subcultures, the much greater sectoralization of organizational networks, a far-going individualization of human relations, and a decline in traditional authority patterns. As we saw, the traditional rules of the game were deliberately challenged and an attempt was made to replace coalition politics by a politics of polarization and direct electoral choice. At the same time there was a rapid increase in confrontationist politics also outside the political arena, when more and more groups resorted to direct action tactics. Both the politics of polarization and direct actions presented a clear challenge to existing authority, and were hailed by some as clear indications of a general process of democratization. Their impact of polarization and direct actions seemed all the stronger because Dutch elites were not - or more accurately, were no longer - used to a policy of confrontation. Hence they acted often nervously, wavering between allowing expression and repression.

Such uncertainties, magnified for a time by television which made both the challenges to authority and the hesitancy of politicians visible in an unprecedented manner, seemed for a time to create a crisis of legitimacy. To the extent that direct actions also provided shortcuts to favorable decisions as compared to the more laborious institutionalized procedures set up for ‘normal’ ways of consultation and decision-making, the process seemed self-reinforcing. All this might point to a picture of lasting and fundamental change.

But the same coin has also another side. Generally speaking, the strong drive for democracy and democratization in Dutch society eventually proved abortive. There is little left of communitarian hopes. Experiments in democratic self-government in a large number of institutions and organizations generally ended mostly in malaise and the establishment of new external or internal bureaucratic Controls. Once elites and mass publics got used to a new confrontationist politics, direct action lost much of its initial democratic ‘luster’. Resorting to direct actions has become to some extent routinized. Having become at most one way of advancing particular interests, they are no longer regarded as offering a lasting ‘democratic’ substitute for the persisting requirements of organized and institutionalized politics. In fact, many democrats of yesterday have become the managers of today. The few who have not become persuaded of the merits of new management have now become the butt of ridicule: they represent a vanishing group of oude jongeren (old youth) who, to use a term of the 1960s, are no longer ‘with it’. More importantly, the wider-ranging, deliberate attempt to remake the Dutch system one of dichotomous politics, whether through a change in political institutions or through a change in the strategy of parties, has failed.

Does this imply full restoration? Those who like to think in such terms can
point to various attempts at increasing social control. One of the strongest examples of this is the deliberate attempt on the part of the Vatican, aided and abetted by not overly numerous conservative Catholic groupings in the Netherlands, to re-establish ‘order’ in the Dutch Catholic Church by the appointment of outright conservative bishops. Another would consist in a greater emphasis on issues of law and order. A third would point to the more general tendency towards a more ‘managerial’ type of control in both government and private enterprise. One can see this in various reforms in the social security system. In the area of industrial relations the power of employers seems to have grown, that of the unions to have weakened. Considerations of cost and efficiency seem to outweigh those of code-termination and sometimes of social justice.

Does this trend towards more management and bureaucracy also affect the traditional pluralism of Dutch society? It would be too early to say, not least because the situation is somewhat paradoxical.

There is on the one hand an inclination to settle matters at central government level, while on the other there is a growing belief in the need for deregulation and privatization. The latter would logically presume a decrease in central government intervention and greater freedom for private groups and organizations. At least in theory and ideology there is some convergence among all major ideological groups on the need for less direct government and a wish to leave more to lower levels of government and to private groups. No definite balance would seem to have been found, however. The relations between state and social groups remain close and complex, in a manner which defies any simple definition in terms of ‘pluralism’ or ‘corporatism’.

What has all this done to political interest and citizen participation? On that the evidence seems clear. Time-series data show no, or hardly any, increase in overt political interest or active political involvement as the picture of massive unrest or a massive wish for ‘democratization’ presumably should make one expect.\(^81\) What survey evidence does show, on the other hand, is a much greater tolerance for unconventional political behavior as well as deviant personal behavior and beliefs. That has perhaps been the most lasting development in Dutch politics and society. Social surveys reveal a constant growth in permissiveness regarding all aspects of private behavior, such as the position of women and minors, interreligious and intercommunal living, all manner of sexual behavior including homosexuality, abortion, new lifestyles of cohabitation, drug use, etc.\(^82\) Such permissiveness was made easier, I suggest, by older pluralist traditions in the Netherlands which made it possible for people to continue their own preferred life, leaving others well alone in theirs.\(^83\)

In fact, much of daily life proceeds, as before, in limited circles of work, family or alternative lifestyle communities, and smaller social groups. Political decision-making remains rather prudent but distant, with complex compromises even now often preferred to once-for-all majority decisions.

Perhaps, then, the Dutch have remained much as they have always been: secure in their own groups, prepared to bargain (notably for specific interests), at times heavily ideological but on the whole not overly political except for occa-
sional emotional eruptions?
The picture is not very exciting perhaps. It is made all the more remarkable in that Eurobarometer surveys reveal the Dutch to be according to their own indications invariably the happiest citizens in the European Communities, with only mild dissatisfaction on the manner in which democracy works in the Netherlands.

Early in my professional life I always began any lecture to foreigners on the Netherlands with a simple phrase: let me try to make Dutch politics interesting by explaining why it can be so dull. Perhaps that has not changed, after all, for all the noise which the last decades have occasionally produced.

Eindnoten:


11. The 1917 revision brought full manhood suffrage but only removed existing constitutional obstacles for voting rights for women. The latter followed soon afterwards, however, through a parliamentary initiative adopted in 1919.


13. On hearing of revolutions in Vienna and Berlin the King had summoned the President of the Lower House, bypassing his ministers, to announce that he was willing to accept far-going reforms which he, his ministers and the majority of Parliament had so far resisted. The King declared to a meeting of the Diplomatic Corps that he had changed in twenty four hours ‘from someone very conservative to someone very liberal,’ and appointed a committee of five mainly oppositional politicians with J.R. Thorbecke as its primus movens, to advise on changes in the existing constitution and on the formation of a new cabinet. On these events see notably J.C. Boogman, Rondom 1848: De Politieke Ontwikkeling van Nederland 1840-1858. Amsterdam: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1978.


15. Thus, the first Orange King, William I, met with increasing parliamentary resistance. In 1839 Parliament rejected the budget, leading the two ministers of Finance and the Colonies most directly concerned to resign. The end of the protracted struggle over the secession of the Southern Netherlands between 1830 and 1839 necessitated a constitutional revision. This revision introduced reforms which the King would not accept. He preferred to abdicate in 1840.


24. Kossmann compared Van der Muelen to Locke asking: ‘Why was he forgotten while the fame of Locke, who moved over a wider field, but who was not a more penetrating or original thinker than he, would only grow? Was this simply because what in the final analysis had nothing
surprising in the Netherlands was still fresh for Englishmen?" Politieke Theorie in de Zeventiende Eeuw, p. 71 (translation HD).
25. E.g. the influential Calvinist leader, Abraham Kuyper, in his doctrine of soevereiniteit in eigen kring (inherent sovereignty for social groups), later developed by Herman Dooyeweerd in his philosophy of wetskringen, and the Liberal Hugo Krabbe who consciously opposed the doctrine of state sovereignty with a counter doctrine of rechtsoverheerserschap. Krabbe's study published in German as Die Lehre der Rechtsoberherrschaft (1906) was translated into English by George H. Sabine under the title The Modern Idea of the State (New York: 1927). Sabine, of course, gave considerable credit to Althusius as the founder of a modern pluralism in his influential A History of Political Theory.
27. Kossmann, Politieke Theorie in het Zeventiende-Eeuwse Nederland, p. 68, p. 77 and pp. 80 ff. In discussing Vander Muelen Kossmann points to 'how the rights of men and citizen could grow owing to the new, individualist foundation of absolutism which writers such as Hobbes had provided, and being no longer absorbed and evaporated in the aristocratic constitutionalism of the 16th century acquired a very precise and dynamic meaning.' (translation HD).
30. The term 'osmosis' was used as early as the 1930s by the pioneer of the discipline of public administration in the Netherlands, G.A. van Poelje.
34. One might note this element in the work of F.A. Hermens, C.J. Friedrich, Barrington Moore and others.

41. This somewhat different version of his original English manuscript was published in Dutch under the title *Verzuiling. Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*. Amsterdam, DeBussy, 1968; 6th ed. 1986. He also explicitly noted the changes which were occurring in the Netherlands in the second edition of *The Politics of Accommodation*. Berkeley, 1975. At the same time, however, he has shown elsewhere how little the Netherlands really shifted on the dimensions which he has since then developed for comparative analysis in his *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984; see his ‘From the Politics of Accommodation to Adversarial Politics in the Netherlands: A Reassessment,’ in H. Daalder and G.A. Irwin (eds.), *Politics in the Netherlands: How Much Change?* London: Cass, 1989, pp. 139-153 which was also published as a special issue of *West European Politics*, vol. 12, no. 1 (January 1989).


44. The term *Pacificatie* had old roots in the Netherlands, notably having been used at the time of the *Pacificatie van Gent* in 1576 when for a short time the seventeen Provinces seemed to agree on a common stand on the basis of a mutual recognition of diversity. The term was revived for the agreement which the major Dutch parties reached on the schools issue in combination with universal suffrage and proportional representation, passed into law by the constitutional revision of 1917. Lijphart has used the general term *Pacificatiedemocratie* as the Dutch equivalent of the English ‘consociational democracy.’


46. In passing we should note that such theories were developed on the whole post factum. This is not unimportant. For it implies that one reads from the present back into history, starts from the assumption that the development of different ideological subcultures was a foregone conclusion, and implicitly accepts their moral right and success. In fact, the very metaphor of *verzuiling*, of separate pillars which supported an overarching common roof, could only develop in a climate of successful mobilization of all and mutual forbearance of each. This has not always been so. Notably in the 1930s there were vociferous critics (mainly of a liberal or ultranationalist persuasion) who spoke of *schotjes*, partitions, divisions which weakened unity and endangered the nation.

47. E.g. J.A.A. van Doom, ‘Verzuiling: Een Eigentijds Systeem van Sociale Controle,’ *Sociologische Gids*, Vol. 3 (1956), pp. 41-49; S. Stuurman, *Verzuiling, Kapitalisme en Patriarchaat*. Nijmegen: Sun, 1983. Stuurman interprets the successful mobilization of Calvinists and Catholics in Dutch society not so much in terms of emancipation of deprived strata, or autonomous ideological values, but as a deliberate attempt on the part of ‘fractions’ of a capitalist ruling class to forestall the organization of an effective working-class movement. He defines the term *zuilen* (segments or pillars) in a manner which *eo ipso* excludes the Socialists. Zuilen are according to his definition: ‘a hierarchically structured complex of socio-political and ideological apparatuses with the following characteristics: (a) the social basis cuts across all classes; (b) each pillar comprehends more than one social activity; (c) its integrating ideology is religious, aiming at class cooperation and of patriarchy [read: male dominance] as basic characteristics; (4) the
pillar has a political component, operates on the level of the state’ (Ibidem, p. 71, translation HD).


50. One wonders, in fact, whether not both the ‘emancipationist’ and the ‘social control’ approach show somewhat teleological features: if the first deems the emancipation of any particular subculture, and in the end that of all, as justified seeing all preceding history in that light, the latter regards the formation of the religious subcultures as obstacles to the emancipation of workers and women which for long prevented the latter from taking their rightful position in society.

51. Regional factors - notably the incidents of warfare at the end of the 16th century - were to determine to a substantial extent which religion a particular city or province would eventually have. Thus, many erstwhile Catholics had been converted to Protestantism under the pressures of the twin forces of public authority and the privileged position of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Northern provinces. In contrast, the southern areas of Brabant and Limburg had been re-won fully for Catholicism during the Counterreformation before they were conquered in the 1620s and 1630s by the Northern Provinces. They then retained their homogeneously Catholic character. But the heavy concentration of Catholics in what remained the Generaliteitslanden (dependent territories administered by the seven United Provinces jointly) did much to instil attitudes of inferiority in the Catholic population. It should be added, however, that many areas of the North (most notably in the populous province of Holland) retained substantial pockets of Catholics. The principle of cuius regio, eius religio was never applied fully in the case of the Netherlands. This tends to differentiate the Dutch case from that of Switzerland, for instance.

52. Some examples: long before the advent of mass working-class unions the article of the Code Pénal banning the association of working-class associations had been scrapped (1872); the Left had, however grudgingly, recognized that nothing in the Constitution prevented the principle of subsidizing religious education (1887); a Cabinet of Calvinists and Catholics (1888-1891) arranged for the first government subsidies to religious elementary schools long before full financial parity was granted to them in the 1917 Compromise (Pacificatie).

53. Calvinist mobilization went as follows: in the course of the 19th century both elite groups and lower class believers became increasingly restless about developments within the Dutch Reformed Church. Tolerating as the Church did many different beliefs ranging all the way from a near-secular modernism to an otherworldly fundamentalist pietism, it had become, in the words of the great Calvinist leader and demagogue, Abraham Kuyper, a ‘Caesaro-papistic monster,’ a true ‘synagogue of Satan.’ Using increased possibilities for congregational decision-making, Kuyper and others mounted a strong fight for local control of particular churches at a time that most of his followers did not yet enjoy the right to vote in the political arena. In a massive organizational drive Kuyper and his followers founded successively an Anti-School Law League (consciously modelled on the British Anti-Com Law League (1872), a Calvinist newspaper De Standaard (1872), a Calvinist working-class organization Patrimonium (1876), a massive petition asking the King not to sign a Liberal Education Act which strengthened the position of the secular public schools (1878), the Antirevolutionary Party (1879) and a separate Calvinist Free University (1880), finally to break away in substantial numbers from the Dutch Reformed Church (the Doleantie of 1886) who formed a new Calvinist denomination consciously called the Gereformeerde Kerken (Reformed Churches in the plural) to denote the need for autonomy for true believers. What one should note about this organizational drive are at least three features: it took place before the suffrage was extended: Calvinist leaders therefore consciously spoke of the need to mobilize ‘the people beyond the electorate;’ it did not embrace all orthodox elements: many of them notably among traditional elite groups saw in Kuyper’s militancy a danger to the unity of the Dutch Reformed Church and preferred to work for reform from within the Church or were satisfied with personal orthodoxy. These groups eventually organized politically in the Christian-Historical Union which never assumed the character of a strong mass party unlike the more militant Antirevolutionary Party.

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54. As compared to the Calvinists, the formation of a Catholic subculture took a very different path. Although substantially more numerous than Kuyper's Calvinists, Catholics were much more hesitant to organize. They supported the separation of Church and State, as advocated notably by the Liberals at the time of the Constitutional Revision in 1848, and obtained in 1853 the re-establishment of the Church Hierarchy under an Archbishop in Utrecht and four other dioceses which had disappeared since the Dutch Revolt. Such organization as took place was mainly directed towards rebuilding the Church. Clerics were notably important in all new Catholic organizations.

55. This statement begs an important question: when did the religious subcultures organize, and in what regions and which social groups were they successful? There is some ambivalence in the view of left critics. On the one hand, they have generally argued that the impetus for the political and social organization of the religious groups was mainly reactive: they organized when and where Socialists began to pose a threat. On the other hand, they seek part of the reason for the limited success of the Socialists in the existence of religious subcultures which presumably means that they were in place before Socialists could successfully challenge them. I suggest that this dilemma can only be solved by detailed historical, regionally-specific inquiry. Such data as are available would seem to offer only limited confirmation of the view that the efforts of the religious subcultures was mainly one of defense, rather than the promotion of their own ideological interests. See for some interesting case studies J.C.H. Blom and C.J. Misset eds., Broeders Sluit U Aan! Aspecten van Verzuiling in Zeven Hollandse Steden. Bergen: Bataafse Leeuw, 1985.

56. This statement obviously does not hold for those social control theorists who would seem to embrace the elitist theory that elites exaggerate cleavages to keep or gain positions for them. Perhaps one should describe this position as one of the inevitability of the circulation of Lumperelites?


60. This term was coined by J.J. Vis, see his 'Parlementaire Pretenties, Praktijken en Problemen’, in H. Daalder (ed.), Parlement en Politieke Besluitvorming in Nederland. Alphen: Samson, 1975, pp. 24-45.


Three useful publications outlining the background of the Netherlands in foreign affairs are:


For an extensive inside report on Dutch decision-making see B.J. van Eenennaam, *Achtenveertig Kruisraketten: Hoogspanning in de Lage Landen*. The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1988; for data disproving the suggestion that the Dutch public was particularly ailing from ‘Hollanditis’, see the studies by Eichenberg in note 57 and Everts in note 66.


This is 1/150 or two thirds of 1% of the national valid vote.

Having won eight seats in 1971 it was to provide the declining Christian Parties and the Liberals with a margin of strength necessary to retain a parliamentary majority. One year later an internal conflict in the Biesheuvel Cabinet led the two DS'70 Cabinet ministers to resign. The DS'70 party shrunk to six seats in the ensuing 1972 elections and only 1 seat in 1977. It was officially dissolved after it failed to win a seat in 1981.

The rationale for such proposals had been developed before the party was formed in two influential articles by a Leiden Law Professor, J. Glastra van Loon, ‘Kiezen of Delen,’ *Nederlands Juristenblad*, (1964), pp. 1135-1142; 1161-1167. Van Loon later became a junior minister and then chairman of D'66.

*Staatscommissie inzake de Grondwet en de Kieswet* (generally known by the name of its two chairmen as the Cals-Donner Commission) which published several reports between 1968 and 1970 (The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij).

Drastic reforms would anyhow have been difficult to pass, given the circumstance that a revision of the constitution would have required a two-thirds reading after dissolution of Parliament which gave a veto power to any grouping making up at least one third of either House of Parliament. Some smaller reforms were introduced, notably an end to compulsory appearance at the ballot-box, and the scrapping of a clause which had forbidden electoral pacts between different party lists. The latter decision was intended to increase the chances of combined groupings in the allocation of seats. After a long preparation an entirely new constitution was voted in 1983 which contained mainly technical revisions. Perhaps the most important political reform in that revision was a change in the election of the Upper Chamber, which would no longer be chosen in staggered elections, one half being renewed every three years, but would henceforth be renewed every four years immediately following provincial elections. Being the product of more recent elections potentially increased the political weight of the Upper Chamber.


One might add that Van Thijn thought that the days of traditional membership parties were over. Given that parties had to win votes in an increasingly open market, new forms of electioneering were necessary, as was a new strategy towards political groups: parties should form linkages with such groups, and profit from their mobilization potential not so much through enduring institutional cooperation as had been the case within the former ideological families, but by promoting their interests *ad hoc* and by remaining alert to political demands in the actuality of political debate and decision-making.

I have offered somewhat more extensive surveys in English in: ‘Changing Procedures and Changing Strategies in Dutch Coalition-Building,’ *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 4, (1986), pp. 507-531, and “The Dutch Party System: From Segmentation to Polarization - And then?” in: H. Daalder (ed.), *The Party Systems of Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the

78. I have not referred in this lecture to one later attempt at changing institutional arrangements in the Netherlands. During the short time he was Minister of the Interior in 1981-1982 Van Thijn charged a new Staatscommissie van Advies inzake de Relatie Kiezer-Beleidsvorming (the Biesheuvel Commission) with the task to offer new proposals on the procedure of the formation of cabinets and the possibility to increase direct voter choice. The Biesheuvel Commission offered mainly technical suggestions on the earlier matter, and recommended the introduction of a referendum under which voters could challenge an act passed by Parliament, provided some 10,000 voters submitted a request that within six weeks would be supported by 300,000 signatures. The referendum proposal was dutifully discussed by the major parties but soon died, having met with lukewarm support if not clear opposition. Proposals for strengthening direct voter choice in other matters, e.g. a revived proposal for a directly elected Cabinet formateur, of the direct election of provincial governors or municipal mayors, have remained equally abortive.

79. Both in the time of the Republic, and throughout the latter half of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th centuries, mass actions (whether organized or not) have been frequent. Sometimes those took on the form of rebellious eruptions, sometimes of well-organized mass actions (as in large-scale petition movements such as a protestant movement in 1853 seeking to stop the return of a Catholic Hierarchy in 1853, petitions by Calvinists and Catholics to the King not to countersign a Liberal school law in 1878, mass demonstrations for universal suffrage at the time of the Opening of Parliament before World War I, and repeated mass actions on matters of armament, e.g. one very large one in 1923 protesting a government plan for a naval expansion which provoked the largest mass demonstration, and the greatest petition movement in Dutch politics, until the mass demonstrations against the INF missiles in the early 1980s.

80. It is now possible to arrange for mass demonstrations at the courtyard of the Binnenhof (which houses the two Chambers of Parliament) in direct consultation with the information services of Parliament which will find Members of Parliament ready to receive a petition and arranges for the presence of television cameras whenever appropriate.


82. A particularly rich source is the biennial report of the Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij) which has appeared since 1974. See also P. Castenmiller, Participatie in Beweging: Ontwikkelingen in Politieke Participatie in Nederland. The Hague, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, Cahier 1988/nr. 59, which contains a useful survey and analysis of Dutch studies on participation and political attitudes.

83. For an analysis along these lines, applied to race relations in the Netherlands, see C. Bagley, The Dutch Plural Society: A Comparative Study in Race Relations. London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, 1973.
chapter thirteen | looking back: the development of the study of comparative politics

‘Comparative politics’ existed long before it became a recognized subfield of the modern discipline of political science. A century or so ago, a knowledge of the variety of political systems formed part of the normal education of literati in different disciplines, such as law and philosophy, history and letters. There were classic writers on problems of modern government in different countries such as Mill, Bagehot, Bluntschli, Radbruch, Redslob, Duguit or Bryce. Their treatises contained many comparisons, over time as well between different societies. One might go back further in history. Political theory abounds with comparative discourse on both contrasts and commonalities in political life, as even a superficial survey of the writings of Aristotle and Polybius, of Dante and Machiavelli, of Bodin and Locke, of Montesquieu and De Tocqueville, not to speak of the authors of The Federalist Papers, immediately shows. Man has speculated comparatively on problems of government and society in both prescriptive and descriptive terms since times immemorial. If we nevertheless insist that modern comparative politics is somehow different, this is for three not unrelated reasons: first, modern comparative politics deals consciously with a political world which has changed drastically from the universe known to the great writers of the past; second, it has become the special terrain of a recognized subfield of contemporary political Science; and third, as such it participates in both paradigmatic shifts and the new research developments and techniques of the discipline of political science.

The academic tradition

Several characteristics marked the understanding of government in Europe and the United States as it developed at the beginning of the twentieth century.

First, there was a strong normative overtone in discussions on government and democratic rule. Normative approaches were traditionally strong in fields like law, philosophy or theology in which problems of government were discussed at the time. Different ideological traditions, whether Conservative, Catholic or Protestant, Liberal, Radical or Socialist, inevitably had their impact on political discourse. So had more specific traditions of political theory which nourished debates on crucial themes like sovereignty, community, authority, liberty, constitutionalism, rule of law and so forth.

Second, discussions of government often reflected particular conceptions of history. In the hands of some, this might lead to the elaboration of ‘historical laws’, often couched in terms of different ‘stages’ through which societies would develop. ‘Diachronic’ comparisons thus came naturally. Models of social change often showed a clear evolutionary or even teleological bias.

Third, there was generally a strong emphasis on political institutions, which
were thought to be not only the results of past political strife, but also factors which could control present and future political developments.

Fourth, ‘comparative’ politics generally assumed specific country perspectives. Thus, in Britain ‘cross-channel’ dialogues easily developed into a contrast between (stable) British ‘cabinet government’ and (unstable) French ‘gouvernement d’assemblée’ (or for that matter British ‘rule of law’ versus French ‘droit administratif’). Trans-Atlantic debates resulted in the conflicting typologies of ‘parliamentary’ versus a ‘presidential’ system of democratic government. Perennial debates in France on the merits, or lack of merit, of the French revolution strongly coloured political discussions on problems of constitutionalism and popular sovereignty. Debates in what was to become Germany had a powerful impact on the analysis of state and nation, of the exercise of power, of ‘organicist’ versus ‘liberal’ modes of social and economic development, and of the comparative role of bureaucracies - subjects which were to become the concerns of future social science also outside German borders. Comparisons of European countries with the United States underscored the early nature of American democracy and stressed the importance of voluntary groups in a free society, but the United States could also be held up as a negative yardstick for alleged abuses, for its spoils system, the role of lobbies or a yellow press, or more generally the dangers of ‘mass society’.

Typically, smaller European countries tended to be neglected in the reasoning of learned men outside the borders of the particular country itself. Linguistic frontiers may partly explain this. But probably more important was the assumption, typical of nineteenth and early twentieth century power politics, that small countries hardly mattered. At best they might be of little more than folkloristic interest, at worst they were seen as no more than transient players in a world in which the larger countries determined history.

‘Comparative politics’ then went generally not much beyond speculation and the study of ‘foreign government’. Other states were generally seen as entities all on their own, or at most as possible yardsticks against which to measure developments in one’s own society, and then often as negative yardsticks at that.

The political shocks of the twentieth century and the erosion of institutional certainties

All this was to change drastically in the wake of three fundamental twentieth century shocks: the breakdown of democracy in Weimar Germany, the rise of totalitarian systems and the turn towards authoritarianism of most of the new states which were established following the demise of European colonialism.

The formally legal ‘Machtübernahme’ in Weimar Germany in 1933 shattered democratic hopes and self-confidence. The Weimar constitution had been heralded as the perfect model of democratic constitutionalism. Its fall destroyed the trust in political institutions as sufficient guarantees of democratic rule. Admittedly, some theoreticians attempted to retain ‘institutionalist’ explanations, singling out ‘faulty’ institutions such as proportional representation,² the presence of a directly elected
President next to a ‘normal’ but thereby weakened Kanzier, or the absence of judicial review, as major factors in the destruction of democratic rule. But
generally, institutionalist analyses stood discredited. A growing awareness of the patent discrepancy between the promises of the Soviet constitution of 1936 and the realities of naked power relations in the USSR reinforced this tendency, as did events in Italy since 1922 and in France in 1940.

The rise of totalitarian political systems massively changed the perceptions of politics. Their development, in some countries and not in others, raised new problems of comparative enquiry. Earlier beliefs about the ‘natural’ development of democracy foundered. ‘Autocracy’ had been a time-honoured category of political analysis, and ‘absolutism’ had been the natural counterpoint of constitutionalism and later of democracy. But totalitarianism seemed to represent an entirely new political phenomenon. Problems of power and leadership, of propaganda and mass publics, of repressive one-party systems and police rule, came to dominate political discussion. Sociological and psychological explanations seemed to offer better insights into the realities of totalitarian rule than did traditional political theory or institutional analysis.

The post-1945 world was soon to see also the rise of many new states from what had been colonial dependencies. Such states had generally been equipped with democratic constitutional arrangements, which in most cases proved ineffective to stem developments of authoritarian regimes, whether in the hands of traditional elites, military or bureaucratic governors, or revolutionary party leaders. Such developments further undermined a belief in institutional approaches, and called for alternative modes of analysis.

One effect of the great political shocks of the twentieth century was a massive migration of scholars, notably to the United States of America, but to a lesser extent also the United Kingdom. One needs only list prominent names such as Karl W. Deutsch, Henry W. Ehrmann, Otto Kirchheimer, Paul Lazarsfeld, Karl Loewenstein, Hans Morgenthau, Franz Neumann, Sigmund Neumann, and Joseph Schumpeter, to make clear the importance of this factor for new developments in the study of politics. That field was also to attract the progeny of European refugees who, as a typical ‘second generation’, turned to the analysis of comparative and international politics in great numbers. Exiles from Hitler were followed by migrants from Communist repression, and later still by a growing number of Third World scholars who opted to stay in the First World. A desire for the systematic study of comparative politics came naturally in such circumstances. It heightened concern with the realities of political power, both within and between states. It made for a characteristically ambivalent attitude about democracy: if anything the belief in democratic values became stronger, but expectations about its chances turned toward pessimism.

The academy and the changing political universe

If migrant scholars looked back naturally on developments in continents they had left, the world was changing, and so was the role of the United States in what was rapidly becoming global politics for policy-makers and students of politics alike. Although Europe remained a key area, other parts of the world, including notably the evolving Communist bloc, Japan and a rapidly growing number of new states,
became matters of urgent political and intellectual concern. So did Latin America, long regarded as a backyard of a Monroe doctrine America. Comparative politics saw the number of its possible units of analysis grow beyond recognition. At the same time problems of political stability and legitimacy, of social and economic development, of competing political regimes and ideologies assumed an entirely new importance.

The need to understand this new world could be met in a variety of ways. It underscored the importance of experts on single countries, notably those which became the object of particular policy concern. It increased the relevance of traditional area studies which it released from their (sometimes almost museum-like) preoccupation with the unique features of ‘other’ civilizations; in the process cultural anthropology became a more central field in contemporary social Science. At the same time, older beliefs about inevitable - and presumably static - differences gave way to concerns with political and social change - inter alia toward democracy - and beyond this: to discussions of the extent to which such changes could, and should, be engineered.

All this fitted in well with the traditional temper of American academics. The lure of ‘science’ had traditionally been strong and had expanded much beyond the ‘natural sciences’ into the social sciences and even the humanities. So had the assumption that ‘science’ could and should lead to practical policy results. There was a strong belief that the academic enterprise should centre on the elaboration of testable theories. At the same time, the idea of interdisciplinary study stood in high esteem. It was given a strong impetus within some of the great universities (the University of Chicago being a particularly important centre). Such interdisciplinarity was moreover reinforced by new agencies, including government research councils, the newly established (American) Social Science Research Council and a growing number of private foundations all becoming increasingly involved in sponsoring ‘relevant’ research. This in turn facilitated a massive expansion of graduate schools, and fostered collaborative research between senior and junior scholars, the latter being called upon to ‘test’ particular theories elaborated by the former through detailed empirical research. All this came to coincide with the development of new research tools, which helped to foster what was soon to become known as the ‘behavioural revolution’ (from which electoral and value studies have benefited). Next to library research and field work in a participatory setting, the survey became a powerful research tool. Governments also began to develop more and more important statistical data to monitor the effects of new policies. A rapidly growing number of international organizations, whether global (such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund), or regional (the OECD growing from the efforts of the Marshall Plan, and the European Communities being particularly important), came to collect statistical data on many countries. To the extent that they were presented in standardized form, this facilitated comparative inquiry. More and more efforts also went into the construction of time-series data, necessary for the study of developments over time. This massively increased amount of quantitative data (initially developed mainly in the context of economic and social policies and used
in particular by economists and experts in social policies) also found its way into data handbooks and data archives.\(^4\) The computer revolution was concurrently to facilitate the storage, analysis and access to such data. The efforts of individual scholars first, research sponsoring agencies later, made the pooling and preservation of research data (including the products of survey research for secondary analysis) increasingly common practice. All this occurred at a time of a massive expansion of academic enrolment, which increased facilities not only for graduate research, but also for publishing research findings. Both university presses and specialized commercial publishers massively expanded. Journals proliferated. So did professional associations and the number and specialization of workshops and panels at academic conferences.

If both the mass, and the sophistication, of such developments in social science were taking place initially mainly in the United States, they soon became an international reality. Early in the post-1945 period deliberate efforts were made to foster international comparative research. One powerful stimulus came from UNESCO, which established its own International Social Science Research Council, and which provided a powerful stimulus for the establishment of international professional bodies such as the International Political Science Association (IPSA) or the International Sociological Association (ISA). Many national governments expanded their research councils. The idea of international exchange and research co-operation found increasing favour, with the fellowship programmes of a number of American Foundations, the Fulbright programme, and to a lesser extent agencies like the British Council setting a pattern. In the process English became increasingly the lingua franca of modern social science.

**The ‘new’ comparative politics**

Against this general background of political change on the one hand, and a massive expansion of international and national policy-making and research on the other hand, ‘comparative politics’ developed rapidly. The shift in terminology from the older term of ‘comparative government’ to ‘comparative politics’ was symbolic for what was in fact, a conscious desire to move away from the traditional concern with political institutions towards a preoccupation with political and social developments generally, and within democratic systems in particular.

There are some particular landmarks in the development of modern ‘comparative politics’. One of these was the Evanston seminar at Northwestern University in 1952 which brought together a group of then-younger scholars including Samuel Beer, George Blanksten, Richard Cox, Karl W. Deutsch, Harry Eckstein, Kenneth Thompson and Robert E. Ward under the chairmanship of Roy Macridis. In a statement, published in the American Political Science Review, they branded the existing study of comparative government as parochial in being mainly concerned with Europe only, as being merely descriptive instead of analytical, as overly concerned with institutions rather than processes, and as being insufficiently comparative, wedded above all to case method approaches.\(^5\) Some of the members...
of the Evanston group vigorously clashed with stalwart representatives of an older
generation, including such luminaries as Carl J. Friedrich, Maurice
Duverger, Dolf Sternberger and William A. Robson during a colloquium of IPSA in Florence in 1954. Such older practitioners of comparative government were not readily persuaded by the new gospel. They were to note gleefully that the most irascible proponent of the new ‘comparative politics’, Roy Macridis, was soon to publish work on France and other countries along what seemed after all rather traditional lines. The continuing need to take account of specific country perspectives was also to become apparent in the work of other scholars of the group, who after all became editors and authors of influential textbooks organized on the basis of country studies, though covering again mainly the larger countries.

In the meantime, a group of scholars (including some members of the Evanston Seminar) was being formed who as a group would have a lasting influence on the development of comparative politics. Many of them were, or would be, active in what was soon to become known as ‘the Committee’ (i.e. the Committee on Comparative Politics of the American Social Science Research Council). In the second half of the 1950s, this Committee deliberately brought together a number of leading area experts. With Gabriel A. Almond as its highly influential chairman, it set itself to recasting the analysis of comparative politics along mainly structural-functionalist lines. As Almond explicitly stated in the influential volume edited by himself and James S. Coleman, *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (1960), the ambition was to find ‘a common framework and set of categories to be used in... area political analysis’; to this end Almond himself engaged in ‘experiments in the application of sociological and anthropological concepts in the comparison of political systems’, irrespective of time or area. This work was eventually to lead to the famous ‘crises of political development’ model, which sought to analyse political systems in terms of the character and sequence of six major processes: legitimacy, identity, penetration, integration, participation and distribution. One manner in which to validate such approaches was to bring together members of the Committee with experts on areas, particular institutions or social processes for a series of books on different aspects of political development, including Communications, bureaucracies, political culture, education, parties, and (belatedly) state-formation. Two works were intended to cap the approach: a book by Almond and Powell in 1966 offered mainly as a textbook, and a co-authored volume on Crises and Sequences in Political Development. Whereas the first seemed to proclaim certainty, the latter revealed considerable self-doubt and disagreement in the Committee. Clearly, its members did not see eye to eye on such fundamental matters as the existence or not of a linear development from tradition to modernity, and the possibility to engineer social change and democratization or not.

Of course, such debates were not restricted to members of the Committee. A great many scholars, in different disciplines, tried their hand at defining processes of political development and modernization. For all their diversity and disagreement, such writings had in common an attempt to understand processes of social change, conceived as in principle comparable over different areas and time-periods, and tackled with instruments from whatever social science discipline seemed appropriate. Such approaches also led to a reconsideration of past patterns of political and social change in nations already seen as fully or mainly modernized,
including the United States itself and Western Europe. Historians were asked to join in such efforts at comparative understanding.13.

The impact of these approaches on the discipline was substantial. All manner of Ph.D. candidates swarmed out to study processes of social and political modernization in countries all over the world. They did so with different interests and intent. Some became thoroughly intrigued with the persistent role of traditional structures and beliefs, making them eager novices in the ranks of area specialists and cultural anthropologists. Others concentrated rather on the other end of the presumed tradition modernity continuum, identifying largely with the search for ‘development’ by economists and experts on public administration. Yet others felt happier with the work of various international organizations which sought to monitor and stimulate social and economic developments with the aid of statistical indicators, regarding the universe of nations, or some particular sample of it, as a laboratory in which to test particular development models.14.

Inevitable reactions

For all its exhilaration the political development boom was to create its own reactions, in rather different ways. One reaction consisted in the development of counter-models of development which treated the prosperous West not as the prototype of a modern society which others were naturally to attain at some later stage, but as the root cause of an inequitable distribution of the world's goods. Marxist theories of (neo)imperialism held capitalist development responsible for the exploitation of the Third World, and regarded the so-called ‘independence’ of former colonies as a thin guise for what was in practice ‘neo-colonialism’. Notably from the background of Latin America, which had much older independent states than Africa and parts of Asia, developed the various brands of ‘dependency’ theory which emphasized the co-existence of traditional sectors of society and the economy with modern economic sectors which were in practice little more than the emporia of the advanced economies in the USA and Europe. Such models were given a more elaborate treatment in Wallerstein's World System approach, which became in many ways an academic industry of its own.

A second reaction came from those who had difficulty fitting Communist systems into the framework of general development theories. To many, such a problem did not seem particularly urgent: the comparative study of Communist societies was to a considerable extent a world unto itself, and many were happy to leave it at that. The idea of a possible convergence of systems in the West and the East seemed to most observers bereft of reality, perhaps a matter of speculation for economists, not for those who knew the patent differences in political life from direct physical experience or historical analogy. But developments of Communist states did yet enter the field of general comparative politics for at least two reasons. Communist models might and did serve as example and inspiration for Third World countries, notably in their Chinese and Cuban variety. And in a more theoretical vein, a debate arose on the issue to what degree totalitarian systems were themselves a product of
modernity. This point had been strongly argued by Carl J. Friedrich, who saw in that characteristic the fundamental difference between older
systems of autocracy and royal absolutism and modern totalitarian systems, but was denied by scholars like Wittfogel who saw many common features between the systems described in his *Oriental Despotism* and systems of modern totalitarian rule. Nevertheless, whether seen as possible models of modernization, or as alternative expressions of modernity itself, the study of totalitarian systems remained on the whole outside the scope of general comparative politics writing. At least one reason for this was the tendency to equate political modernity with democracy, in systems already existing or as the natural end-product of political development.

A third reaction to the political development literature consisted in the allegation that it rode roughshod over the uniqueness of particular areas or countries. Such was the natural reaction of scholars nurtured in a tradition of ‘configurative’ studies, whether of a particular local culture, or a particular political system. Such scholars were not comfortable with what they regarded as overly general categories of analysis. They emphasized that the essence of political and social systems lay in the complicated interaction of many variables which could only be disentangled by destroying the uniqueness of the whole. And they tended to deny the possibility of real comparative study given the inability of scholars to really know more than one or two cases sufficiently well.

**Rethinking Europe**

For a time Europe became a somewhat ambiguous area in the development of the new comparative politics. The Third World seemed to attract most of the theorizing and field research, as did to a lesser and more specialist sense the development of Communist systems. Europe seemed possibly somewhat old-fashioned, a world of stable democracies about which all was known and where little happened. The very concept of Europe had become somewhat hazy, moreover. The erection of the Iron Curtain had lopped off a number of countries which had formerly formed a natural part of the European universe. If one saw Western Europe as for all practical purposes identical with ‘democratic Europe’, then certain European countries (including some members of NATO, like Greece, or Portugal, not to speak of Spain) presumably did not belong to it. If democracy were the defining characteristic, why then not study all modern democracies together, thus abandoning the very existence of ‘Europe’ as a distinct area, which was a conclusion drawn, for example, by Lijphart?18

Whatever such qualms, ‘Europe’ was soon to figure prominently on the map of comparative politics again, through a variety of circumstances. The persistent concern about ‘totalitarianism’ naturally made for comparative enquiry into past events: what after all had caused the breakdown of democratic regimes in some countries, and not in others. When much later Greece, Spain and Portugal all returned to democratic rule, the reverse question arose: what were the causes for such transitions from authoritarian rule. The failure of imposed constitutional regimes in many former colonies raised the issue whether alternative models of democracy might have done better; where was one to find these but in Europe (the British dominions usually being regarded as mere offshoots of a British system)?
The general concern with development posed many questions for which the history of different European countries might provide possible answers, whatever the dangers of historical analogies. There was a rich literature on European countries, and access to sources was relatively easy. Europe contained, moreover, a variety of cases vital for comparative analysis with a generalizing intent, provided one really knew the specific cases that made up Europe, and went beyond the exclusive concentration on a few larger countries only.

Much of the history of the development of comparative politics writing in and on Europe can in fact be written in terms of a desire to take account of the political experience of particular countries. As a special sub-discipline, European comparative politics grew largely from the efforts of a new post-war generation of younger scholars who engaged in mass journeys to some extent to the United Kingdom, but particularly to the United States. They found there an exhilarating world of scholarship, with all manner of theoretical speculation and rich empirical research. This was in strong contrast with the paucity of ‘modern’ social science literature in their own country, and led naturally to a desire to emulate and replicate studies on America with comparable studies at home. At the same time, a confrontation with Anglo-Saxon scholarship also provoked a natural reaction against what were often felt to be too specifically ‘British’ or ‘American’ theories, typologies or models, and fostered a desire to develop alternative theories and typologies which were more in line with the understanding of one’s own country. At a minimum, more countries should be brought onto the map of European comparative politics, which somewhat ironically required ‘translating’ their experience into Anglo-American concepts.

Thus, some of the most innovative comparative politics writing by European scholars betrays, on closer analysis, a strong influence of particular country perspectives. This had been irritatingly clear from what purported to be a general study of political parties by Maurice Duverger, which for all the help the author received in data collection from an early IPSA network of European political scientists, was shot through with French perspectives and prejudices. But one can also document the impact of Italian concerns in the much more sophisticated analyses of party systems by Giovanni Sartori. There is the disappointment of a left-socialist German emigré-scholar about post-war developments in Germany and Austria in the work of Otto Kirchheimer, just as Scandinavia provided the undoubted background of the development of a centre periphery model in the rich work of Stein Rokkan. An even clearer example is the deliberate development of the consociationalist model against the background of The Netherlands, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland, to counter the massive impact of what seemed too easy an identification of Anglo-American models of government with democracy per se.

From the mosaic of such parallel studies a much more sophisticated picture emerged of the diversities of the European experience, which could be studied both in a diachronic and a synchronic manner, culminating in what is as yet the most satisfactory attempt at understanding the complexities of European political developments contained in Stein Rokkan’s so-called ‘topological-typological’ map, or ‘macro-model’ of Europe.
Different research strategies for studying democracy

Taking developments in the study of ‘Europe’ as an example, the considerable variety of modes of comparative study becomes readily apparent. A seeming paradox is provided by the country monograph. To the extent that such a monograph is written to elucidate particular political experiences for a more general public, it may offer insights of comparative importance. This is much more true if the monograph seeks to prove, or disprove, specific theoretical propositions first developed with one or more other countries in mind. The most telling example, however, is the consciously theory-based analysis of a single country case.26 Moving to a somewhat higher level of abstraction are comparative analyses of two, or a few, particular countries.29 Most ‘comparativists’ must confess that their real knowledge of different countries tapers off quickly beyond a rather limited number of cases. One obvious way to overcome such limitations is collaborative research, in which, for any given research question, experts on different countries are asked to join in a common research effort. Most books on (European) democratic comparative politics consist of edited volumes of this kind. Such volumes bring much needed information on different countries together and testify to the fruits of cross-fertilization. But most of them suffer the natural defects of group enterprises. The choice of countries is often a function of the availability, or even the reliability, of individual country experts. Even the most rigorous attempt at editorial guidance rarely results in an even quality, let alone genuine comparability, of country chapters. Introductory and concluding chapters very often are of a rather ad hoc and impressionistic nature.30

This strengthens the case for attempting individual syntheses after all. The difficulty of such an enterprise becomes readily apparent, however, if one seeks for post-war equivalents of the great comparative government treatises of the past.31 These are very hard to find, and encounter the obvious problem of an increased number of countries to be treated, with many more empirical research findings of potential relevance to be covered.32 Rather than on analysis at the level of countries as a whole, work has tended to focus on particular institutions such as monarchy, heads of state, the formation of cabinets, parliaments, electoral systems, parties in general, particular party families, interest groups, bureaucratic structures, and so on.33 In studies focusing on particular institutions or groups, there is always real danger of analyses that are out of political and social context.

Alternatively, there is the massive growth of quantitative ‘cross-national studies’. As stated before, both the quantity and the quality of data have increased massively in the last decades, through the efforts of governments, international organizations, the gallant work of those who prepare ‘data handbooks’, and organize data archives.34 Such data invite cross-national studies, in a large number of fields. Thus one needs only to inspect the list of contents of journal articles in Electoral Studies, not to speak of important collaborative volumes ranging from that by Rose, to the one by Franklin and others,35 to see the richness of studies on electoral behaviour, and of elections.36
participation, influenced notably by the works of Verba and others, and of Barnes and Kaase, and on the impact of changing values, an area dominated by the highly debated analyses of Inglehart. The study of cabinet coalitions has offered a fertile testing-ground of formal theories. As we shall see presently, the data revolution has also had a great impact on the study of the development and problems of modern welfare states and public policy. Not all such cross-national studies are really comparative, however. Although they draw on data from many countries, they are often directed more to problems of general political sociology or psychology than to a systematic inspection of country variables. ‘Contextual’ knowledge is often neglected, and with it possibly the essence of comparative politics itself, which in the words of Sidney Verba presupposes that one tries to generalize - using that term loosely - about nations, or to generalize about subnational entities like bureaucracies, parties, armies and interests groups in ways that use national variation as part of the explanation. A lack of knowledge of the countries studied has made some such ‘cross-national’ analyses verge on what Stein Rokkan once dubbed mere ‘numerological nonsense’.

New approaches to the study of democratic politics

Developments in modern comparative politics, then, were largely the result of a greater knowledge of individual countries on the one hand, and of a true revolution in data collection and analysis techniques on the other. But at the same time, new political problems appeared on the political agenda, which resulted in something like a paradigmatic shift. If comparative politics had concentrated thus far mainly on problems of regime change, political institutions, and what in systems theory one calls ‘input’ structures, a new concern developed with problems of public policy and political ‘output’. Various factors contributed to this development.

One cause was the ‘Left’ revolution in social science in the 1960s and 1970s, which faced the question why ‘capitalist’ systems endured, once-confident prophesies to the contrary notwithstanding. This led to a new concern with the role of the state, which seemed somewhat forgotten in otherwise rival approaches of systems theory and economic determinism. A parallel debate arose on the extent to which political parties - notably Socialist ones - did affect government policies or not. A major element in the discussion became the degree to which states differed in their dependence on external economic forces, which could only be solved by comparative inquiry. Even when such studies related to European countries only, the obvious relevance of international economic structures and events brought scholars closer to those who had long been preoccupied with world economic realities (e.g. the proponents of a World Systems approach mentioned earlier).

A second major factor was the development of ‘neo-corporatism’. Originating to some extent from a transposition of an approach found useful in the study of Latin America, it won great acclaim in attempts to explain ‘Europe’, and possible differences within it. By emphasizing the close interaction between public and private actors, the neo-corporatist approach seemed successfully to bridge input and output structures,
and to present a more realistic picture of power relations and policy-making than either those who had spoken uncritically of ‘the’ state,
or those who had embraced a naive ‘pluralism’, had been able to provide). Neo-corporatism became in Schmitter's words ‘something like a growth industry’. But the gap between ‘general’ theory and empirical validation remained substantial, to the detriment of the value of the approach as a tool for general comparative analyses as distinct from the study of specific policy areas.

A third major contribution came from those who set out to analyse the development of the welfare state in comparative terms. On the one hand, this work fitted in well with the concerns of older development theorists: one should note the link between state expansion, economic policies and processes of political development which had characterized the work of German *Kathedersozialisten* and *Nationaloekonomen*; (re)distribution had been one of the paramount concerns of the Committee on Comparative Politics; and the leading empirical scholar in this field, Peter Flora saw his work as filling a gap in Rokkan's macro-model of democratic politics in Europe. On the other hand, comparative work on the welfare state was to encounter what was soon to become the major debate on its ‘fiscal crisis’, and on possible limits of state intervention more generally. The label ‘political economy’ was to cover a wide variety of concerns, ranging from rational choice paradigms based on individualist self-interest, to studies of specific policy areas, competing models of general economic and monetary and fiscal policy, and renewed debates on political legitimacy.

**Great new challenges**

But such challenges would seem to pale before the momentous changes taking place in what had been thought of as the Communist world, and the attendant shifts in contemporary international relations. In addition, the progress of European integration, however halting, is affecting the very basis of independent states as the unit of analysis on which so much of comparative politics has rested.

The long-standing assumption of a natural division of labour between the study of international relations engaged in analysing the interaction of states, and comparative politics concerned with the study of processes within states, always rested on somewhat dubious ground. It left unclear how scholars were to handle the formation of (new) states; it glossed over the great influence of domestic political processes on the making of foreign policies; it belittled what became known in the international relations literature as ‘transnational’ politics; and it postulated a degree of political independence for ‘sovereign’ states which never completely fitted the realities of an interdependent world (as advocates of a World System approach, dependency theorists and other political economy theorists had long maintained).

The division of the world into rival blocs had arguably permitted a certain separation of international relations and comparative politics. The assumption that existing states within a bloc remained distinct units of analysis seemed tenable in a world of relatively stable alliances (the necessary ceteris paribus qualification being as easily forgotten as it was given). The much more fluid international scene of today makes such an assumption rather more questionable.

At the same time, developments within the European Union increasingly un-
dermine the role of member states as independent units, even though international modes of decision-making remain juxtaposed to supranational ones. Powers of decision in vital matters are either shared or transferred to organs ‘beyond the nation-state’; while at the same time states also lose formal or effective powers to regional or local units. The ‘national’ power to control citizens, groups and enterprises becomes more dubious in a world of increased mobility and communication, affecting the status of individual ‘states’ as realistic units for comparative analysis.

But the greatest, if generally unexpected, challenge to comparative politics comes from events in Central and Eastern Europe. We mentioned earlier that the study of Communist states had become mainly the concern of a specialist group of scholars. Experts on Communism have largely lost their ‘subject’, although they have retained their knowledge of language and area. Scholars who were mainly concerned with the study of the development and the working of democracies, on the other hand, stand before an entirely new universe. Their concern had generally been with the comparative treatment of existing democratic states, which is a far cry from the making of new democracies in societies which have not known democratic rule for two political generations or more. For all the words spoken by pundits at symposia, in newspaper columns or journal articles, the extent to which proven knowledge exists is unclear.

The future of democracy presupposes at a minimum the creation of new institutions, but the brunt of comparative politics teaching since Weimar has tended to discount the independent effect of political institutions. Seemingly abstract debates on the merits of presidential, semi-presidential or parliamentary systems of government, on unicameral or bicameral legislatures, on electoral systems and their effect on the politicization of cleavages and the formation of party systems, on the proper role of judicial bodies, have become suddenly matters of crucial importance again. But they must function in areas with all the remnants of a totalitarian past, rival claims for political control and citizenship, possibly severe disagreements on the nature of the political unit itself - and all this amidst economic min and change. It is as if all major issues in the study of comparative politics are chaotically thrown together: the formation of states, the working of institutions, the rivalry of parties and groups, competing ideologies, the provision of state services and their limits, issues of economic interdependence, international power politics, and what not. Against this, one must ruefully acknowledge that basic political phenomena such as civil war, terror, ethnic conflict or the shattering effects of ideological strife have traditionally tended to fail in the interstices of the study of international relations, comparative politics and political theory, rather than forming their core.

Comparative politics, then, stands before its greatest challenge yet. Never before were so many fundamental questions raised at one and the same time about the development of democracy, democratic governance and related performances. In all honesty one should acknowledge that it provides few definite answers.

Eindnoten:

Hans Daalder, State formation, parties and democracy. Studies in comparative European politics


3. Most notably in the field of electoral research, but also in other comparative analyses, e.g. the influential work of Almond and Verba on political culture, (1963). The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations. Princeton: Princeton University Press.


29. The value of this strategy had not been lost on members of the Committee on Comparative Politics which sponsored as one of its first projects a comparison of Japan and Turkey, cf. Ward R.E., and D.A. Rustow (eds.), (1964). Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey. Princeton: Princeton University Press.


41. In this light, the famous title of Evans, P.B., D. Rueschemeyer and Th. Skocpol eds. (1985). Bringing the State Back In. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, would seem to testify as much to a new vision of those who had been strangely blind, as to the real record of political studies they criticized.


This appendix, which can be downloaded from the website of the ECPR Press (www.ecprnet.eu/ecprpress/daalder), contains three discussion papers on the development of political science in Europe in the last thirty years, and three working documents for a comparative study of the smaller European democracies as elaborated by leading scholars in the 1960s.

Appendix 1 is an address given at the Joint Sessions of the ECPR in 1979 when I laid down the Chairmanship, as the second ECPR Chairman after Stein Rokkan (1970-1976). It contains an assessment of the state and potential of political science in Europe at that time. I looked back at that statement thirty years later at the Round Table organized at the 40th anniversary Joint Sessions in Münster in April 2010, see Hans Daalder ‘Political Science in Europe and the ECPR: Looking Back and Looking On,’ in European Political Science 9 (2010) Supplement 1, S30-S37.

Appendix 2 contains the text of a paper presented at the Second Colloquium on European-American Relations, organized by Samuel P. Huntington in Talloires, France from 6-10 September 1987. It analyzes key problems facing European countries at that time which are still high on the agenda after almost a quarter of a century later.

Appendix 3 faces the issue whether one can speak of ‘A European Political Science’, in an unpublished paper presented during a symposium on 18-19 September 1997 held to honour Stefano Bartolini at the end of his appointment as Professor of Political Science at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy.

Appendix 4 contains three basic documents on a research project for a comparative study of Smaller European Democracies in the 1960s, proposed first by Hans Daalder and Val R. Lorwin, who were later joined as editors by Stein Rokkan and Robert A. Dahl. They show an increasingly ambitious research scheme elaborated by a larger group of European political scientists (see details in the Introduction of this volume). Their value is not in its implementation, but as an illustration of how an international group of scholars saw the requirements of serious country studies in a comparative perspective half a century ago.
Electronic appendixes

Appendix 1

‘The Internationalisation of Political Science: Promises and Problems’,


Appendix 2

‘Perspectives on Domestic Developments in European Politics: A Discussion Paper’

This unpublished paper was prepared for the Second Colloquium on European-American Relations (organizer: Samuel P. Huntington, Harvard University), held at the European Center of Tufts University, Talloires, France, 6-10 September 1987.

Appendix 3

‘A European Political Science: how could it be?’

This unpublished paper was prepared for the Symposium ‘Is there a European Social Science?’ European University Institute, Florence, 18-19 April 1997.

Appendix 4

*The Politics of The Smaller European Democracies. An International Research Project (SED)*

Three documents:

I. ‘A Proposal for a Research Project on the Smaller Democracies in Europe’

II. ‘The Politics of the Smaller European Democracies - Common Core Elements’
   This outline contains the ‘common core’ elements to be treated in individual country studies agreed at by participants in the SED-project during the 1964 September Conference at Bellagio Italy (Contributors to this outline were: Hans
III. ‘The Politics of the Smaller European Democracies - List of Priorities’

This list of priorities and optional tables for country volumes was drawn up by Stein Rokkan, of the Christian Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway - March 1965.
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