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1. A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE WEST GERMAN FEDERAL ELITE: METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS OF TWO RECENT PROJECTS

The two research projects I am going to present would not be rated proper studies in administrative history in my country. First of all, I am not a scholarly historiographer, but a social scientist by training. Secondly, the period covered by the projects is very limited with merely 35 and 17 years, respectively; in both cases I deal only with the post-world-war II-elite. Thirdly, both projects embark on multi-dimensional quantitative data analysis customary only in the social sciences. While historical events are taken into account to explain changes observed, the focus is on the individuals and their attributes who made up the politico-administrative elite of the second German republic.

Maybe, an adequate categorization of the projects for the present purpose would be the label "historical sociology of the federal executive elite".

Nevertheless, I hope some general lessons can be learned from these projects: In *methodological* perspective limitations and potential of two alternative research designs can be studied, which could have a bearing for projects about administrative history; Some of the *substantive* findings are of theoretical and historiographical significance, in particular in internationally comparative perspective. They also relate to the work of this distinguished commission, as far as it focuses on the history of civil servants.

1. The projects under Consideration

The two projects I am going to inform you about bear the official names "Federal Elite 1949-1984" (Bundeselite 1949-1984) and "Comparative Elite Study II (CES II)". Both studies are carried through under my direction, the CES II project, however, in collaboration with Renate Mayntz of the Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung Köln.

1.1 Federal Elite 1949-1984

"Federal Elite" investigates social background characteristics and career patterns of the entire elite population in office in Bonn between 1949 and 1984, i.e. 193 executive politicians (ministers and 72 parliamentary state secretaries) as well as 707 elite civil servants (150 state secretaries and 557 division heads in federal ministries). The first principal aim of the projects is to *compare both groups of elite members* with respect to degree of heterogeneity of background and career patterns.

The *data base* are organization charts and government manuals to determine the number of positions and the names of positions holders. Secondly, biographies were collected from press archives, Who is Who-

entries, and parliamentary as well as government manuals containing short biographical notes. The project, however, did not use official personnel records like the Finnish civil service project. 80 per cent of these 900 cases can be regarded well documented, while for 20 per cent, almost exclusively division heads, a number of characteristics is missing: occasionally we could store merely the names, ranks, and the time of entry and exit of position.

The codebook divides into two parts: part one contains roughly 600 variables to depict characteristics of position holders ranging from social, religious and educational background to publications and award medals; last not least it includes categorizations of up to 12 positions through which an individual might have gone during his career.

In part two of the codebook the unit of analysis is the individual *position* in the government system, which is occupied by consecutive persons over time. We then can reckon e.g. frequency of turnover in specific classes of positions.

Most importantly, in both parts of the codebook the *exact historical point in time* was coded, when an event: entry, promotion, transfer, exit occurred. This is a prerequisite for analyzing changes in the composition of the elite between specific points in time after 1949 and to find out the influence of political events like government formations. Thus, "Federal Elite" is based on *time series data*, and its second theoretical emphasis - apart from comparing bureaucrats and executive politicians - is on the question of *change over time* within both groups and between both groups. I hope to contribute ultimately to answering the question, if the politico-administrative system is in the process of *de-differentiation* due to increasing similarity of career patterns and cross-overs from politics to administration and vice versa.

1.2 Comparative Elite Study II

CES II, although dealing with roughly the same population of administrative and political elite members, is distinctly different from "Federal Elite" in a number of respects. (For simplicity's sake I leave out the internationally comparative dimension, which gave the project its name.)

CES II is *a replication* of a study carried out in Western capitals, among these in Bonn in 1970, by Robert Putnam and his associates Joel Aberbach and Bert Rockman, who published the overall results in 1981 under the title "Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies" (Harvard University Press).

Like "Federal Elite" it is dealing with the *problem of change*, but covers merely the period between 1970 and 1987, when the two surveys were carried out. Furthermore, its focus is on the *subjective side*: professional and political values and the role understanding of politicians and top administrators in particular with respect to their mutual

relationship and interactions. It goes without saying that the basic research instrument applied in CES II is interviewing according to a highly standardized *questionnaire*.

In contrast to "Federal Elite", ministers are not included in the sample because of anticipated access problems. Furthermore, not merely executive politicians (PStS), but also the highest ranks of parliamentary politicians from *all fractions* were included (59 people). The civil service elite was disproportionately sampled by rank in the 13 federal ministries concerned with policy at home.

Among the roughly 200 people interviewed in 1987 are some 40 odd who had already been surveyed in 1970; in addition, some others took part in the Mannheim elite surveys of 1972 and 1981, which contained some identical questions. Thus, in the extreme (and ideal case) we succeeded in constructing a *panel* of identical persons who were asked the same questions in 1970, 1972, 1981 and 1987, i.e. we obtained a *time series* for some of the respondents and, therefore, hopefully a chance to explain and not just to describe potential change in role understanding over time.

1.3 Relationship between CES II and Federal Elite

Although both projects were originally unrelated, "Federal Elite" emerged in early 1982 while CES II was embarked on in late 1984, they have nevertheless become theoretically and methodologically related over the years.

First of all, both deal with the politico-administrative elite and the relationship between both elite groups.

Second, while "Federal Elite", works with documents and CES II is based on interviews, data from Federal Elite could be used to exactly determine the universe of the elite members and draw the CES II sample from it. In some cases Federal Elite data also served us to recode the 1970 Putnam data set or establish additional variables. After all, we can also check the representativeness of the CES II sample against the population contained in Federal Elite, for instance as to subject studied or social background.

Thirdly, there is a *complementary relationship* between both projects which derives from their using different sets of data and focusing on the objective and the subjective side, respectively, of the elite personnel. For instance, in Federal Elite we have defined *political generations*, i.e. certain birth cohorts are assumed to have been subject to specific historical influences on their political outlook. This, however, is not far more than a metaphor, unless we can empirically determine the content of political socialization. CES II, instead, by analyzing the political values and the role understanding, can provide us with hints as to how the views of the birth cohorts of 1970 and 1987 might vary. Complementarity of the projects does, of course, not mean, that we

were able to merge the two data sets. We cannot transfer CES II data to the Federal Elite data set for reasons of data protection. We may, however, theoretically compose complementary findings from both projects.

2. Coming to Terms with Change

Most elite studies compare the elite composition at *two points in time* and infer the degree of stability from observable variation of individual properties. The historical aspect may be adequately covered by these momentary shots in *very long perspective*; but what about *short-term swings* and *oscillations* occurring between legislative periods? We need time-series-data, which we can hardly gain in surveys, in order to account for short-term political reverberations within the national executive. While this requirement may be dismissed by pointing at the lack of theoretical significance of short-term swings, longitudinal data covering more than two points in time are urgently needed to corroborate or reject trend hypotheses derived from singular observations, in particular if the time difference amounts merely to a few years.

"Federal Elite" copes with this problem by distinguishing on the one hand political generations, that enter and leave elite positions, and, on the other hand, legislative periods, when changes in the elite composition occurred.

Theoretically, the two time dimensions will help us to disentangle *generation* and periodization or *political regime effects*. Furthermore, it should be possible to compare supply and demand model explanations of observed changes.

CES II cannot rely on a time series covering 35 years, but basically compares cross-sections of the 1970 and 1987 elite population; change, i.e. statistical difference, can indicate erratic swings and short-term reverberations as well as long-term trends. In the latter case they may be due to political *periodization effects*, e.g. changes in the governing parties, as well as to *generation effects*. Things become even more complicated when we ask whether what initially looks like a generational effect, could be caused by *aging* within one generation, or by *rank* independent of age (unfortunately, both are closely associated) or is due to the process of being *socialized* in the system while staying in the same generation and without having been promoted (again very rarely the case).

It is the strategic function on the *panel group* in our survey to disentangle these various possible effects. We hope, that we shall come to terms with the statistical analysis in view of the relatively small sample.

3. Some Findings

I now want to report some of the *diachronical* findings from both projects dealing with change of the federal elite.

I shall, furthermore, use the cases in order to make clear the different types of results you achieve when working with documents and with survey interviews. It goes without saying that I primarily draw on the Federal Elite project, as CES II is only at the beginning of data analysis.

3.1 The Issue of Party Membership

Party membership of supposedly neutral German civil servants is one of the most delicate problems. Which difficulties do we face when measuring the incidence of membership in political parties over time, and which methodological and contextual factors do we have to take into account when explaining and describing the findings?

In "Federal Elite" the biographical documents told us the party membership (including explicit non-membership) of merely 50 per cent of state secretaries and 15 per cent of the Ministerialdirektoren. As party membership of civil servants is not related to their official role, one normally does not find this characteristic in official biographies.

When comparing the repercussions of the government changes of 1969 and 1982, the only thing I could convincingly show was that members of the former government parties were more *likely* to get ousted from office and followers of the new government parties to enter the vacancies than their opponents from other parties. It was, however, not possible to describe accurately the *frequency* of party membership in absolute numbers.[1]

The survey-based CES II data[2], on the contrary, revealed a higher percentage of party members for 1970 (29 per cent) and even 57 per cent in 1987. By 1987 SPD-MD had further diminished since 1983. CES II also demonstrates a beautiful rank effect for 1987, as State Secretaries to 60 per cent belong exclusively to the chancellor's party.

From the "Federal Elite" data you get the impression that party membership has rather decreased between 1970 and 1983; CES II tells you that the opposite is the case.

Increased party membership is also perceived by the bureaucratic elite. In 1970 55 per cent had recognized politicization; in 1987 even 86,3 per cent told us politicization had definitely taken place.

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1 *Hans-Ulrich Derlien*, Repercussions of Government Change on the Career Civil Service in West Germany: The Cases of 1969 and 1982, in: Governance 1 (1988), 50-78, esp. 72 ff.

2 *Renate Mayntz/Hans-Ulrich Derlien*, Executive Leadership and Bureaucratic Politicization, to be published in: Governance 2 (1989), issue 3

It should be clear, however, that these findings have to be compared with individual statements about personal party membership in order to avoid subjective exaggerations and biased perception.

3.2 Political Generations

17 years are too short a span of time to observe the succession of sufficiently large birth cohorts in elite positions. This could only be accomplished in "Federal Elite" with documentary data.[1] Table 1 shows how the 798 people, politicians and bureaucrats, are distributed in the sample and how we have related them to specific historical periods when their political socialization might have taken place between the age of 16 and 21. Furthermore, Table 2 exhibits the changing generational composition through legislative periods.

Of course, we do not know, how particular historical experiences affected outlooks, attitudes and role understanding of the cohorts, but by employing the concept of political generation, we merely recollect specific historical contexts, in which the elite was politically socialized. By slipping in short *qualitative* descriptions of the biographies of the federal chancellors, we can illustrate the concept and make it less metaphorical.

Konrad Adenauer, born 1876, president of the parliamentary council in 1948/49 and first chancellor (1949-1963), can be regarded a representative of the Kaiser-Reich generation. Not only did he complete his university studies before 1914, he was also elected councillor in 1906 and mayor of the city of Köln in 1917, even became appointed member of the Prussian house of lords in 1917.

His successor as chancellor (1963-1966), *Ludwig Erhard*, born in 1897, would belong to the political generation "world-war-I". Before taking up university training, he enlisted in the army in 1916 and was seriously wounded. Chancellor *Kurt Georg Kiesinger* (1966-1969), born in 1904, belongs to that political generation which was moulded by the 1919 revolution and the critical years of the first German republic. He takes up studies in 1925, shortly before Erhard was awarded his doctoral degree (1928).

Willy Brandt (born in 1913), chancellors from 1969 to 1974, was not politically socialized during the relatively stable years of the Weimar Republic (1924-1929), but belongs to those imprinted by the years of economic and political crisis (1929-1933). After having passed the A-level in 1932, he had to emigrate already in 1933.

Helmut Schmidt (born in 1918), in the chancellory 1974-1982, was politically socialized under established national-socialism. After the A-level in 1937, he was drawn to mandatory labour service and finally to the Wehrmacht.

The present chancellor (since 1982), *Helmut Kohl* (born 1930), would be a representative of the "postwar-reconstruction" generation. In 1950 he passed the Abitur, after having become member of the Christian-Democratic Party already in 1947. Indicatively, he gains his doctoral degree in 1958 with a dissertation about the "Resurrection of Political Parties after the Collapse of 1945".

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[1] *Hans-Ulrich Derlien*, Continuity and Change in the West German Federal Executive Elite 1949-1984, paper presented at the workshop of the European Consortium for Political Research, Rimini 1988

In order to enrich the meaning of the concept of political generations beyond the illustrative cases presented above, I related it to one significant historical event of German history (and unfortunately world history): active participation in both world wars. May the contents of political socialization be difficult to determine (at least not with our data), war experience will undoubtedly have formed an individual and will have had a bearing on his future attitudes and behavior. 37 elite members of the first three generations, which were to shape the initial years of the Federal Republic, had been soldiers during world-war-I, and even 332 reported combat experience during the last world war, among these 58 per cent of ministers and 54 per cent of state secretaries; 14 people even participated in both wars. Among the world-war-II participants we find 34 per cent belonging to the 7th generation, whose political socialization until the age of 22 was assumed to have been influenced by this event anyway. The cohorts 1925 and 1926 have participated in world-war-II to almost 100 per cent. Owing to the strong representation of the sixth and seventh generation in 1973, the federal elite of this year was composed of 70 per cent who had been soldier in the last world war.

Another example, in which way I related generations with specific historical events are the various forms of suffering from the Nazi-system; active involvement in the totalitarian system, however, is almost never documented in the (authorized) biographies. An attempt to get access to the NS-files of the Berlin Document Center (under US-authority) failed, thanks to the present Federal Government's worry about data protection rights of the former Nazis.

But what exactly were and are the outlooks and attitudes of those generations dominating in 1970 and post 1984 (1987) can only be gained from the inspection of our CES II survey data.

3.3. Changes in Training

So far, I have illustrated how I am dealing with the time dimension in "Federal Elite" by employing the concept of generations and relating it to legislative periods. Now I should like to turn to the *dependent* variables which are supposed to change with generations tive and can, due to time constraints, merely treat *two variables*, which, however, might be of prime importance to the Finish projects: changes in training and career patterns of the federal elite.

While politicians are subject to generation and periodization effects as to their *level* of education, administrators are not - regardless of social background, the higher civil service code requires a completed university training.

There is, nevertheless, a longlasting effect observable in the *field of studies*: While more than 70 per cent of the oldest generations (until 1910) had studied law, beginning with generation 5 (1911-16) the percentage of law students in the elite fell below 70 per cent, reaching

a minimum in the (quantitatively small) Adenauer-generation (1935-40) with 43,2 per cent. This *secular trend of diminishing importance of law training* surprisingly is more marked in the administrative than in the political elite. The concomitant trend is the *rise of economics* from 13,4 per cent in generation 5 to 36,4 per cent in generation 9. In addition, training in economics is more widespread in the younger generations of bureaucrats than among their political peers.

The secular generational shift from law to economics as the subject of university training had its impact on the federal elite since the formation of the reformist first Brandt government in 1969, too. While the share of law graduates declined from 71,9 per cent in 1966 to 61,7 per cent in 1970, economists gained from 10,5 per cent to 16,1 per cent and topped in 1973 with 17,2 per cent. Whereas the percentage of law students stayed on the 65 per cent level in the administrative elite in combination with a fairly constant 15 per cent rate of economists, politicians, contrariwise, are increasingly recruited with law background after 1970 and culminated with a historically unique 64,9 per cent in 1983. Economists in the Kohl government (10,8 %) were hardly less rare than during the 3rd and 4th legislative periods. If we had looked only at our CES II data, we could not have been sure about any long-lasting trends.

3.4 Change of Career Type

Closed civil service career systems, in which officials would spend all their professional life after having completed their training, are questioned by many an observer for tending to become elitist, for not breeding the necessary expertise to respond to new societal demands, or for lacking innovativeness. One aim of the research project, therefore, was to investigate to what extent the administrative elite in Bonn corresponded to or deviated from the extreme of civil service careers uninterrupted by initial or intermediate stays in other socio-economic sectors. Secondly, since we knew that the political elite in Germany has a strong *state affinity* due to often being socialized in civil service families, frequently having studied law and occasionally having spent some years in the civil service, it seemed worth-while comparing the overall career of the later political masters with that of their bureaucratic servants.

We classified careers of politicians and civil servants ranging from uninterrupted civil service careers, over civil service careers deferred by up to four years at the beginning of professional life, mixed careers with longer external occupational activities, to careers with less than five years spent in the civil service or made completely outside public administration. Not surprisingly, only politicians have never been in the civil service (71 per cent) or spent short civil service jobs (15,5 per cent) before entering their ultimate position. On the opposite, the traditional uninterrupted civil service career was typical merely for every second (52 per cent) of the top bureaucrats.

There is a close association between *training in law and uninterrupted civil service careers* in the administrative elite, whereas a degree in economics is least typical. On the other hand, economists among the administrative elite more often have a mixed career than jurists. This trait they have in common with those of their colleagues and those politicians, who have studied (from the point of view of the traditional higher civil service) even more exotic subjects. In other words: a classical civil servant's career is more likely with a law degree, while politicians, too, tend to have spent considerable parts of their professional life in public administration, if they have left university with a law degree.

Hidden behind these aggregate figures lies though a *generational as well as a periodical* change. Uninterrupted civil service careers of top bureaucrats have become rather the exception since generation 7 (1923-1928) and decreased to 28 per cent in the still quantitatively important "post-war reconstruction" generation (Table 3). Mixed careers, instead, complementarily gained. While the percentage of *politicians*, who have never been in the civil service, dropped to a fairly stable 65 per cent with generation 6, there evolved an oscillating, but overall stable one third of executive politicians with prior experience in public administration after generation 6. As would have been predictable from the change of generation compositions during successive legislative periods, the shift from traditional to unorthodox careers of the *administrative elite* can be observed after 1966 when generations 1 to 4 had gradually retired. The government change of 1969, which was characterized by the replacement of a considerable part of the administrative elite, affected the career composition and resulted in 51,5 per cent of top bureaucrats, who had made their way through deferred or mixed careers, overwhelmingly state secretaries. This trend extended into the 1980's with roughly 40 per cent top civil servants only who had undergone an uninterrupted civil service career.

The decline of traditional uninterrupted internal civil service careers and the increased mobility between other sectors and the civil service is obviously a long-term trend caused by changed generational curricula vitae. Politicians seem to develop greater professional affinity to the civil service in the long run, a fact that might be caused by the over representation of civil servants in parties and parliaments, the recruitment field of the political elite.

It is beyond the scope of "Federal Elite" to reveal if and to what extent with changing career patterns and training *role understanding* varies. I hope to gain insight in this relationship during the course of analysis of the survey data generated in CES II.

Table 1: Distribution of Political Generations by Elite Positions

Position / Generation (birth cohorts)	BM	PSTS	STS	MD	sonst. AL	Total %	Total n
1 Kaiser-Reich (- 1892)	8,3	0,0	3,4	1,8	8,5	3,5	28
2 World War I (1893-1898)	10,7	0,0	5,4	4,4	11,3	5,8	46
3 Revolution & Crisis (1899-1904)	10,7	0,0	16,8	11,4	14,1	11,5	92
4 Stable Weimar Rep. (1905-1910)	8,3	1,4	13,4	13,8	18,3	12,2	97
5 Weimar Rep. in Crisis (1911-1916)	13,2	4,2	8,7	12,5	14,1	11,3	90
6 Establ. National-Socialism(1917-1922)	12,4	12,5	14,1	10,9	8,5	11,7	93
7 World War II (1923-1928)	17,4	25,0	18,1	22,1	8,5	19,7	157
8 Post-War Reconstruction(1929-1934)	10,7	27,8	16,8	16,9	9,9	16,3	130
9 Establ. Adenauer era (1935-1940)	7,5	22,2	2,7	4,7	4,2	6,3	50
10 Student Revolt (1941-1948)	0,8	7,0	0,7	1,6	2,8	1,8	15
n = 100%	121	72	149	385	71	100,0	798

Legend: BM=Bundesminister (Federal Minister)
PSTS=Parliamentary State Secretary
STS=State Secretary
MD=Ministerialdirektor,division head

Table 2: Composition by Political Generations through Legislative Periods

Period / Generation	2/1950	3/1954	3/1958	3/1962	3/1966	3/1970	5/1973	4/1977	4/1981	9/1983
1. -1892	32,7	14,6	1,9	0,8						
2. 1893-1898	26,9	28,1	20,8	9,9	2,3					
3. 1899-1904	25,0	32,3	38,7	36,4	25,6	2,8				
4. 1905-1910	13,5	18,8	31,1	36,4	40,6	23,9	10,2	0,6		
5. 1911-1916	1,9	6,3	7,5	13,2	24,1	19,0	18,0	8,1	1,7	
6. 1917-1922				3,3	5,3	21,1	20,4	20,8	16,6	16,0
7. 1923-1928					1,5	24,6	34,7	37,0	37,7	35,9
8. 1929-1934					0,8	7,7	13,2	24,9	27,4	33,1
9. 1935-1940						0,7	3,6	7,5	13,7	11,6
10.1941-1948								1,2	2,9	3,3
n = 100%	52	96	106	121	133	142	167	173	175	181

Table 3: Career Type by Generation

Type / Generation	P O L I T I C I A N S never civ. s.	short c.s.job	mixed career	total n=100%	C I V I L S E R V A N T S civ. s. career	deferr. c.s.car	mixed career	total n=100%
1 (-1892)	100,0	0,0	0,0	10	100,0	0,0	0,0	15
2 (1893-1898)	92,3	0,0	7,7	13	85,7	3,6	10,7	28
3 (1899-1904)	84,6	15,4	0,0	13	74,6	4,5	20,9	67
4 (1905-1910)	72,7	9,1	18,2	11	68,6	12,9	18,6	70
5 (1911-1916)	94,7	5,3	0,0	19	52,3	18,5	29,2	65
6 (1917-1922)	66,7	20,8	12,5	24	53,7	22,4	23,9	67
7 (1923-1928)	53,8	28,2	17,9	39	39,0	27,1	33,9	118
8 (1929-1934)	63,6	15,2	21,2	33	32,3	22,9	44,8	96
9 (1935-1940)	64,0	16,0	20,0	25	28,0	12,0	60,0	25
10(1941-1948)	66,7	16,7	16,7	6	33,3	22,2	44,4	9
total %	71,0	15,5	13,5	100	52,5	17,7	29,8	100
total n	137	30	26	193	294	99	167	560