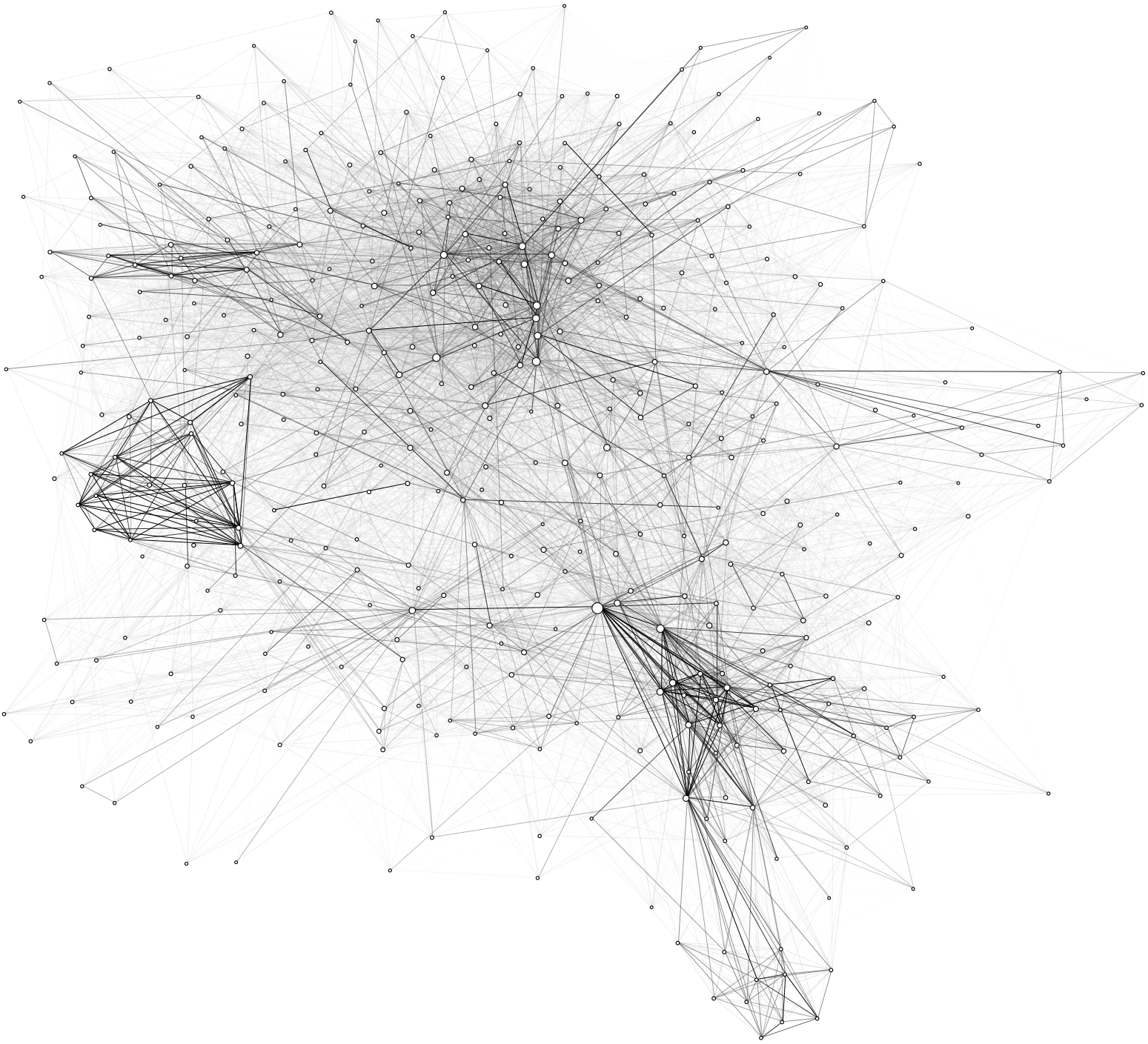
Elites in Denmark

Power Elites and Ruling Classes in a Welfare State



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Contents

Acknowledgments 4
English Summary 7
Dansk resume 10
Introduction: Restoring focus on privilege and democratic inequalities 13

The study of elites 16

Chapter 1: From ruling class to power elite – elites and class theory 22

Moving beyond economic capital – accumulation through dominance 23
Owners or managers? 30
The politics of the ruling class – the power elite as a social group 34
Ruling classes as inner circles 38
Transnational capital and national elites 43

Chapter 2: Studying elites across borders - On methodological challenges in our study of elites 46

Big data and the description of elites 46
The elite as a relational class 48
How do we understand power elites? 52
Comparative studies of elites across borders 56
Charting the elite 59

Summary of the papers 61

I. A very economic elite - The case of the Danish CEOs 61
II. Status and Integration in the Field of Power of Danish Chief Executives 62
III. The Inner circle revisited – the case of an egalitarian society 63
IV. The elite in the field of power – cohesion and oppositions within the elite 65
V. The Danish elite network 66
VI. The methodology of identifying power elites 67
VII. The power elite in the welfare state – key institutional orders of the power networks in Denmark 69

Conclusion: Elites in the workfare state 71

Strengths and weaknesses 72
A perspective: Power elite and social movements in the workfare state 76

References: 78
The articles 98

I. A very economic elite - The case of the Danish CEOs 99
II. Status and Integration in the Field of Power of Danish Chief Executives 120
III. The Inner circle revisited – the case of an egalitarian society 157
IV. The elite in the field of power – cohesion and oppositions within the elite 189
V. The Danish elite network 232
VI. The methodology of identifying power elites 240
VII. The power elite in the welfare state – key institutional orders of the power networks in Denmark 274

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This dissertation is first and foremost a product of the collective work of numerous generous people around us. Of course, the errors and inaccuracies remaining are my responsibility alone.

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Christoph Houman Ellersgaard

English Summary

Who are the members of the most powerful group in the Danish society? To answer this question, we explored the elite through two different methodological approaches. Using correspondence analysis, we charted the oppositions structuring two exclusive groups, the 100 most important Danish CEOs and the 1,527 elite individuals identified in the Danish Power and Democracy Study in 1999. Through social network analysis, we identified and explored the integration of a core of the power network in Denmark – the power elite - and the inner circle of the corporate elite.

This implies, as discussed in the first chapter, that the power elite is to be seen as a social group able to (1) accumulate resources that are convertible to other forms of power; (2) be placed at the top of formal hierarchies of authority; and (3) enjoy high levels of prestige among their peers in the elite. To do this, the elite must (4) be a central part of a cohesive network. By extending the notion of accumulation to forms of capital other than economic, it is argued that central elements of theories of the ruling classes can be integrated into a framework of the elite as the central individuals in the power network. In this way, Pierre Bourdieu's notion of the field of power is also synthesised with C. Wright Mills' analysis of the power elite.

This means that the elite should be identified in a relational approach. The second chapter discusses the potential of descriptive classifying methods able to use the multitude of data made accessible by the digital revolution to chart the size and composition of the power elite.

The first and second articles map the 100 most important Danish CEOs. In Article I, we show which career trajectories lead to the top managerial positions, compared with Germany, France and the UK. Four typical career paths are identified using cluster analysis: the organisational personnel, the inheritors, the experts and the salespeople. Of these, the last is typical of Danish business; however, all of these pass through many years in the business world. Like their foreign counterparts, Danish CEOs hail mostly from the upper–middle class or the upper class, often from homes in which the father himself was an executive. However, when it comes to types and level of education across countries, the top managers are very different. This suggest that it is more important to fit into the national business culture than to have qualifications and experience useful in management across countries.

The status and prestige of the top CEOs are charted in Article II. High status levels are tied very closely to whether or not the manager is invited into the network, tying them to other parts of the power elite. Such status takes the form of media coverage, royal recognition in the form of decorations and

invitations to royal balls, and leadership prizes. Even among the top 100 CEOs, there are substantial differences in the levels of prestige and the degree of connections to other powerful individuals.

The association between network ties and status highlighted the need to further explore the Danish power network. A large database was constructed from 5,322 affiliations, with 62,841 positions held by 37,750 individuals. The database contains corporate boards, boards and subcommittees in organisations officially recognised by the state, boards of state institutions and commissions, foundations boards, other networks, and events such as royal balls. The database is described in depth in Article V.

Article III describes how, from the positions on the boards of the 1,037 largest Danish corporations, we identified an inner circle of the Danish corporate elite corresponding to Michael Useem's inner-circle concept. We identified 171 individuals sitting not only in the central positions in the Danish corporate world, but also frequently in other prestigious or powerful networks, such as business organisations; state committees; boards of education, research or culture; exclusive networks such as the groups under the Danish Management Society (VL); foundations; and royal events. The inner circle are similar to the top CEOs in having prestigious social backgrounds, the same narrow educational profile, and sharing lifestyles. This leaves this group with every possibility of being the politically active part of the capitalist class.

From looking at the economic elite, the focus of the remainder of the dissertation is placed on the entire elite, with the objective of identifying the most powerful group, the power elite. First, in Article IV, 1,527 individuals are charted as a field of power using the elite study from the Danish Democracy and Power Study. Two main oppositions characterise this group: first, an opposition between cultural and economic capital, or the level of inclusion in the economic order; and second, an opposition between the established and newcomers to the field of power. Newcomers are most often politicians, but even among the more open political elite, a group of Danish natives is found, coming not only from the most privileged groups in society, but from political dynasties. It is primarily the economic and established poles that have positions in other power networks and thus have contact with, and the potential to exchange capital with, other parts of the field of power.

These groups in particular compose the core of the power network and are explored as the power elite in Article VII. First, however, Article VI describes in depth the methodology used to identify this core. The analytical strategy makes it possible to approach the size and composition of the elite empirically. By including all potentially powerful networks and developing weights to handle the heterogeneity of these diverse networks – ranging from the serious atmosphere of the corporate board meeting to the

splendour of the royal ball – the core of the network is decided not by the researchers' preconceptions and assumptions about the nature of power, but by who actually interacts most frequently in the power network. In this way a power elite of 423 individuals are found in the core of the power network.

These 423 individuals and their networks are charted in the Article VII. First, we show how, for all of the sectorial networks, central positions in one of the sectoral networks (e.g. central state institutions and committees) leads to central positions in other sectorial networks (e.g. unions). Furthermore, central positions are accumulated by a very small group. When looking at the composition of the power elite, more than half come from either business or business associations. However, also part of the core of the power network are union leaders, senior civil servants, politicians – especially those with leadership positions such ministers or mayors – and scientists, especially university principals and economists. The key actors in the corporatist Danish state are all present. The juridical system, administrators of culture, and media directors are tiny minorities, whereas the clergy, artists and journalists or other celebrities are completely excluded. But not only is affiliation to a certain sector important. By looking at particular individuals it is shown how, to become part of the core of the elite network, one must play the game of the power elite, essentially by accepting the legitimacy of claims to power of all the other members of the power elite. Finally, we explore the social characteristics of the power elite. Almost all of the 423 hold a position of authority at the top of an organisation. Close to half come from just eight university programs. The vast majority cluster in the gilded ghettos, in particular near the sea and parks in Northern Copenhagen. The social closure of the power elite is evident in the gender profile (less than one in five [19%] are women) and the highly selective social background. More than 90 % of those in the power elite for whom we have social background information come from the most privileged 20% of society. Power elite members who have parents mentioned in *Kraks Blå Bog* (the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*) outnumber the remaining 80% on the social ladder more than two to one. Thus the core of the power network is tied not only by their interwoven network, but also by shared lifestyles and experiences. In spite of internal differences, they compose a cohesive group that concentrates power in Denmark in the hands of very few indeed.

The studies of the Danish top CEOs and the inner circle in Danish business, together with the studies of the field of power and the power elite in Denmark, presented in this disseration all show that a small group concentrates and accumulates a large volume of resources at the very top of Danish society. This group is densely interlocked in a widespread network. The cohesion of the core of this network is strengthened by the similarities in lifestyle and social background of the top CEOs and in the power elite as a whole.

Dansk resume

Hvem er medlemmerne af den mest magtfulde gruppe i det danske samfund? Det er det centrale spørgsmål i denne afhandling. Gennem to forskellige metodiske strategier undersøges eliten nærmere. Med korrespondanceanalyser af eksklusive grupper, nemlig de 100 vigtigste danske topdirektører og de 1.527 eliteindivider identificeret af Magtudredningen i 1999, undersøges hvilke modsætninger, der former disse grupper. Med netværksanalyser finder og undersøger vi kernen af det danske magtnetværk – magteliten – og erhvervselitens inderkreds.

Det betyder, som der beskrives i første kapitel, at magteliten skal ses som en social gruppe, der både formår 1) at akkumulere ressourcer, der kan veksles til andre former for magt, 2) at være placeret i toppen af formelle autoritetshierarkier og 3) nyder høj prestige blandt deres ligemænd i eliten. Men det gør den ved 4) at udgøre et tæt forbundet netværk. Ved at udvide, hvad der kan akkumuleres til andre former for kapital end økonomisk, argumenteres der for, at de centrale pointer fra teorierne omkring herskende klasser kan tænkes ind i rammen om eliten som de centrale i magtnetværket. På den måde samtænkes Pierre Bourdieus begreb om magtfeltet med C. Wright Mills analyse af magteliten.

Det betyder, at eliten bør identificeres i forhold til relationer. I andet kapitel vises, hvordan beskrivende og klassificerende metoder kan udnytte den myriade af data, der med den digitale revolution er blevet tilgængelig til at kortlægge magtelitens størrelse og sammensætning.

De 100 vigtigste danske topdirektører kortlægges i den første og anden artikel. I den første artikel vises hvilke karriereveje, der leder til toppen af erhvervslivet sammenlignet med Tyskland, Frankrig og Storbritannien. Med klyngeanalyse findes 4 typiske karriereveje for danske direktører, der dog alle går gennem mange år i erhvervslivet: firmaets mand, arvingen, eksperten og sælgeren, hvor den sidste er særegen for dansk erhvervsliv. Danske topdirektører stammer ligesom deres udenlandske kolleger i høj grad fra den øvre middelklasse eller overklassen, ofte fra direktørhjem. Men topdirektørerne er meget forskellige, når det kommer til uddannelsestyper og længde på tværs af lande. Det tyder på, at det er mere afgørende at passe ind i den nationale erhvervskultur end at have kvalifikationer og erfaringer, der passer til ledelse på tværs af lande.

Topdirektørernes nuværende status og netværk kortlægges i den anden artikel. Det viser sig at høj status i form af omtale, royale anerkendelser som ordner og invitationer til bal og ledelsespriser hænger endog meget tæt sammen med, om direktøren inviteres ind i de netværk, der forbinder dem med andre dele af

magteliten. Selv blandt de 100 vigtigste direktører er der store forskelle i, hvor stor prestige, man har og hvor godt man er integreret med de øvrige magtmennesker.

Sammenhængen mellem netværk og status gjorde det oplagt at se endnu nærmere på det danske magtnetværk. Vi indsamlede en stor database bestående af 5.233 netværk med 62.841 poster besat af 37.750 mennesker. Databasen indeholder virksomhedsbestyrelser, bestyrelser og underudvalg i organisationer med høringsret, ledende organer i statslige institutioner, kommissioner, udvalg, råd og nævn, fondsbestyrelser, andre netværk og begivenheder som kongelige baller. Indsamlingen er udførligt beskrevet i den femte artikel.

Bestyrelsesposterne i de 1.037 største danske virksomheder bruges til – med udgangspunkt i Michaels Useems teori - at finde en inderkreds i den danske erhvervselite i artikel 3. Her findes 171 mennesker, der ikke bare sidder på de centrale poster i dansk erhvervsliv, men også langt hyppigere end de øvrige bestyrelsesmedlemmer har poster i andre prestigefyldte eller magtfulde magtnetværk så som erhvervsorganisationer, statslige råd og nævn, universitets- og kulturbestyrelser, eksklusive netværk som VL-grupper, fonde og royale begivenheder. Inderkredsen ligner desuden direktørerne i kraft at have eksklusiv social baggrund, samme smalle uddannelsesbaggrund og dele livsstil med hinanden. Det giver denne gruppe alle muligheder for at være den politisk aktive del af den økonomiske elite eller kapitalistklassen om man vil.

Fra den økonomiske elite lægges fokus herefter på hele eliten med henblik på at identificere den mest magtfulde gruppe, magteliten. Først kortlægges 1.527 personer fra magtudredningens eliteundersøgelse i 1999 som et magtfelt i den fjerde artikel. To modsætninger karakteriserer denne gruppe. For det første en modsætning mellem dem med kulturel kapital og dem med økonomisk kapital - de inkluderede i den økonomiske orden. For det andet en modsætning mellem indfødte i magteliten og nytilkomne. De nytilkomne er oftest politikere, men selv blandt den mere åbne politiske elite er der en gruppe indfødte, der ikke bare kommer fra samfundets mest privilegerede grupper, men fra politikerfamilier. Når man ser på, hvem der typisk får poster i andre magtnetværk og dermed har kontakt til – og kan udveksle kapital med – andre dele af magtfeltet er det primært i den etablerede og økonomiske pol på magtfeltet.

Især grupperne herfra udgør den kerne i magnetværket der ses som magteliten, kortlagt i artikel syv. Inden da bruges artikel seks dog til i dybden at beskrive, hvordan man med en nyudviklet metode kan gøre elitens størrelse og sammensætning til et empirisk spørgsmål. Ved at tage alle potentielt magtfulde netværk med og herefter udvikle teknikker til at vægte de meget forskellige typer af netværk – lige fra virksomhedsbestyrelsens alvorlige atmosfære til pragten ved det kongelige bal – bliver kernen af

netværket ikke bestemt of forskerens fornemmelse for magt, men af hvem der faktisk interagerer mest i magtnetværket. På den måde findes en magtelite på 423 personer.

Disse 423 mennesker og deres netværk kortlægges så i den sidste artikel. Først vises, hvordan det for alle sektornetværk gælder at det at have centrale poster i et sektornetværk, fx statslige institutioner, råd og nævn, betyder at man også oftere har centrale poster indenfor et andet sektornetværk, fx fagforeninger. Desuden bliver det klart, at de centrale poster i netværket akkumuleres blandt meget få personer. Herefter ser vi nærmere på magtelitens sammensætning. Over halvdelen er enten fra det private erhvervsliv eller fra erhvervsorganisationer. Men både fagforeningsledere, topembedsmænd, politikere – især med ledelsesposter, altså ministre og borgmestre – og videnskabsfolk, særligt universitetsrektorer og økonomer er med i kernen af magtnetværket. Kerneaktørerne i den danske model er alle tilstede. Retsvæsen, kulturadministratorer og mediechefer udgør meget små minoriteter, mens de gejstlige, kunstnere samt journalister og andre mediepersonligheder er helt udenfor. Men ikke kun sektortilknytning betyder noget. Ved at se på enkeltpersoner forklares det, at for at blive en del af kernen, så må man spille på dennes præmisser, hvilket grundlæggende betyder at acceptere sine med- og modspilleres ret til at være der. Endelig ses der nærmere på magtelitens kendetegn. Næsten alle de 423 er ledere, tæt på halvdelen kommer fra kun 8 universitetsuddannelser og det store flertal klumper sig sammen i helt bestemte områder. Magteliten foretrækker særligt at bo nord for København tæt på skov eller vand. Magtelitens lukkethed vises ved, at færre end en ud af fem – 19 % - er kvinder og at den sociale rekruttering er meget skæv. 94 % af de fra magteliten, vi kender den sociale baggrund på, kommer fra samfundets mest privilegerede 20 %. Og mere end dobbelt så mange har forældre nævnt i Blå bog, som der kommer fra de resterende 80 % af den sociale rangstige. Med andre ord bindes kernen af magtnetværket ikke blot sammen af deres tætte netværk, men af at dele livsstil og erfaringer. De udgør, trods de interne modsætninger, en sammentømret gruppe, der koncentrerer magten indenfor kongeriget på få hænder.

Studierne af de danske topdirektører, inderkredsen i dansk erhvervsliv samt magtfeltet og magteliten viser altså samstemmende at en meget lille gruppe koncentrerer og akkumulerer en voldsom mængde ressourcer helt i toppen af det danske samfund. Denne gruppe er på kryds og tværs bundet tæt sammen i et vidtforgrenet netværk. Kernen i dette netværks sammenhængskraft øges af den store lighed – både hvad angår livsstil og social baggrund – der findes både blandt topdirektører og i hele magteliten.

Introduction: Restoring focus on privilege and democratic inequalities

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Marcellus to Horatio, *Hamlet* (1.4), by William Shakespeare

Identifying the most privileged individuals in a society is always controversial. Whereas media and popular culture turn the discussion of power and privilege into entertainment, the social sciences, particularly in Denmark, have refrained from engaging in discussion on the distribution of power and privilege in society, or have at least kept this discussion out of harm's way by retaining it in a strictly theoretical universe. By not invoking a public imagery of the powerful, the social sciences leave the floor open for conspiracy theorists, political populism and general disenchantment to explain how privilege and power remains in the hands of the same men.

Some elites, as Paul du Gay (2008) has described, are Keyser Süze elites, pulling off the trick – maybe even fooling themselves – that they do not exist. Especially in a country like Denmark, an egalitarian welfare state recently made *the* best practice of state building by Francis Fukuyama (2011), who set the challenge of 'getting to Denmark', power elites or ruling classes seem to be an image from the past. However, this dissertation will show that in both the offices of the business elite and at the core of the elite network in Denmark, resides a very privileged and powerful group. Recently, the work of Thomas Piketty (2014) and others has inspired a renewed focus on privilege and power in general and the ultra-rich in particular. The British NGO Oxfam made headlines showing how the richest 80 individuals own more than the poorest half of the world's inhabitants do, while the richest one per cent will soon have more wealth than the rest of the world combined. In this context the egalitarian nature of Denmark provides an interesting least likely case for a study of the power elite. If we find a strong elite concentrating wealth and power in Denmark, elites are likely to achieve the same in less equal and democratic countries.

The central question of this dissertation is: Who are the most influential and powerful people in Denmark? And how do different parts of this group stand relative to one another? These are questions of enormous public interest, and yet they are almost neglected in the social sciences. They are also relevant to social movements, civil society at large and public debate, which until the social sciences address these questions is necessarily an uninformed debate. Thus one objective of this dissertation is

to make a public sociological intervention (cf. Burawoy 2005) in the debate about the distribution of power across society. Without a narrative of the ones who reap the profit even in the aftermath of the financial crisis and the mechanisms which ensure that elite prerogatives are untouchable, without a language to describe the accumulation of resources by elites, neither the general public nor the social movements are able to defy the power of elites. Of course, this grand question cannot be answered adequately within the work of a dissertation. However, if the social sciences shy away from providing answers to how power is distributed across society as a whole, we also lose the ability to relate and understand the influence of the actors within our more specific area of study. How do we understand the position of a business leader relative to an academic on a governmental advisory board if we do not understand the relative strength of their power resources?

At the turn of the millennium Denmark was the most equal society in the world with regard to the distribution of income measured by Gini coefficient. Inequality has increased, and yet 10 years later Denmark is still in the top five of the world's equal countries on most measures. Therefore it seems reasonable that the perception of an elite-structured social hierarchy is quite rare within Danish society, as in Norway, but is opposed to views in Britain and France in particular (Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2012:20)[1]. In a society where the class narrative is fading, it is paramount that the social sciences provide a narrative for understanding both inequality and the sense of injustice felt by the population at large. Although inequality levels are low, so that Danish society enjoys the profits of fewer status differences as described by Therborn (2014) and Wilkinson and Pickett (2010), so-called ordinary Danes have experienced the threats of job outsourcing, wage pressure from migrant workers, cuts to employment insurance, and the sale of state-owned infrastructure along with the general repercussions of the financial crisis. With the turn from welfare to workfare (cf. Jessop 1993), political decisions are made in an environment of external pressure in which all legislation is evaluated for whether or not it puts the competitiveness of Danish enterprises at risk. When the economy is affected by dropping oil prices or the mortgage and housing market changes because of rent policies in the European Central Bank, a feeling of disempowerment is likely. To paraphrase C. Wright Mills, if a major decision is made by someone, it is not made by the public. This misrecognition could risk a turn towards conspiracy theorists or populist politics.

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[1] The higher levels of income distribution and mobility rates may partly explain these disparate views of social hierarchy. However, even in Sweden, more than 30% identify some sort of elite when describing society, whereas less than 13% of Danes do so in the ISSP 2009 questionnaire.

Methodologically, the articles in this dissertation do not attempt to define who are and what actually form the elite a priori, but instead make this the central empirical question. This gives a much greater level of transparency to the methods and analytical decisions. Furthermore, it enables the reproduction of our results historically or across nation-states and, most importantly, the definition of groups on the basis of their relational characteristics, thus providing the opportunity to break away from our theoretical assumptions. Moreover, the strength of various sub-elites vis-á-vis each other (the classical theoretical question of state power versus economic power) will throughout this dissertation be seen in the light of relations within elite groups. As such, the analysis offers new visual and descriptive assemblages (cf. Savage 2009) of the elites – assemblages that hopefully be much more likely to invoke the sociological imagination of the public.

Of course, this focus on empirically defining the elites does not mean that theoretical questions are obsolete. Quite the contrary. In order to understand the positions of power elites in society as whole, it is necessary to understand how elites are at the same time shaped by the relationship between classes, status groups and social groups. The relationship between national and transnational or global classes or professions and elites can further clarify why the notion of power elites offers distinct analytical advantages. These issues will be elaborated further in Chapter 1. The above-mentioned methodological strategies of handling the unique position of elites in the matrix of class, status and group are the main focus of Chapter 2.

This dissertation combines the frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Mills and attempts to explore the role of business elites and the power elite as a whole in Denmark. Drawing on the theoretical and empirical developments following the renewed interest in elite studies, a less romantic image of welfare state elites is offered. The relative positions of elites and factions of elites is explored by analysing either the economic field or the field of power as whole. The focus on the formation of elite character or habitus by family upbringing, education or during career trajectories makes these characteristics a central empirical question for understanding the workings of the elite. In a new methodological strategy, elite networks are used to identify the core of the elite at the point where the most important institutional orders meet.

The first two articles are based on a prosopographical (cf. Broady 2002) database constructed for the top 100 CEOs of the largest Danish corporations, focusing on their recruitment and integration in the field of power and thus shedding light on economic elites in Denmark. The inner circle in the network of the Danish corporate elite and its inclusion in other power networks is explored in Article III. Article IV presents an overall image of the structure of the Danish field of power and the position of

the political elite within the field of power constructed from data on 1,500 leaders in 1999, sourced from the Danish Power and Democracy study. The fields analysed in Articles I, II and IV are all analysed though geometric data analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004). The problems of constructing a field of power in a specific national setting then leads to the elaborate collection of network data used in Articles III, VI and VII and presented in Article V. Finally, Articles VI and VII present an analysis of the methods of identifying the power elite through social network analysis and the composition of institutional orders in the power elite in a welfare state like Denmark. The overall contribution of the thesis, to both the studies of elites and the role the elite play in Danish society, is discussed in the concluding remarks. First, the work of the dissertation will be placed within the literature of elites in general.

The study of elites

The two main sources of inspiration for the studies in this dissertation are C. Wright Mills' study in the USA in the 1950s, described in his book *The Power Elite* (1956), and the work on the notion of the field of power within the general theory of fields developed by Pierre Bourdieu in *The State Nobility* (1996a). Contemporary elite definitions often use one of the following four criteria to conceptualise elites:

1. Elites as holders of dominant positions within fields controlling disproportionate amount of resources or capital
2. Elites as holders of top positions in organisational hierarchies
3. Elites as the honourable and most prestigious members of society
4. Elites as the key players in elite networks[2].

I will use Mills and Bourdieu to argue, with emphasis on intra-elite relations, that each definition provides a necessary but not sufficient, criteria for being part of the power elite. By using the fourth definition in elite networks, the logic of inclusion, it becomes possible to define the elite as a distinct *social group* fitting all four criteria at once. This is the definition of the power elite used in Articles VI and VII. However, it was only possible for us to identify the feature of the network by, in Articles I, II, III

[2] A fifth criteria used by political scientists such as Robert Dahl (1958, 1958, 1961) is the involvement in decision-making processes. However, according to Mills (1956: 3-4), the leaders of the key institutional orders are also composed of 'men whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women; they are in the positions to make decisions having major importance' (Mills 1956:3–4).

and IV, analysing elite populations identified by either the first or especially the second criterion of holding command positions. For now, I will turn to describe how these definitions relate to the study of elites, reviewing this tradition in general.

The discussion on what criteria should be used to identify the elite reaches further back. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Italian Vilfredo Pareto (1991) was the first to suggest that populations could be divided into layers according to their position in the distribution of a certain resource or attribute and that the most privileged could be labelled the elite. Pareto's contemporary and compatriot, Gaetano Mosca, also focused on the elite, or the ruling class as he coined it. Mosca (1939) however, focused upon how an organised minority is able to hold onto power in face of the disorganised masses. Mosca described the power obtained through being organised within what Max Weber (1946) was later to describe as a party, a social stratification based on command structures (cf. Scott 1996). Floyd Hunter (1953) in his book *Community Power Structure*, a study of power structures in Atlanta, used the reputation or prestige of elites to do this. However, Hunter used reputation as a methodological approach to identify key decision-makers. Hunter thus looked at reputation within the elite rather than the prestige tied to fame and celebrity in the mass media. The studies presented here attempt to synthesise these perspectives, claiming that the power elites are at time same time those who:

1. control the largest amounts of power resource
2. are part of a social organisation of power, and
3. are respected among their elite peers, enabling them to defend their interests against outsiders.

Two key elements are needed to form such a group: a shared culture and understanding created by similar recruitment patterns; and a social context created by current social ties. The first element of recruitment patterns has been a key issue in the studies of elites ever since Pareto (1991) made elite reproduction or circulation the very motor of history. The reproduction of elites sheds light on the process in which the elite is turned into a social group and on the cohesion and fragmentation within this group. Raymond Aron (1950a, 1950b) follows this same line of argument, claiming that recruitment and constitution of the elite, rather than class struggles, are formative of society. However, as newcomers arrive in the elite, their entry is based either on charisma or, more often, on organisation of power. In his seminal study of the rise of socialist parties, Roberto Michels (1915) showed the party as an oligarchic structure. As the party grows, the party elite are formed closer and closer to the image of the existing elite. Michels (1949) claimed that, over time, counter-elites will be integrated into the existing elite, creating an amalgam of the new and the old. C. Wright Mills (1956:142), focusing on the

formation of the 'character' of elite members, and Pierre Bourdieu (1996a), analysing the reproduction strategies of the economic elites through either family inheritance or elite universities, also emphasised the recruitment of the elite. For this reason, in the analysis of the Danish top CEOs and the inner circle of the corporate elite, and in our study of the field of power and the power elite in Denmark, we focus on parental background, educational strategies and the career paths of elite members. And even in Denmark, these elites are extremely exclusive: they have very select, if not elite educations; the vast majority of elite members come from the upper or upper-middle classes; and they have distinct career patterns.

The elites are not just tied together as a social group by similar recruitment, as argued by Mills (1956:281–2). More importantly, they constitute a cohesive social group. Michels (1949:106–7) described how this internal organisation of the elite constituted a ruling class through overlapping social circles of politics, economy and intellectuals. Aron (1950a:9) distinguished between the separation and relative strength of different factions of the elite, showing that these factors are indeed variable over different nations. In short, the relative strength of elite groups, or the exchange rate of their forms of capital as Bourdieu (1996a) would describe it.

However, the exchange rate of capital, or the dominance of some elite groups over others, remains a central point of contention among elite scholars. Mills' (1956) claim that a trinity of business, politics and armed forces dominated American society was heavily criticised (Bell 1958; Dahl 1958; Kornhauser 1961; Polsby 1960). This led to a tense theoretical debate on the nature of power (e.g. Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Dahl 1957; Lukes 1974). Although definitions of power must still be a cornerstone when investigating elites (Scott 2008), the debate on power slowly moved away from the empirical analysis of the powerful. Throughout this dissertation, we move from the abstract question of actually deciding who has the power in a certain situation - made largely irrelevant through the work of Foucault and other poststructuralists (cf. Savage and Williams 2008) – and turn instead to discussing the distribution and accumulation of power resources following the work of Walter Korpi (1985) or forms of capital in the framework of Pierre Bourdieu (1986).

The repercussions of the debate on power led scholars to turn their empirical interest towards social networks investigating the cohesion and connections of the business elites, or the capitalist class, within the tradition of corporate interlocks (Allen 1974, 1978; Brandeis 1914; Bunting 1983; Burris 2005; Davis, Yoo, and Baker 2003; Levine 1972; Mintz and Schwartz 1981, 1981, 1985; Mizruchi 1982;

Stanworth and Giddens 1975; Stokman, Ziegler, and Scott 1985; Windolf 1998)[3]. The position of the inner circle of the corporate network (cf. Useem 1984) in other power networks, such as policy planning groups or social networks, was then analysed within the framework of power structure research (Domhoff 1974, 1975, 1978; Hunter 1953; Mintz 1975; Moore et al. 2002). In particular, several scholars attempted to identify which elite circles were tied to each other socially (Alba and Moore 1978; Heinz et al. 1990; Higley et al. 1991; Higley and Moore 1981; Hoffmann-Lange 1987; Moore 1979). Article III of this thesis revisits Michael Useem's notion of the inner circle, which brilliantly bridged the studies of corporate interlocks and power structure, but with Denmark as the case and using more elaborate methods. The issues of identifying central elite circles and thus assessing the relative strengths of elite groups are the vantage points of Articles VI and VII on the network of the Danish elite.

Elite networks also play a pivotal role in sociological explanations of societal developments, most notably to explain the stability of the Medici family in renaissance Florence in the classical study by John Padgett and Christopher Ansell (1993), or as the chains of interdependence – and the very setting – of the court society dissected as the precursor for modernity by Nobert Elias (1983). In this respect, following Randall Collins (2004:112–8), elite networks can also be seen as interaction-ritual chains, acting as either power or status rituals and evoking collective effervescence and solidarity of the participants. By applying the formal sociology of Georg Simmel (1950), elite networks can be used to trace the dynamic process of group formation (Vedres and Stark 2010). How shared network participation creates symbolically integrated groups is explored with Danish top CEOs in Article II, whereas the processes of network integration of the entire power elite are both the subject and the very reason for the relevance of Articles VI and VII.

The amalgamation of elite networks plays a central explanatory role. We argue, particularly in Article VII, that the social integration of elites shows that an elite settlement has occurred. This is a key element in the works of Michael Burton and John Higley (1987). Within this tradition of democratic elitism (see e.g. Best and Higley 2009, 2009; Burton and Higley 2001; Dogan 2003b; Higley et al. 1991; Higley and Moore 1981) the stability of democracies is tied to a stable elite configuration, with all powerful groups accepting overall legitimacy of the other groups. Although the school of democratic elitism celebrates this concentration of power for its ability to keep society peaceful, as early as the

[3] For a review of the tradition of corporate interlocks, see Scott (1991a) or Mizruchi (1996).

1950s the classic anthropologist Siegfried Nadel (1956) argued that the collective actions of elites were focused on maintaining the status quo and thus enabling the powerful to remain in their privileged position.

It is exactly how the power elite reproduces itself that is the starting point for Pierre Bourdieu's (1996a) analysis of the reproduction strategies of the elite, following Raymond Aron's (1950a, 1950b) focus on recruitment. As argued in Articles IV and VII, the focus upon maintaining the powerful position also creates an 'organic solidarity of a genuine division of the labour of domination' (Bourdieu 1996a:263), which enables us to understand the elite settlements described in the tradition of democratic elitism in a broader context of domination and reproduction across society. Thus, Bourdieu not only offered a theory of elite recruitment, but through the notion of the field of power, tied recruitment to the overall structure and composition of the elite to the most important forms of capital in the society in question. Following Bourdieu and Mills, German sociologist Michael Hartmann (2007:61–80, 2010) developed three distinct indicators of the social closure, homogeneity and cohesion of the elite based on their familiarity in education across elite schools such as Oxbridge universities in the UK, Ivy League universities in the USA or the *grandes écoles* in France and the regular change in career between different elite sectors or 'inter-sectoral mobility' (Hartmann 2010:292). In his general review, Hartmann (2010:314) described the Scandinavian elites as the most open and least cohesive.

In line with this unaristocratic educational profile but based on somewhat anecdotal evidence, a special conspicuous inconspicuousness has even been ascribed to Nordic elites (Daloz 2006). The Scandinavian welfare states provide, as mentioned above, an interesting case for elite studies. High levels of social mobility, strong egalitarianism and the presence of union and social democratic parties create a very different context of elite reproduction and cohesion (Korpi 2006). However, the consequences of this seem to vary across the Nordic societies. Although all elites appear to have comparatively open recruitment, the degree of internal elite coherence seems to be much higher in Finland[4] and Norway than in Denmark and Sweden (Ruostetsaari 2007). However, the reasons for the lack of coherence in Denmark and Sweden differ. The Swedish power study (Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1990) suggested the existence of two elites antagonised as elite and counter-elite: – bourgeois and social democratic; however, the Danish elite appear to have grown apart functionally.

[4] In Finland, elite cohesiveness seems to have diminished in recent decades, however, this observation is based on elite surveys with rapidly declining response rates (Ruostetsaari 1993, 2006, 2013).

Recently, Nordic scholars have charted elite structures within more elaborate frameworks. In Sweden, a focus on elite networks is emerging (Edling et al. 2012; Edling, Farkas, and Rydgren 2013, 2014). In Norway, the research project *Elites in an Egalitarian Society* (Korsnes, Hansen, and Hjellbrekke 2014) has described cultural, administrative and economic elites. From this group of scholars have emerged analyses of the structure of the Norwegian field of power[5] (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007), the upper class in Norway (Flemmen 2012) and the social reproduction of the richest 1% and 0.1% (M. N. Hansen 2014), largely debunking the myths of egalitarian and highly mobile elites.

In Denmark, research on the elite has been sparse. Few studies have been conducted on the elites in Denmark, apart from the Danish Democracy and Power Study (Christiansen, Møller, and Togeby 2001; Christiansen and Togeby 2007; Togeby et al. 2003), which published its much criticised main report a decade ago (see Andersen 2005; Øllgaard and Madsen 2004; Sørensen 2004; this critique is further elaborated in Article IV). Some have studied subgroups such as judges (Hammerslev 2003) or senior civil servants (Jensen and Olsen 2000; Krarup 2012) and the debate on classes has recently turned to analysis of the most privileged (Andersen et al. 2015; Olsen 2010). This dissertation thus provides a much needed first step in the description of the economic elite and the power elite in Denmark, needed not only for understanding the particularities of elites in Denmark, but also for understanding Danish society in general. Before the mostly empirical explorations of the business elite and the power elite in Denmark in the articles, a discussion on the role of ruling classes versus power elites is now offered.

[5] Using data from the Norwegian Power Study (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002)

Chapter 1: From ruling class to power elite – elites and class theory

> There's class warfare, all right, but it's my class, the rich class, that's making war, and we're winning.
> Warren Buffett, Investor and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway
> The New York Times, 26 November 2006

As shown in the introduction framing this dissertation, in the elite research tradition elites have no clear definition in the social sciences. It has even been claimed that the 'word elite is probably one of the most misused words in the sociological lexicon' (Scott 2003:155). As argued by Savage and Williams (2008:2–3) the term 'elite' often serves a rhetorical function with little conceptual clarification in the major contemporary sociological narratives on globalisation by Manuel Castells and Zygmunt Bauman. In particular, the distinction between elites and the capitalist class, sometimes merged under notions such as the ruling class, remains unclear. Classic elite theorists such as Pareto and Mosca have explicitly used the notion of elites in opposition to a Marxian notion of class (cf. Best 2012) and capital, as a social relation.

The argument presented here will call for an extension of the notion of a ruling class. I will argue that the concept should include other forms of exploitation, extracting forms of capital other than economic, such as that found in the relationship between capitalist and worker. Furthermore, it will move from class as a theoretical construct towards the political mobilisation and actions of classes and conceive elites as social groups tied through interactions. I will offer a conceptual clarification of the relationship between particular sub-elites (e.g. the economic elite) and the power elite as a whole, a relationship that is discussed throughout this dissertation. But first, I turn to the Marxist discussion on the ruling class in an attempt to show how it is largely compatible with the notion of power elites used in this dissertation.

The notion of the capitalist class or ruling class provides a compelling framework for understanding the distribution of power and privilege. As argued by Tom Bottomore (1964), ruling classes by looking at ownership of the means of production explain who are in power and, more importantly, the mechanism behind the distribution of power. Without emphasis on a common class base, elite studies are 'unable to provide a convincing explanation, as distinct from description, of the solidarity of the power elite' (Bottomore 1964:24). The general discussion on classes and the relationship between classes as theoretical constructs and conscious class-based action has focused primarily on the potential

for ideological mobilisation and the perils in fragmentation of the proletariat. However, these developments have been subject to numerous debates in the Marxist depiction of the ruling class. Three debates are of particular importance to the relevance of the notion of the ruling class in Denmark. First, there is the discussion about which part of the business world constitutes a capitalist class, with emphasis on how to understand the position of managers after the split of ownership and control of the large corporations. Secondly, there is the question of political action of the capitalist class and its position towards the state. Thirdly, I attempt to show how both debates can be solved by looking at the network of the ruling class. A fourth debate is also relevant, and I discuss the challenge by the growing internationalisation and financialisation of capital to nationally based elites. The key to understanding these three issues is to relate them closely to the question of exploitation and accumulation of resources, to be discussed in greater depth in the next section.

Moving beyond economic capital – accumulation through dominance

As seen throughout *Capital* (2007), the magnum opus of Marx, ownership of means of production does not in itself constitute capital. Capital is always a social relation in which surplus value is appropriated by exploiting classes without ownership of the means of production. To be a member of the capitalist class does not mean that one simply owns large stock of capital, but also that capital is constantly being accumulated by extracting surplus value.

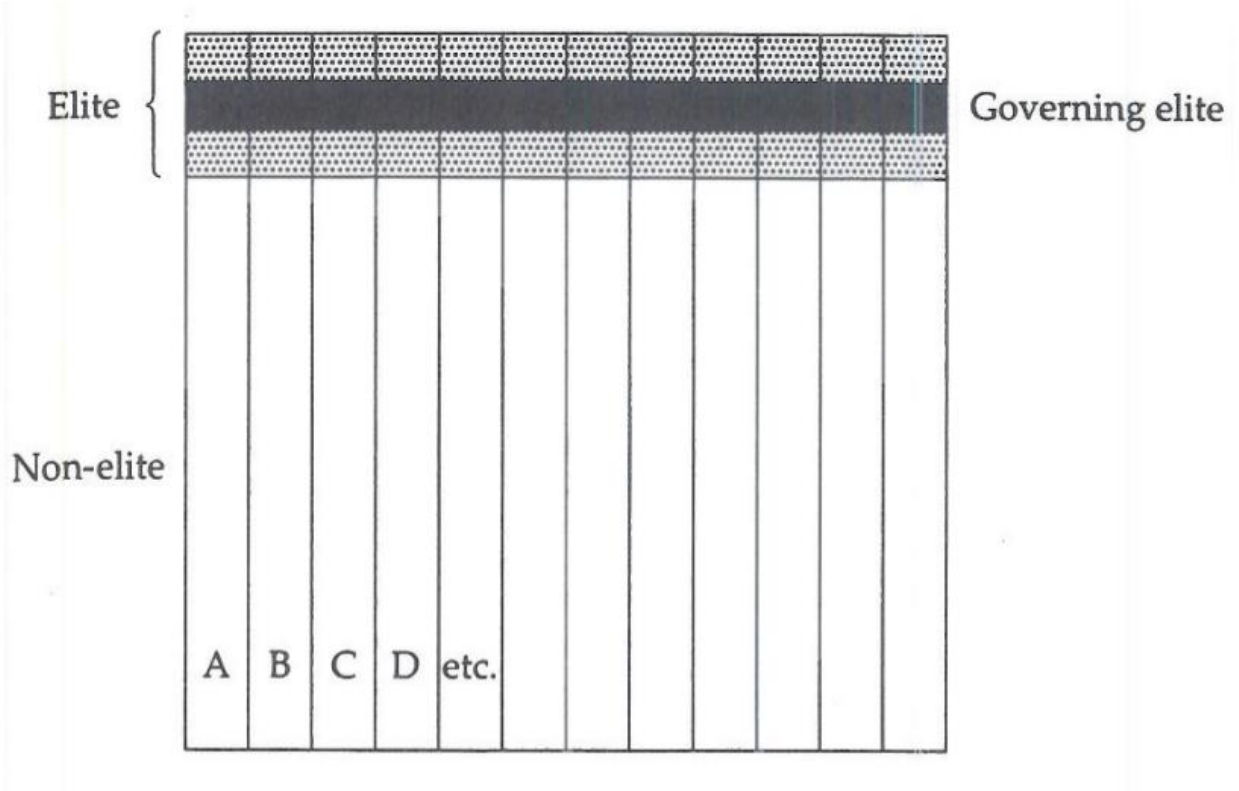
Some Marxist scholars, such as Nicos Poulantzas (1975), have argued that the primacy of class relations is located in the extraction of surplus value. Although surplus labour may be appropriated on the basis of political and ideological criteria, only the manual, productive workers are subject to exploitation. However, as argued in the class-qua-surplus–analysis of Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff (2003), the notion of exploitation can also be expanded to include all relations in which authority –through either ownership or de facto control – is used to appropriate the labour of others. Wolff and Resnick (1987:115) defined class as 'those specific social processes where surplus values is "extracted" or "appropriated" from the direct producers' and thus determined by position in relation to how surplus is produced, appropriated, and distributed. Not only does the capitalist extract surplus value in his relation with his workers, thus accumulating wealth, but the director of a state institution also takes home a higher wage and can use his or her subordinates' labour power for his or her own means.

Within a Bourdieusian framework, Savage, Warde and Devine (2005:43–4) argued that other forms of capital are accumulated much like Marx describes the process of appropriating surplus value. Whereas there is some ambiguity in Bourdieu's work as to whether capital is just a possession of resources or

one that is always embedded in a social relation (Desan 2013), Savage, Warde and Devine (2005:45) used exactly this distinction in their definition of capital: 'In order for a resource to become a form of capital, it needs to be shown that there are systemic processes allowing the garnering of such resources by those who possess it.' This multidimensional view of social stratification is the foundation of the field analysis through multiple correspondence analysis in Articles I, II and IV, in particular the relationship between social and symbolic capital.

But how are forms of capital other than economic garnered? Bourdieu (1986:241) defined capital simply as 'accumulated labor'. Although capital may take embodied, objectified and institutionalised forms, the basis is always the labour of the holder of the form of capital or the appropriation of the labour of others. Holders of dominant positions within the field may use their positions to appropriate the labour of others. The stock of a famous novelist publishing a new book is further enhanced by others who use their capital when dealing with the book. It could be the journalistic reviewer praising the book or doing an interview, the scholars discussing it or the teachers using it in class. Another example could be the prestigious architect or chef, having several precariously employed interns or students working day and night to boost their own resume. Or, famously studied by Robert K. Merton (1968), it could take the form of accumulation of fame and recognition by dominant individuals in the scientific field through the Matthew effect. Likewise, Roberto Michels (1915:83) argued that political capital is accumulated much in the same way: 'The concentration of power in those parties which preach the Marxist doctrine is more conspicuous than the concentration of capital predicated by Marx in economic life'. These holders of dominant positions can be called field-specific elites, a term used throughout this dissertation. In this way 'elites' simply denotes the most resourceful or powerful within a certain hierarchy, as Pareto (1991) originally defined the term (see Figure 1.1). Likewise, Shamus Khan (2012a:361–2) described 'elites as those who have vastly disproportionate control over or access to a resource'.

FIGURE 1.1: PARETO'S CONCEPTUALISATION OF ELITES AS THE MOST EMINENT WITHIN DIFFERENT HIERARCHIES



A: Hierarchy of wealth. B: Hierarchy of legal competence. C: Hierarchy of Political Influence. D: Hierarchy of Poetic Ability.

Source: Scott (1996:143). Note that this in '[n]ot to scale. The balance in size between the elite and the non-elite and between the various elements within the elite and the governing elite are determined empirically and not a priori.'

However, there are numerous societal hierarchies. You might be a leading businessman, thinker or politician, or you might be the leading gamer of some online universe, the leading stamp collector or the leading sportsman. We must also understand capital's ability to be converted into other forms of capital (Savage et al. 2005). As Shamus Khan (2012a:362) eloquently put it:

> The resource must have transferable value. Imagine, for example, that I am the greatest jump-shooter in the world. I can likely convert this skill into considerable economic rewards, influence the national culture through my fame, and integrate myself into some of the higher social echelons. If, by contrast, I am the greatest jump-roper in the world, I may be admired, but likely not well compensated for my skill, and my hold on the cultural and social life of the nation will be non-existent. Understanding elites means not just making sense of the resource they control or have access to, it also means considering the conversion of that resource into other forms of capital.

Within Bourdieu's framework, to hold a dominant position of some level of autonomy within a field an elite needs to be able to establish its own hierarchy and dominant forms of capital. When Bourdieu (1988, 1996a, 1996b) identified the dominant positions of, for example, the academic field, the economic field or the literary field, these fields either had a strong relative autonomy or gave access to a form of capital that is easily transferable[6]. These fields potentially occupy a position in the 'field of power' (Bourdieu 1996a), while the internal logic of the fields is also contested by being 'a field of forces, but … also a field of struggles tending to transform or conserve this field of forces' (Bourdieu 1993:30). In this sense, elites occupy the top of the social space. To speak of a cultural elite, an economic elite or a religious elite requires that the dominant within these fields also have a position at the top of the social space (Hansen et al. 2014:31).

Economic capital holds particular importance when discussing capital conversion rates. Bourdieu (2005:199) described it as the most easily exchangeable of all forms of capital. This means that, when analysing the elite, holders of economic capital are of particular interest. As Thomas Piketty (2014) showed, the richest one per cent have benefitted disproportionately from the politics of neoliberalism through accumulation and inheritance. Piketty (2014:250ff) followed the economic definition of class by dividing classes into income deciles of the upper class (top 10%), the middle class (the next 40%) and the lower class (bottom 50%). This may seem overly simplistic and arbitrary, but it has great descriptive advantages (Savage 2014). This is particularly true if we take as the principle of division not just economic capital, but the total volume of capital – the feature Bourdieu (1984, 1996a) used to distinguish players vertically in both the field of power and in the social space as a whole. An example of how the richest one per cent dominates not only by virtue of their economic resources but also by using their larger quantities of social capital to reproduce their income is that children of the one per cent having the highest income are much more likely to work in the same organisations as their fathers (Bingley, Corak, and Westergard-Nielsen 2011) (see Figure 1.2). Bourdieu's focus on the convertible nature of all forms of capital also allows us to analyse an individual's overall volume of capital. Even though strategies differ according to the particular composition of capital, we can think of the value of elites in terms of the convertible value of their overall volume of capital.

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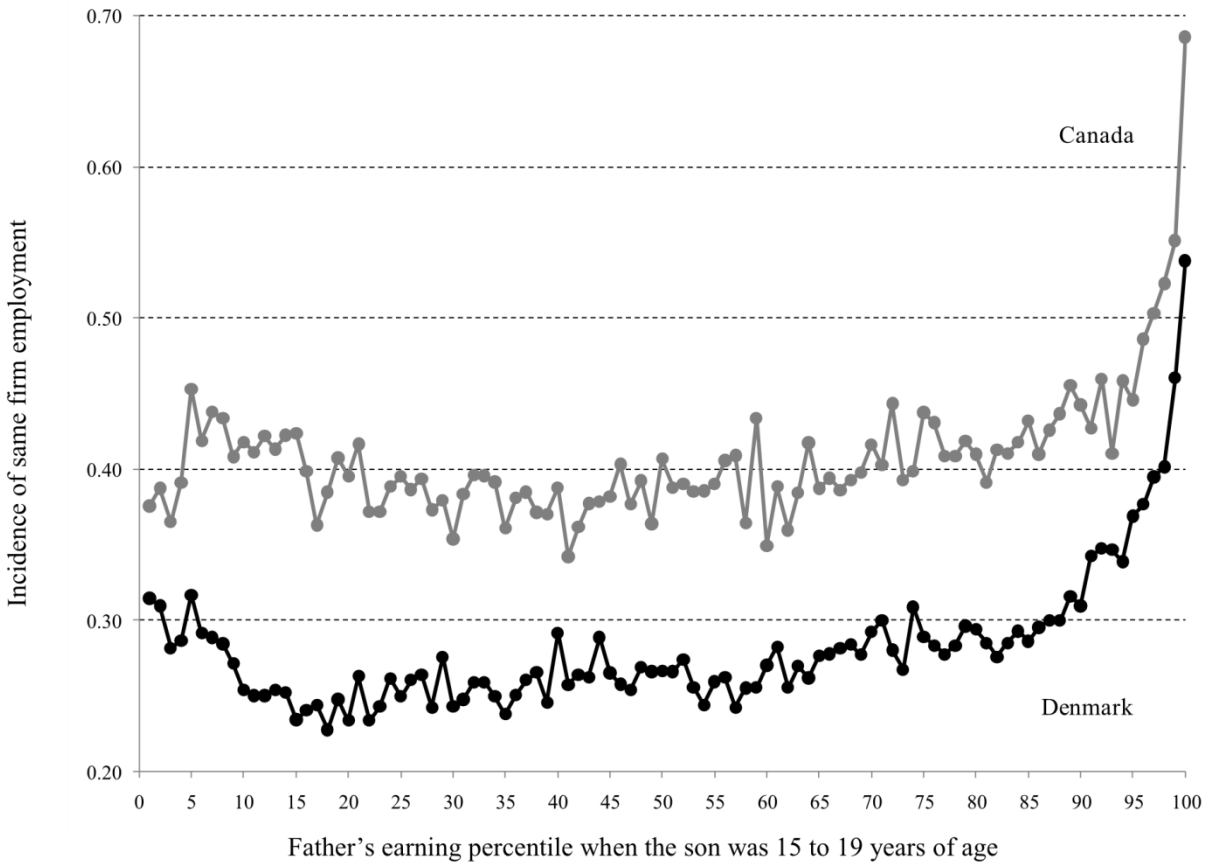
[6] The conversion of capital is key to understanding why Bourdieu's theory of fields not only described the inner workings of more or less autonomous fields – almost Luhmannian systems – but also the relations between fields through the notions of social space and the field of power. In the field of power 'the struggle over the power to dictate the dominant principle of domination' (Bourdieu 1996a:265) takes centre stage.

FIGURE 1.2: PROPORTION OF SONS IN CANADA AND DENMARK WITH THE SAME MAIN EMPLOYER AS THEIR FATHER BY FATHER'S INCOME PERCENTILE WHEN SON WAS 15-19 YEARS OF AGE.



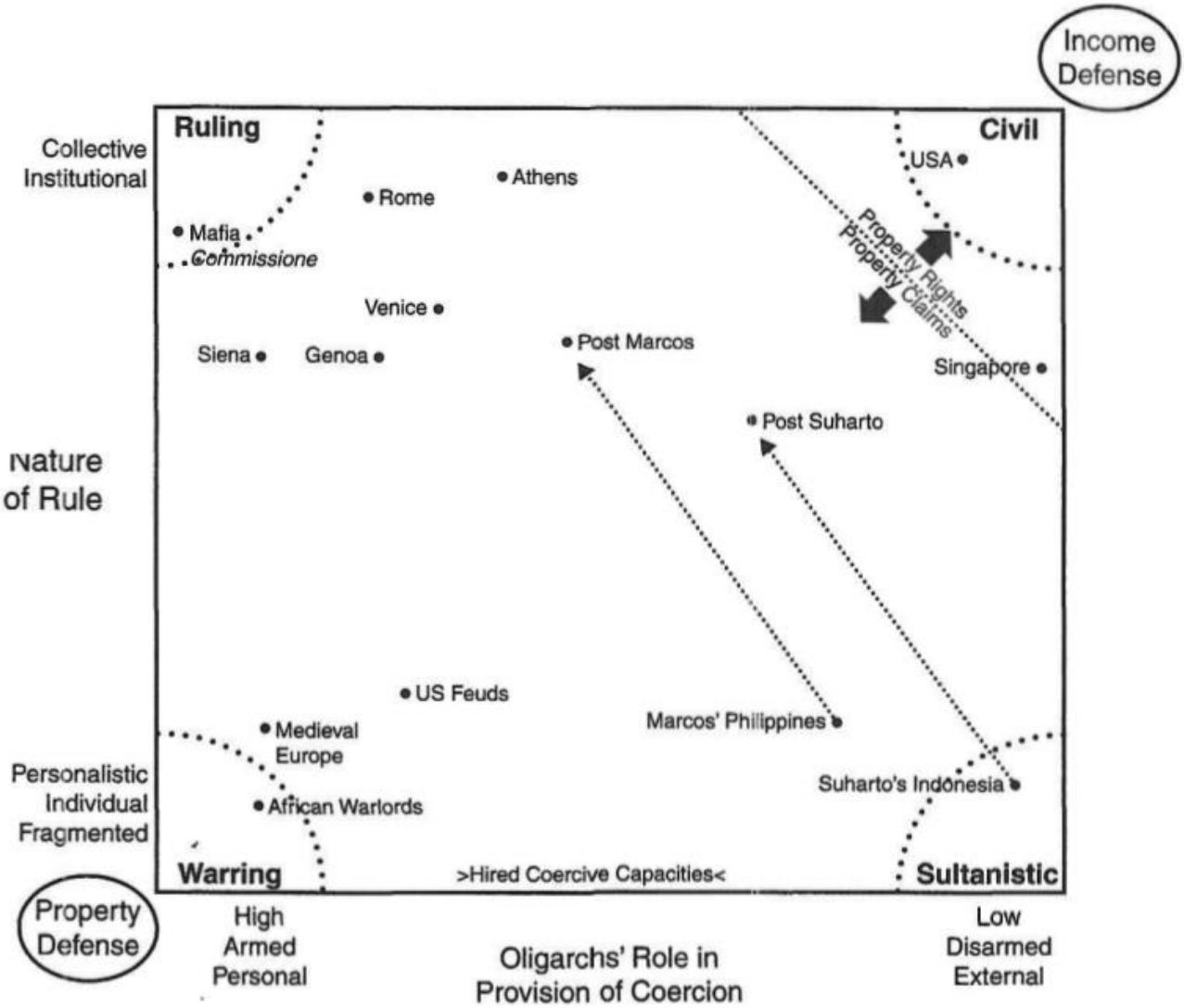
Source: Calculations by authors using administrative data, Canadian information from Corak and Piraino (2011, figure 2).

Source: Bingley et al (2011:29).

This makes the wealthy identified by Piketty a very interesting group. However, more importantly, the exchangeable nature of economic capital may buy dominance in other sorts of fields as well. Political scientist Jeffrey Winters (2011) argued that economic resources are the easiest for oligarchs to accumulate and convert into power. Thus it is not a question of whether or not wealthy oligarchs are able to bend society in the defence – and further enhancement – of their wealth and fortune, but of how. In fact, Winters claimed that the defining feature of society is the strategies oligarchs pursue to defend their wealth, with four main types ranging from civic oligarchs in contemporary western societies to sultanistic oligarchs (e.g. in Indonesia) to the ruling oligarchs of ancient Rome or Athens and the warring oligarchies of failed states. Like Aron, Winters described society as being based on the

group at the top. However, Winters explained this defining group as the oligarchs, developing the four ideal types mentioned above from the level of institutionalisation of oligarchs and to which extend they are armed (see Figure 1.3). Whereas Winters convincingly showed the influence money can buy, the fate of some Russian oligarchs, such as Mikhail Khodorkovsky, shows how the ability of a sultanistic oligarch such as Vladimir Putin to take hold of the state creates new possibilities. Thus, even within the richest proportion of society, state power and economic power remain superior, as will be elaborated further in the section on the relationship between ruling classes and the state below.

FIGURE 1.3: TYPES OF OLIGARCHIES



Source: Winters (2011:34).

The work of Thomas Piketty shows us the importance of understanding the accumulation of economic capital historically and across societies. Even in Scandinavian countries, the richest 1% or 0.1% exhibit very low rates of mobility (Björklund, Roine, and Waldenström 2012; M. N. Hansen 2014; Hussain, Bonke, and Munk 2013), suggesting a strong mechanism of social closure, inheritance and reproduction among the moneyed classes. Furthermore, as Winters (2011:278–80) suggested, the very rich are not as rare in the welfare states as believed. When compared to GDP per capita, Denmark has more dollar millionaires than the US[7] and the wealth Gini coefficient is higher than in all other industrialised countries, although the wealth of Danes is very difficult to compare cross-nationally (Davies et al. 2009).This dissertation focuses on the distribution of power rather than of privileges, but this also requires an understanding of how economic capital is converted to other forms of capital and vice versa. For this reason emphasis will be on how and to what extend the very rich form a politically active class and the ability of this class to influence other fields as well as the economic field. It should be noted that the vast majority, if not all of the populations explored in this dissertation – the top 100 CEOs, key position holders and members of the core of the elite network – belong to the richest one per cent. What distinguishes them for this study, though, is not their wealth but their power.

If we assume that the form of capital of these top 100 CEOs has a decent conversion rate, this creates elites within the subfields of the field of power (see Article IV, Figure 1). This will mean that artists, gallery owners, art critics and so on will be regarded as elites. These individuals no doubt would be dominant in the cultural field and thus part of the cultural elite. However, the value of cultural capital and the importance of the cultural field in the reproduction strategies of the elite may differ, even within contemporary western societies. In other words, we lack a criterion to determine who is not just a member of the elites, but part of an elite of power. To understand this, it is necessary to challenge our understanding of capital as an asset controlled by a particular individual.

As Magne Flemmen (2013:333) argued, the Bourdieusian approach individualises the class or elite question by offering:

> … only a partial view of power, since it ignores a point that is crucial to most established theories of class, namely that the organization of the capitalist economy endows some people with considerable power, by virtue of their position, not only

[7] Of the American population 1.2%are dollar millionaires; of the Danish population, 0.9% (http://borsen.dk/nyheder/avisen/artikel/12/1072489/artikel.html?hl=SmFtZXMgR29ybWFuO0phbWVz), whereas the American GDP per capita is 20% higher.

> within property and market relations, but also within the institutional or organizational structures that make up the capitalist corporation. This means that in contemporary capitalist societies, there are individuals in positions in which they exercise a power which is founded in the institutions and corporations. Managers, and CEOs exercise a power that isn't *theirs*, so to speak.

Even if 'control over a resource' may be seen as an attempt to take institutional or organisational structures into account, seeing elites simply as the holders of the largest quantities of the forms of capital with the highest conversion rates leaves us short of understanding the institutional foundation of elite power and how the conversion of capital takes place. Hence, a definition of elites with regard to resources identifies the elites as dominant within fields giving access to convertible capital. The problems of defining elites strictly by resources alone and not also by power will be discussed further. I shall argue, following Flemmen (2013), that this resource definition lacks focus on the importance of institutions and organisation as well as status or prestige. This is the reason that the role of organisations' leaders must be explored further.

Owners or managers?

Ever since Adolf Berle and Gardiner Means (1932) proposed that ownership and control of the major corporation had split, the importance of determining the capitalist or ruling class according to ownership of the means of production has been challenged. Karl Mannheim (1940) optimistically saw societal hierarchies moving from being class-based with inherited property to being ruled by an elite based on abilities and merits. This introduction of managerialism, based on the competence and authority of the managerial class, was used by scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf (1959) and Daniel Bell (1973) to indicate a break with a society split between the capitalists and the working class. The idea that by not owning their corporation and thus not having the same level of formal resources, managers constitute a distinct break with capitalist class, was challenged by Marxist scholars. This critique of the autonomy of managers has relevance for understanding the role of the modern corporate head and leaders of organisational hierarchies in general.

The perceived split in ownership and control was challenged by scholars such as Maurice Zeitlin (Soref and Zeitlin 1987; Zeitlin 1974, 1976; Zeitlin and Norich 1979), showing how ownership was in fact much less dispersed than claimed. While managers had some autonomy, they not only had to answer to investors individually, but also to a highly coordinated allied group of dominant owners. In the top 82 Danish corporations explored in Articles I and II, the ownership structure of the large Danish corporations is even less dispersed than in the UK, with the majority being controlled by foundations,

families or cooperatives, as seen Table 1. This shows that owners of corporations still play a potentially important role in the capitalist class in Denmark.

TABLE 1: OWNERSHIP[1] OF TOP CORPORATIONS

Year	France 1988	UK 1998	Denmark 2007
Public Company - Dispersed Shareholding	22%	95%	15%
Public Company - Concentrated Shareholding	42%	5%	36%
under foreign control	-	-	(18%)
under foundation control	-	-	(18%)
Dominant Family Shareholding	15%	0%	30%
Dominant State Shareholding	15%	0%	7%
Cooperative Enterprise	6%	0%	11%
N	100	100	82

Source: France and UK – Maclean, Harvey and Press (2006:67); Denmark – author's own research.
[1]Ownership defined by Maclean et al (2006:67): A company with diverse shareholding is defined as having no single shareholder or shareholder group holding 20% or more of equity. A company with a concentrated shareholding is defined by a single shareholder or shareholder group holding 20% or more of equity. A dominant family or state holding is 20% or more of equity.

With much of the rise in top incomes being driven by a vast increase in CEO remuneration (Alvaredo et al. 2013), including stock options and golden parachutes, the notion of the managers acting in the interest of the corporation and society at large rather than to please owners or investors seems no more than a romantic dream. Several Marxist scholars have on various grounds shown how the top CEOs and the owners of the means of production are in fact tied closely to one another. There are two different lines of argument. The first is based on the appropriation of surplus value based on the labour of authority, to which we shall now turn. The second is that managers and the corporation owners belong to the same class, and is based on their shared experiences, condition and class consciousness, which will be touched upon when I discuss the role of the political action of the ruling class.

As mentioned above, Resnick and Wolff (2003) offered the most radical view of the relationship between authority and exploitation. Their critique extended Erik Olin Wright's (1997) work on contradictory class locations based on the distribution of rare skills and authority relations. Following Wright, managers, in particular those who have achieved a certain level of expertise, can take part in the exploitation of the working class because of their ability to exploit a favourable position and recognition of their skills in the organisational hierarchy. Likewise, Miliband (1969:15) argued that 'it is at least possible to note the existence of economic elites which, by virtue of their ownership or control or both, do command many of the most important sectors of economic life'. Along these lines,

Poulantzas (1975:175–81) argued that managers gain both their power and position through capital. Although managers do not necessarily occupy the 'position of capital', they at least occupy the 'function of capital'[8]. Thus Poulantzas placed more emphasis on the particular faction of capital the manager represents rather than on his position in the ownership structure. Furthermore, Poulantzas not only determined class on an economic level, but also on an political and ideological level (see also Wright 1978).

As shown in Article I, in a certain career path of top Danish CEOs, inheritors rise quickly to the top. However, this does not appear to be a path followed exclusively by the sons of the owners. Sons of managers and other parts of the upper classes with large quantities of inherited class-specific cultural capital (cf. Hartmann 2000) also ascend quickly. As for the status and integration in the field of power, a clearer split between managers and owners is seen in the analysis presented in Article II. Owners have stronger ties outside the corporate world, whereas managers have stronger internal ties. However, when looking at the position of the CEOs in relation to the other elites, the position of the corporation according to symbolic capital matters far more. Articles VI and VII show that being very rich does not automatically lead to being in the core of Danish elite networks, whereas a very large proportion of top CEOs, in particular those representing industrial or financial capital, are part of the core. This suggests, as explored in Article III, that the political action of the corporate elite is organised by an inner-circle principle rather than by a corporate or a family principle (cf. Useem 1982) and is thus based on reputation in the business elite as a whole. This will be discussed further below in the section on political action of the capitalist class.

Using a line of argument similar to that of the Marxist scholars above, Mills (1956:119 italics in original) rejected a class division between owners and managers:

> [T]he chief executives and the very rich are not two distinct and clearly segregated groups. They are both very much mixed up in the corporate world of property and privilege, and to understand either we must understand something of the upper levels of the corporate world.

However, Mills' line of argument was not based only on similar economic interests. It was also an attempt to distinguish the political question of rule and the economic question of class (Mills 1956:277–8) by placing an emphasis on sitting at the top of the key institutional hierarchies, or – in line with the

[8] Moreover, this work of exercising authority is a *faux frais*, a false cost, of the capitalist mode of production (Marx 2007:491; Poulantzas 1975:235).

argument to extend the notion of accumulation to other forms of capital– holding dominant positions in the fields where distribution of convertible forms of capital takes place. This prompted Mills (1956:9) to make leaders his main focus:

> [T]he elite are not simply those who have the most, for they could not 'have the most' were it not for their positions in the great institutions … only within and through them can power be more or less continuous and important.

Although the individuals Mills identified as being at the top of the three major institutional orders in the US of the 1950s certainly hold lots of capital – most are rich, have prestigious degrees and social capital though being socially intertwined with one another – their defining feature is 'what they head up', which leads to 'what they have, what they belong to, who they really are' (Mills 1956:381). In his later work, Bourdieu (2005:199) applied several other forms of capital, including organisational capital. This could be interpreted not only as the amount of capital held within an organisation, but also as the amount of backing – and thus potentially accumulated labour – an elite individual has from the institution of which he or she is a prominent leader[9].

In a similar vein, as already mentioned, John Scott (1996) argued that 'elites' constitute a third form of social stratification based on relations of authority. Following Weber, Scott defined classes in terms of economic market relations and status groups in terms of the distribution of status or prestige. Thus, he defined elites not by a specific position in the distribution of resources across society, but by leading institutions or organisations (Scott 2003). Following this, elites are composed of the managers of the largest corporations, Cabinet secretaries and leaders of political parties, military generals, union leaders, senior civil servants and directors of state institutions (see e.g. Giddens 1972). It could also include bishops and other members of the clergy or other sectors, if they have an institutionalised hierarchy. The criteria of belonging to the elite is a leading position in the oligarchic leadership of an organisation, as described by Roberto Michel in his studies of *Political Parties* (1915) or what Gaetano Mosca (1939:53) calls 'the dominion of an organized minority'. We might call these elites at the top of different institutional hierarchies 'leadership elites' or 'commanding elites', being composed of CEOs, Cabinet secretaries, union and party leaders, university principals, museum directors, senior civil servants and so on. These provide interesting groups, but as is shown in Article II, even when selecting the top 100

[9] That Bourdieu in no way neglects the importance of large institutions can also be seen in the studies (Bourdieu 1996a; Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1978) of the economic elite in France, in which field construction is based on firm size and not, e.g., wealth or income.

Danish CEOs, there seem to be huge differences in their prestige and their level of inclusion in the social arenas of the elite. It is difficult to determine which commanding elites play on the same field.

Although all holders of top positions in key institutional hierarchies undoubtedly wield power, this power cannot be reduced to their institutional position alone. Through philanthropy, donations or – in less civic circumstances – corruption or hired guns, extreme wealth can lead to influence above one's formal position (cf. Winters 2011). Furthermore, social ties made through family connections such as marriage can strengthen one's position in the elite (Padgett and Ansell 1993). Another resource that can enhance or weaken the institutional position is the status, prestige or symbolic capital of an individual. It cannot a priori be assumed that volumes of convertible capital of experts such as economists or opinion makers (e.g. famous journalists or authors) are directly reducible to their institutional position. However, as shown in Article VII, the core of the elite network is composed almost entirely of institutional leaders. The sole exception, economy professors, are mostly tied to formal positions as part of the current or former economic counsel of the government (see also Stahl and Henriksen 2014). In short, leading a corporation or another institution that allows for the accumulation of capital is a necessary but not sufficient condition to enter the power elite. But how does one understand the relationship between holders of different convertible forms of capital and leaders of the key institutional orders? The question of whether the extension of the notion of accumulation can be tied to the notion of the power elite has been the subject of much debate in the Marxist theory of the state.

The politics of the ruling class – the power elite as a social group

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848:3) famously wrote: 'The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.' This claim has been widely misinterpreted and criticised for being a part of the simplistic base–superstructure image of society in which the actions of political actors in and around the state are reduced to being puppets, with the capitalist class acting as puppeteers. However, in his actual analysis of political struggles, such as in *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx (2008) described a far more complex struggle between mobilised classes and party alliances. However, he still gave key explanatory power to the position of actors in relation to the ownership of the means of production.

The debate of the understanding of the role of the state was resumed in the famous 'Poulantzas-Miliband debate' (Laclau 1975; Miliband 1969, 1970, 1973; Poulantzas 1969, 1976) of the 1970s on the relative autonomy of the state. Poulantzas (1969) criticised Miliband's (1969) use of instrumentalist mechanisms based on shared conditions of life, social and educational background, along with

economic support to political parties and ownership of the media, to explain capitalist class hegemony. On the contrary, although attributing relative autonomy to the state and the political, Poulantzas (1976) saw the class politics of the state and the repressive and ideological 'state apparatus' as essentially protecting the interests of the capitalist class through the particular form of the 'apparatus', depending on the state of the class struggle in society. Although Miliband insisted that the class position of the individuals leading the state had importance, Poulantzas argued that the state of class struggles determined the politics of the state. After the debate, the focus on state politics (see e.g. Jessop 1982) rather than on the state elite emerged victorious, leading (along with the rise of the poststructuralist impersonal view of power of, e.g. Foucault) to a disinterest in the study of powerful individuals (Savage and Williams 2008).

After more than 35 years of neoliberal reforms across the globe (cf. Harvey 2005) following the Poulantzas-Miliband debate, the question of which mechanism actually secures the influence of the capitalist class – a question no less relevant now – remains unsolved. By turning to the creation of class consciousness of the elite, created by shared experiences and the actual interaction of the elite as a social group (in the spirit of E.P. Thompson [1963]), it is possible to explain the political alliances securing the defence of privileges. In the 1950s, James Meisel (1958) claimed that assumptions about the power of a ruling class rested on three Cs: cohesion, class consciousness, and conspiracy. Mills (1956:292) had anticipated this line of critique:

> The conception of the power elite and of its unity rests upon the corresponding developments and the coincidence of interests among economic, political, and military organizations. It also rests upon the similarity of origin and outlook, and the social and personal intermingling of the top circles from each of these dominant hierarchies. This conjunction of institutional and psychological forces, in turn, is revealed by the heavy personnel traffic within and between the big three institutional orders, as well as by the rise of go-betweens as in the high-level lobbying. The conception of the power elite, accordingly, does not rest upon the assumption that American history since the origins of World War II must be understood as a secret plot, or as a great and co-ordinated conspiracy of the members of this elite.

Hence, Mills dismissed the idea that conspiracy is a necessary component of power-elite integration. Rather, he claimed that the interests of the dominant forms of capital are served through the formation of a power elite as a social group through social interaction and shared culture.

In the production of class consciousness, or at least the foundation of joined class action among the power elite, the notion of class-specific habitus offered by German sociologist Michael Hartmann

(2000, 2007, 2010), mentioned in the introduction, has particular relevance. Hartmann attempted to access the strength of the cohesion within the elite through shared career trajectories and elite education. In the corporate elite of the UK shared privilleged background and social clubs raises the propensity to support the same, conservative, political parties or pressure groups (Bond 2007; Bond, Glouharova, and Harrigan 2010), with membership of exclusive networks being tied to shared upper class background and elite education (Bond 2012). Through the notions of habitus and character, Bourdieu (1996a) and Mills (Gerth and Mills 1953; Mills 1956:140ff) placed emphasis on the importance of family upbringing, the influence of the schools and universities, and (Mills especially) the way institutions form and evolve individuals' careers. In a similar vein, Elias (1983:104) described how aspects of the elites' personalities were developed through the nature of the social games of court society. Miliband (1969:44, italics in original) also followed this line of argument, noting how:

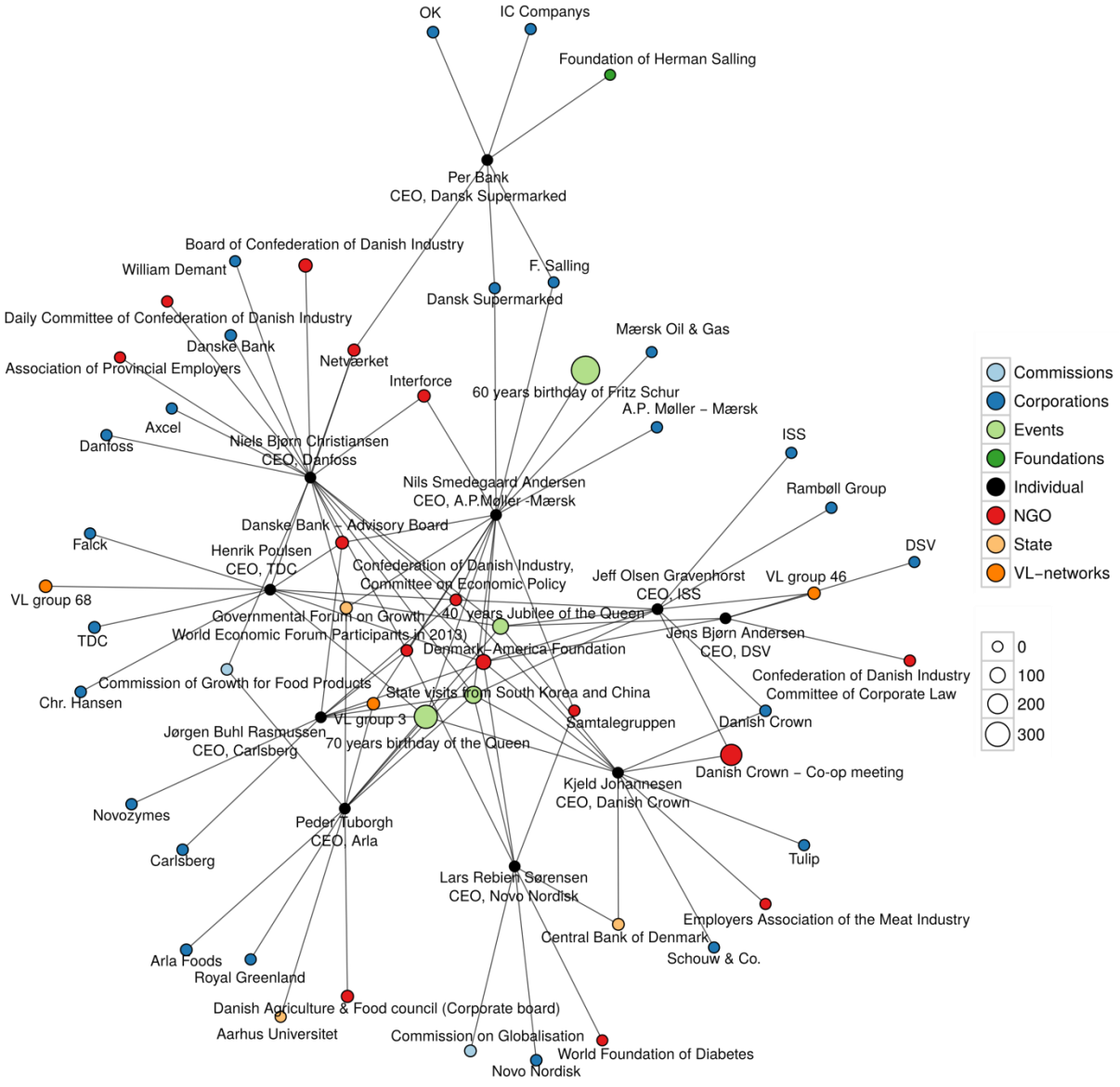
> … [e]ven a far more 'meritocratic' way to the top, grafted to the existing economic system, would only ensure that a larger number of people from working-class origin would occupy the top rungs of the existing system. This might be thought desirable, but it would not cause its transformation into a different system.

By virtue of being formed by the corporate, governmental or party logic (on the latter, see also Michels 1915) they pass ascending the career latter, the new men quickly become men of the system. Article I describes how the formation of the personality of the corporate leaders is the subject of, in spite of the existence of different career trajectories, a through long allegiance to the economic field is a prerequisite for a career in top management in Denmark. However, our argument of this ideological juxtaposition of the managers towards the capitalist class is based on shared traits of these particular elite and thus lacks empirical foundation to answer the question of whether or not their values and attitudes align.

Although Poulantzas (1975:177) criticised Mills and Bourdieu for placing too much emphasis on the environment and education of elites and insisted that elite members must be understood through which position of capital they occupy, this subjective formation of class consciousness could explain some of the political and ideological factors key to understanding contemporary class situations. To claim that common cultural experiences and shared personality have no effect on the cohesiveness, and thus also no effect on the division fractioning of the ruling class, seems highly speculative. As Bourdieu (1985:723) argued, occupying similar positions in the social space makes it much easier for a class to move from being a 'theoretical class' to 'a real class, an effectively mobilized group'. In defining the establishment, Bourdieu (1996a:315–17, italics in original) noted that 'wealth, when it is not accompanied by the appropriate "manners" is even less sufficient …"This club, with no written charter and no membership list, [operates] solely through spontaneous and *instinctive co-optation*"'. Thus these

aristocracies function by mutual recognition through mastery of the manners acquired through time within the establishment, which, again through the notion of habitus and its bodily inscribed hexis, is similar to the 'soundness' one must 'embody' according to Mills (1956:141).

FIGURE 1.4: POSITIONS AND CONNECTIONS OF THE CEOS OF THE 10 LARGEST DANISH CORPORATIONS BY TURNOVER



The CEOs of the Top 10 Danish Corporations and their memberships of networks (see description of the data in Article V). The size of icons denotes the total number of participants in each network; the colour denotes the source – and thus roughly the type – of affiliation. Note that many of the CEOs share network affiliations and are tied through events, state

committees and social clubs such as the VL-groups and organisations. The position of Per Bank, CEO of Dansk Supermarked, and practically a hanger tied primarily to Nils Smedegaard Andersen, can be explained by the fact that Smedegaard Andersen's A.P. Møller-Mærsk owns Bank's Dansk Supermarked.

The second element that explains how the ruling class is formed into a social group is based on their interaction. In the aftermath of the instrumentalist–structuralist debate, Michael Useem (1978, 1980, 1982, 1984) coined the notion of the inner circle. Based on social interaction in the boardrooms of top corporations, the top managers form a social group sanctioning those who act only according to the interest of their own firm and not the biggest corporations or the dominant segment of the capitalist class as a whole. In Article III, the continued relevance of the inner-circle notion is explored. Another example of this is seen in Figure 1.4, which shows the plethora of connections between the CEOs of the 10 largest Danish corporations. It can be seen that members of the inner circle of the corporate board networks are also much more likely to represent the corporate elite in the governing bodies of other societal sectors. Through the notion of the inner circle, Useem showed the mechanisms that transform corporate interest into political action. This mechanism is tied to the inner circle being a social group based on interaction and having its own criteria of honour and prestige.

Ruling classes as inner circles

To understand how the inner circle is formed as a 'real class', it is of key importance to understand two elements: first, the importance of prestige to the formation of the class; and secondly, the role networks play in this respect.

First, in the importance of prestige is seen, for instance, in the description of the *Court Society* of Louis XIV by Nobert Elias. Elias (1983:93) described how the key aspect of stratification is whether or not one is perceived as a member of The court. This formed a 'powerful and prestigious elite' (Elias 1983:2). The norm and rules of this figuration can only be challenged if one leaves the social circle in 'the network of the court society' (Elias 1983:90) which is 'held together by a network of relatively well-known associations' (Elias 1983:99). Even though the court society has a formal head and official positions, '[court society is] not rational organization in the modern sense [...], but a type of organisation by which each act receive[s]… a prestige character mobilizing the distribution of power at the time' (Elias 1983:84). Rather than acting according to economic interests, it is status, or the 'prestige fetish' (Elias 1983:85), that guides agency (see also Bourdieu 2000). Although the social logics of court

society have changed with modernity, the case nevertheless shows how informal ties and ascription of membership tied to prestige can be of central importance in some elite configurations[10].

In the Danish context, holders of such prestige include the royal family. As shown in Article II, invitation to a royal ball is a very fine indicator of prestige among Danish CEOs. Furthermore, the royal events play a key role in integrating the networks of the power elite, as described in Articles VI and VII. In the assembled database, the entire Cabinet, mayors of the largest cities, CEOs of the largest corporations, senior civil servants and artists were all present at official royal balls, such as the one held for the state visit of the Chinese President. The few chamberlains who were not noblemen were all owners of large corporations, most of them having made several large donations to the royal family and their favourite charities.

The position close to the royal family of some corporation owners highlights an important distinction between public reputation and internal prestige among the elite. As Mills (1956:88) argued, 'it is no longer possible for the power of an elite based on reputation alone to be maintained against reputation that is based on power'. This means that 'the clowns and the queens - the professional celebrities' (Mills 1956:91) - should perhaps be regarded as elites, as the holders of a disproportionate amount of a convertible form of capital, but because of their lack of institutional ties, their position is very fragile when compared to a commanding elite based on a strong institutional position. However, the internal reputation among other powerful players may be extremely important and could dispense with the need for a power base in a major institutional hierarchy, as seen in the case of the court society. This is also the reason that Mills (1956:281) gave primacy to the elite as a *social group*:

> Even if their recruitment and formal training were more heterogeneous than they are, these men would still be of quite homogeneous social type. For the most important set of facts about a circle of men is the criteria of admission, of praise, of honor, of promotion that prevail among them; if these are similar within a circle, then they will tend as personalities to become similar. The circles that compose the power elite do tend to have such codes and criteria in common. The co-optation of social types to

[10] We could regard these status-driven societies in which prestige acts as a key form of convertible capital as curiosities from the past. However, high levels of reputation can still open many doors. Athletes and actors are from time to time able to interact with the powerful and even convert their popularity into a public office or raising public awareness on a certain issue. This group of celebrities also overlaps with the famous rich, typically entrepreneurs such as Steve Jobs or Richard Branson, who owe their fame not only to the organisations they head up, but also to the narrative of their business adventures.

> which these common values lead is often more important than any statistics of the common origin and career that we have in hand.

In short, I will argue that prestige, or symbolic capital in Bourdieu's terms, is important to the individual's peers in the elite. Furthermore, the symbolic capital is closely tied to social capital, with membership of elite social clubs serving as a token of prestige and enabling the accumulation of even more social capital (Cousin and Chauvin 2012). This logic is explored in Article II, using the social and symbolic capital of top Danish CEOs as an empirical case. Being part of semi-formal business roundtables or serving on boards of corporations is linked closely to being decorated, biographied or awarded the leader of the year prize.

Second, being included in networks with others does not serve only as an indicator of prestige. As Randall Collins (2004) argued, interaction under certain circumstances produces solidarity within the group, while also defining group boundaries. To be upheld, the culture of a group such as the power elite or ruling class must be reproduced continually through interaction rituals, a key feature of which is physical co-presence (Collins 2004:32–49). Similarly Robert Putnam (1976:112) argues that elite integration is enhanced by sociometric ties, that is, networks of personal communication, friendships and influence and Cornwell and Dokshin (2014) show that integration through social networks may create cohesion in spite of growing diversity in the elite.

Furthermore, these networks of solidarity – and thus trust – will facilitate the reconversion and the rate of this reconversion, which according to Bourdieu (1996a:277ff) is the core element in identifying domination within the field of power[11]. Mills (1956:282) pointed out how the elite 'mingle in the status

[11] Co-presence does more than just create solidarity in the current interaction network of elite individuals; it also shapes the habitus of potential elite agents. This can take place in the sphere of the family, in the educational institutions, in the organisation the individual is working within, or in the classic Hegelian triad of family, state and market. These spheres are usually more dominant in some life stages than others. In *The State Nobility*, Bourdieu (1996a:278–90) argued for a shift from family to school-mediated reproduction in France. However, as Hartmann (2000) showed, this requires the formation of elite schools and that reproduction may also take place within the organisation (see also Miliband 1969:40) if the agent performs according to the doxa of the field and thus reprocess the "class-specific habitus". Thus one might argue that Bourdieu missed a third arena of reproduction, that of the organisation. In Bourdieu's (1991) analysis of the political field, the importance of delegated capital acquired through field seniority is given paramount importance, meaning that rather than not seeing this potential, Bourdieu probably found it unimportant in his empirical analysis of the field of power in France. Shamus Khan (2012b) argued that we might look empirically at social clubs, educational institutions and families as the locus for elite reproduction. If we broaden the notion of social clubs to interaction rituals for the elite in general, we are

sphere' through a 'multiplicity of high-prestige organisations' such as churches and social clubs, 'to understand through the experience of trusted others those contexts of power and decision in which they have not personally moved'. This means that:

> '[The members of the power elite] define one another as among those who count, and who accordingly, must be taken into account … Nowhere in America is there as great a "class consciousness" as among the elite; nowhere is it organised as effectively as among the power elite.' Mills (1956:283)

This does not mean that the power elite are without internal divides; 'factions do exist', as Mills (1956:283) asserted. Following Bourdieu (1996a:263), factions in the field of power must be understood as part of a 'complex universe of objective relations of interdependence (established in and through intersecting patterns of domination) among subfields that are both autonomous and bound together by the organic solidarity of a genuine division of the labor of domination'[12]. However, in our analysis, the creation of class consciousness and ideology within the ruling class rests on the above-mentioned assumptions of the integrative effects of social ties. Likewise, the agency resulting from this class consciousness is also tied to the effect of network interlocks.

In Article IV, I show how some areas of the Danish field of power, in particular those tied to the economic order and seniority in the elite, are much more likely to take part in the networking activities than others. Although this questions whether or not the holders of less integrated positions are actually part of the field of power, it also shows that a part of the field of power is also tied through network relations. In Articles VI and VII, we explore a method of identifying the elite and present a theoretical framework to understand the logics of inclusion in the core of the elite network, in the vein of the brief discussions above. A key finding is that network resources (or social capital) are accumulated by the 'Matthew-effect' (Merton 1968), a sort of accumulation also present in Mills' (1956:10) argument for the distribution of prestige.

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perhaps better equipped to understand the importance of a class-specific habitus gained through the spheres mentioned above.

[12] Bourdieu (1996a:328) expanded this line of argument, albeit using corporations as empirical case, showing how interdependence is 'substituting for the former mechanical solidarity among businesses and entrepreneurs that fit into a "common type", as Durkheim would say, an organic solidarity, founded on the complementarily of their interests and on complex (and sometimes circular) networks of domination.'

This accumulation of network centrality can be regarded as an indicator of inclusion in the ruling class by virtue of owning or controlling large stocks of different forms of capital and becoming part of the self-conscious class through one's habitual dispositions and personal ties. Thus, the two central Marxist discussions about the ruling class can be incorporated in the use of Mills' notion of the power elite as a social group accumulating different forms of capital. The recent contribution to debates on class and inequality by Thomas Piketty, among others, again has relevance. Piketty showed how, when it comes to income and wealth, the top stratum of society is a very small group indeed, but the requirements to enter the power elite as a social group (e.g. ties to others made through membership of exclusive social clubs, elite universities, governing bodies of corporations, or state institutions) are met by even fewer. The 'numerous clausus' (cf. Bourdieu 1996a:286) of membership of elite circles based on personal acquaintance or common friends makes the power elite a very small group in which reputation and honour become tied to the individual, as in court society.

The notion of elites and power elites used throughout this dissertation is not an attempt to provide an alternative framework to that of class. Instead, by highlighting how the upper classes are mobilised by belonging to a specific social group tied through mutual interaction, it may help us understand the specificity of the political. By seeing elites as the individuals in the core of the power network, we also identify individuals who accumulate resources, hold commanding positions and are held to high esteem, not least within the elite group. In this way, an elite defined in terms of network centrality, as in Articles VI and VII, is able to combine these necessary, but not sufficient, traits. Traits who, when combined constitutes a ruling class. Furthermore Articles I, II and III all show how, in spite of their differences, some managers and owners constitute a cohesive social group with class consciousness through shared culture and social contact. But while being a social group, these individuals also hold a position appropriating the labour of others through domination of different fields, in particular through relations of authority. Whereas others may also accumulate resources, the core of the elite networks is the politically active faction of the ruling class, the power elite.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the methodological consequences of this elite definition and the larger methodological framework in which this understanding is embedded. Before embarking on this discussion, however, one issue of the ruling classes and elites remains. In a globalised world, can the understanding of elites be confined to the nation-state setting?

Transnational capital and national elites

All papers in this dissertation are concerned with an elite based within a single nation-state. Although this may be seen as a classic case of 'methodological nationalism' (Beck 2002:18) that ignores how every field or organisation now is embedded in a global setting, as is also argued in the papers, we find strong, nationally confined networks. Location and nation are relevant to a definition of the elite that describes group cohesiveness and class consciousness based on shared personality traits and intermingling through interaction rituals with a requisite understanding of the finer nuances of language and norms; and being geographically tied to the same location. The politically active part of the ruling class – at least in the Danish case, as shown in Article VII – are still tied to the nation-state. Even so, three major sources of power located outside the nation influence options or add forms of power that Danish elites may tap into. These are the influence of transnational capital and a transnational capitalist class; the growing importance of the bureaucracy of the European Union (EU); and the possibility of drawing on transnational regimes of knowledge and expertise by belonging to certain professions. I will now briefly review the role of these three transnational forms of power influence among Danish elites.

Since Immanuel Wallerstein's (1974) description of the world-systems theory, it can no longer be questioned that class relations circumvent national borders. Adding to this are the rise of investors over managers as a key component of corporate elites (Windolf 2014) and the growing financialisation (Erturk 2008; Froud et al. 2006) of the economy. Although elites have long travelled to their hideaways on the Riviera, recent elite mobility has brought elites from different nations even closer (see Birtchnell and Caletrío 2014). The economic and geographical conditions of a transnational class formation are thus in place. As Guy Standing (2011:7) describes this new global upper class:

> At the top is an 'elite', consisting of a tiny number of absurdly rich global citizens lording over the universe, with their billions of dollars, listed in Forbes as among the great and the good, able to influence governments everywhere and to indulge in munificent philanthropic gestures.

Following Leslie Sklair (2001), this transnational capitalist class is tied to the growing number of transnational corporations, international organisations and NGOs, and a globalised system of expertise, culture and media. Although there are factions tied to the different globalised fields mentioned above, this group shares a lavish lifestyle that is so familiar from the advertisements in their home turf, the international airport, and have shared interests that counter those of the rest of the global population (Sklair 2001:12–3). Sklair used the CEOs of the Fortune 500 corporations as point of departure. These managers were also explored in William Carroll's works on the rising global network (2007, 2009, 2010;

Carroll and Fennema 2002; Carroll and Sapinski 2010). Furthermore, these ties are enhanced by transnational social clubs like the Bilderberg Conference (Richardson, Kakabadse, and Kakabadse 2013), the Trilateral Commission (Knudsen 2013) or the World Economic Forum (Carroll 2003). Even though there is some disagreement about the growth of the transnational business communities (see Carroll and Fennema 2002, 2004; Kentor and Jang 2004, 2006), it seems that the corporate networks also travel increasingly across borders, particularly within the core countries of the EU (Heemskerk 2013). It appears that there is a rise of the global corporate community and the subsequent growing importance of cosmopolitan capital in very international economies such as Switzerland or the Netherlands (Bühlmann, David, and Mach 2012, 2013; Heemskerk and Schnyder 2008).

But what is the effect of this rising class on the corporate elite and the power elite in Denmark? In the articles, we argue that, although some top politicians and corporate leaders enter the core or periphery of this class, the networks of both corporate leaders and the power elite are still strong. Undoubtedly, the few Danish interlocked in this tiny global elite are able to use this position of brokerage in the Danish power network; however, to participate in the global field of power they usually have to leave Denmark not only geographically, but also in terms of network ties. Even so, to better understand the dynamics of the global field of power, it is necessary to explore the relationship between national and transnational elite networks further and comparatively.

The second challenge to the nationally based elite is the growing importance of the EU, with a new elite centred in the Brussels bureaucracy (see Arnholtz 2012; Georgakakis and Rowell 2013; Kauppi 2005). As mentioned, this coincides with the strengthening of corporate ties within the EU. Furthermore, ties are made by parliamentarians, even between anti-EU parties from different nations, in the European Parliament, through lobbyists and so on. For the most part, though, there seems to be an either–or dilemma to being part of national or European elite networks, making it difficult to be a central player in both.

A third, but very different challenge to the image of elites founded in nation-states, is the influence that comes from experts and bureaucrats embedded in the international system of professions (Abbott 2005). In particular, economists (cf. Chwieroth 2007; Fourcade 2006; Fourcade, Ollion, and Algan 2015; Lebaron 2000, 2003, 2008) and lawyers (Dezalay and Garth 2002; Mudge and Vauchez 2012) draw legitimacy from a highly globalised field. Although not historically unprecedented – the role of the Catholic Church is perhaps the strongest case of global influence based on institutions of scholarly expertise – it is clear that elite individuals with degrees in economics and law share both a professional outlook and the ability to use locally the victories of their colleagues in the global field of power.

Especially in the power elite as a whole, both professions have a very strong position that cannot be explained by internal dynamics of the Danish field of power alone. However, as is shown in Article I, the institutions and university programs used as reproduction strategies are also always subject to national struggles in the field of higher education. Although professions undoubtedly draw upon the global prestige of their expertise, they must also establish this expertise within the institutional struggles of the local power elite.

In short, the challenges to the national power elites from transnational capital and capitalist classes, Eurocrats and professions are all embedded in the dynamics of national elite networks. This in no way means that the struggles of transnational players are unimportant in national elite constellations; only that their influence passes through the interpretation and use of the local agents, whose strategies are bound to the state of struggles in the national field of power.

Chapter 2: Studying elites across borders - On methodological challenges in our study of elites

I don't want to belong to any club that would have me as a member.'
Groucho Marx

The study of elites epitomises the challenge of contemporary social science to grasp social stratification and inequality using the vast amount of data available without reducing class to what C. Wright Mills (1959) would call abstracted empiricism. How do we identify and analyse the elite from the theoretical discussion in the previous chapter? In the following chapter, I will present our methodological and epistemological reflections when identifying both economic elites and the power elite in particular. First, I show in what ways the study of elites can embrace the challenges and opportunities of big data. Second, I discuss how classes and elites can be understood within a relational framework. Third, I investigate how elites can be understood empirically, based on the notion of the elite as the core of the power network. Fourth, I will discuss how this definition also enables the researcher to analyse elites in different historical and national contexts. Finally, I describe the methodological toolbox used to describe the elite. I will not dwell on the quality of our data sources or the analytical differences between the methods used, that is, between multiple correspondence analysis and social network analysis, as Larsen (in press) discusses this in depth. First, however, I offer a brief note on the opportunities presented by the numerous sources of information about elites today.

Big data and the description of elites

The rise of 'big data' not only challenges the classic sociological methods such as surveys and qualitative interviewing; it also presents sociologists with new opportunities (Savage and Burrows 2007, 2009). In the articles in this dissertation, we use some of these opportunities to generate and combine two types of data. The prosopographical databases (for more on this tradition, see Broady 2002) of the biographies of elite individuals used in Articles I, II, III, IV and VII are based on now-digitalised biographical sources such as the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*, *Kraks Blå Bog*; databases such the Danish corporate register, yielding information on such things as personal address and firms' annual reports; and InfoMedia, the database of Danish newspapers giving access to media articles about elite individuals. Because network analysis is based on relational data, which uses information from

documents of relations (Scott 1991), the registration of board members or list of participants can be coded into network data to reveal the connections between different individuals and affiliations used in Article III, VI and VII and described in depth in Article V. In addition to the body of qualitative knowledge acquired during the collection of these data, this gives us data of very high granularity –for both the career trajectories and the formal relations of the Danish elite.

One of the problems of big data is the lack of direction. Data are often collected not for sociological, but for commercial purposes. How can we extend our methodological repertoires without losing sight of our research subject? The analysis offered in this dissertation attempts to offer an alternative to the mess of big data without losing the potential. In Article VI, we describe our data as being of 'the middle range'. This implies that a large amount of data is collected with a specific analytical purpose from the ocean of big data available. This has two separate advantages. First, as mentioned above, by selecting data manually, we get an in-depth understanding of context of the information. For instance, we see the self-presentation of an organisation, and thus also the board members by accessing their homepage. Second, the researcher knows all of the sources of the data. For instance, we know which affiliations have a large number of members, how often these meet and so on, facilitating a reflexive research practice about, for example, the weights used in Article VI. Targeting data of the middle range makes it possible to use the descriptive and classificatory advantages of big data without losing the qualitative 'feeling' of the data sources and their weaknesses.

Another well-known issue of big data, which is particularly relevant for our study, is the ethical dilemma of gathering personal data from multiple sources, especially as we use these personal data and the names of elite individuals in our analysis. However, as discussed in depth by Larsen (in press), using names enhances the reader's ability to gain a more complete understanding of the powerful and is the only way for scholars, the public and the research subjects to really challenge our findings, methods and interpretation.

How can we process the multi-layered information, such as knowing that the elite prefers to answer surveys between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. (Burrows and Savage 2014), to create credible narratives about social inequality at the top? The first step is to acknowledge that big data, not unlike other data in the social sciences, is better equipped for 'description and classification' than the elusive goal of determining causal relationships (Savage and Burrows 2007:896). On the analytical level, all articles in this

dissertation deliberately avoid investigating the question of causation[13]. This does not mean that causation is regarded as unimportant, but rather than we believe empirical results must be interpreted in light of a larger theoretical framework – such as those offered by Bourdieu, Mills and to some extent in this dissertation, Marxist theory– rather than be made a question of more or less elaborate mechanical econometric models. In other words, the ability to generalise from the description of elite populations classified and described in this dissertation is based on the validity of the theoretically informed case selection (cf. Flyvbjerg 2006).

However, if description and classification are to take central stage, we must answer a central theoretical question: Who should we study? How do we construct the classifications to determine whom to describe? I will now attempt to define the power elite as a relational class within the network-based relational sociology of Mustafa Emirbayer (1997) and the reflexive sociological approach of Pierre Bourdieu (see e.g. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

The elite as a relational class

Describing and classifying the elite through network ties identifies an elite defined not by its access to capital, attributes or reputation, but by its structural position in the network of power. This is an attempt regard 'power as a dynamic process *between* entities' (Emirbayer 1997:291). In this sense, social network analysis is used as a heuristic tool (cf. Abbott 2004:97–8) for identifying quantitative aspects of the group – unity, plurality and totality. David Knoke (1993:166) argues that being closely tied to others in the elite through personal relations gives a relational power with potential influence, particularly if the agent holds a position of high centrality (Knoke 1990:133). By viewing central positions in networks as an indicator of relational power, the pitfalls of substantialism (cf. Emirbayer 1997) can be avoided.

The logic behind using networks as indicators of inclusion in society's most influential stratum has been outlined in chapter 1, but also draws on the elementary constraints of networks. The sheer size of the networks and the increasing possibilities of creating social ties in mass-mediated metropolitan society drives agents to seek exclusive networks rather than to use their scarce time to create or maintain ineffective ties (Mayhew and Levinger 1976). This makes policy network 'patterns formed by long-term alliances and enduring social relations' (Scott 2001:65). As William Domhoff (1978:131, my emphasis)

[13] Letting description and classification take centre stage is not new to some of the most celebrated and innovative sociologists of our time, such as Andrew Abbott, John Goldthrope and Bruno Latour (Savage 2009).

argued, 'Being able to specify who is and who is not member of the alleged ruling group is essential to power structure research. This is because *relationships among individuals are the basic elements with which power structure research begins*.'

Much network analysis theory (see e.g. White, Boorman, and Breiger 1976) network positions as generative of practice in a form of structural determinism 'losing its conceptual grasp on culture, agency and process' (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994:1447). For instance, in their study of the political and foreign capital ties of Hungarian businesses, Stark and Vedres (2012) showed how these ties in no way come at the expense of one another. However, rather than expanding this notion towards a theory of the relationship between national and transnational elites in line with their work on structural folds (Vedres and Stark 2010), they interpret their findings in relation to the framework of network theory, wondering how a bridging yet integrative position can be upheld in general. Drawing such a grand and general conclusion also haunts the otherwise brilliant studies on weak ties (Granovetter 1973) and the privileged position of brokerage (Burt 2007). For this reason, our analytical interpretation of network positions is much less modest. By simply using network centrality as primary object of interest rather than the specific role in the network, much less is assumed about the importance of particular relational positions in the network structure. These problems also relate to the intertwined problems of (a) issues of missing data and (b) what actually constitutes a tie.

First, one problem with reducing the actor to his relational position in the network is simply missing data and, in our analysis, the lack of information on informal ties in particular. Brokerage at a formal level might very well be undermined by the fact that two disjoint groups are well-connected at an informal level and their low degree of formal connections could even be a result of their good informal connections. Using network centrality and ties is regarded as merely an indicator of social integration between groups and not also the strategic opportunities of an organisation or institution. This is also the case in Padgett and Ansell's (1993) analysis of multiplex alliances of the leading families in Renaissance Florence – the analytical consequences of missing data are much less severe.

Furthermore, the methodological decision about the timeframe of a relation may radically influence whether or not the analysed structure of the power elite is cohesive or fragmented, as demonstrated by Grannis (2010) in other network relations. Excluding networks forged earlier in the career trajectory not only weakens the perceived level of elite integration but also removes our ability to identify long-

term alliances not requiring continued interaction[14]. However, it seems reasonable to expect former ties to be reaffirmed by recruiting each other to new shared affiliations as well, so that current network ties, albeit imperfectly, also reflect former ties. Once again, using network centrality as an indicator of integration and class consciousness, rather than placing strong emphasis on particular strategic positions, makes the consequences of not including all former ties less grave.

Second, much social network analysis neglects the actual consequence of the tie, which must still be of sociological relevance (cf. Stinchcombe 1990)[15]. By using ties merely as indicators of social integration, less is also assumed about their strategic importance. A more serious challenge for our approach to network analysis, though, is the hierarchical relationships within networks, such as employer, employee, ownership relations, appointer–appointed and the relationship between the chairman in a board with ordinary members, which would be key to understanding elite networks as figurations (Elias 1983). Ideally, the strengths of the relations must be assessed, primarily through the amount of time the network allows for interaction, also for the nature of the interaction. Relationships acquired through full-time jobs are different from those acquired through board membership, although both are professional relationships, whereas more sociable networks with less at stake in power relations, such as club memberships or public commissions, create different ties. Finally, some relations within networks are antagonistic, with political memberships an obvious example. However, the use of data of the middle range simply makes it a near-impossible task to evaluate and code these types of information. In our case, more than 5,000 affiliations and 62,000 positions should have been coded specifically. Thus our approach of using network analysis simply as indicator of elite integration does not take into account the complex nature of interaction in powerful networks. By not ascribing network position as the key driver of agency, the consequences of not all ties being of exactly the same nature are less severe.

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[14] The networks forged earlier in the elite individual's life history could be ties formed at university or in youth politics. Considering the high density of voluntary organisations in Denmark, it is possible that some networks are formed during these activities as well. Examples could be some leftist cadres in the 1970s, members of Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd [The Council for Danish Youth] or youth departments of sports clubs in the most affluent areas of Copenhagen.

[15] Granovetter (1973), on the other hand, discussed not only the strength of ties but also the particular relationship between ties in triads.

A central question in Emirbayer's relational sociology is the boundary specification problem (Emirbayer 1997:303; see also Laumann, Marsden, and Prensky 1983). Where does the group of relations of interest commence? On policy networks, Laumann and Knoke (1989:22) argued that 'the appropriate unit of analysis is not the state understood in the institutional sense, but the state as a collection of policy arenas incorporating both governmental and private actors'. Central actors in these policy arenas are also more likely to secure non-decisions (cf. Bachrach et al. 1970). Subgroup identification algorithms, such as the k-core used in Articles VI and VII, can be used to identify the boundaries of the most central group in the networks (Doreian and Woodard 1994; Seidman 1983). Thus the elite can be identified relationally, based on level of participation in the integrative elite networks. Methodologically, we may specify a relational elite as those most in social contact with other elite individuals.

As in the relational sociology outlined by Emirbayer, in a Bourdieusian framework the construction of fields – and thus also the field of power - takes the relationship of agents as the point of departure. Rather than looking at interactions, Bourdieu emphasised positions in the structure of the distribution of capital (De Nooy 2003). Bourdieu simply defined boundaries of the field: 'Borders of field are defined to end where the effect of field stops' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:128). When identifying the most important individuals in field, to specify what forms and combinations of capital at stake, Bourdieu (2005:99) provided a methodological strategy of finding 'effective agents' through a back and forth process – similar to a hermeneutic circle drawing on qualitative knowledge of the field.

By combining qualitative knowledge with multiple indicators of capital, Bourdieu was able not only to identify key agents, but also to let the relationship between forms of capital become an empirical question. By using geometrical data analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004), as I will discuss in depth later, the hierarchies in the field of power are allowed to be specific to the historical state of the struggles in the particular field of power (Wacquant 1993). Bourdieu's framework thus serves as an epistemological model and not an ontological theory (cf. Broady 1991) of forms of capital dominating the field of power. The effective individuals in the field of power – or in Mills' terms, the power elite (for a more elaborate discussion on the differences and similarities of the two notions, see Article IV) – can be seen as those who have accumulated exchangeable forms of capital. By identifying the exchangeable forms of capital, or the exchangers of capital, we may identify the elite.

As argued in chapter 1 the agents exchanging capital could be located at the core of elite networks. However, Bourdieu was critical of seeing interactions as generative of social practice and positions of power. Rather, interactions are the consequences of the distributions of capital, which are generative of

powerful positions (De Nooy 2003). Whether or not the causal relationship between these has primacy in capital or network positions is of less interest, particularly because of the descriptive nature of our enquiry. As De Nooy (2003:319) reflected, 'If Bourdieu argues that interaction is driven by the distribution of types of capital, the former can be used to measure the latter.' Consequently, position in the elite network structure can be used as an indicator of position in the field of power.

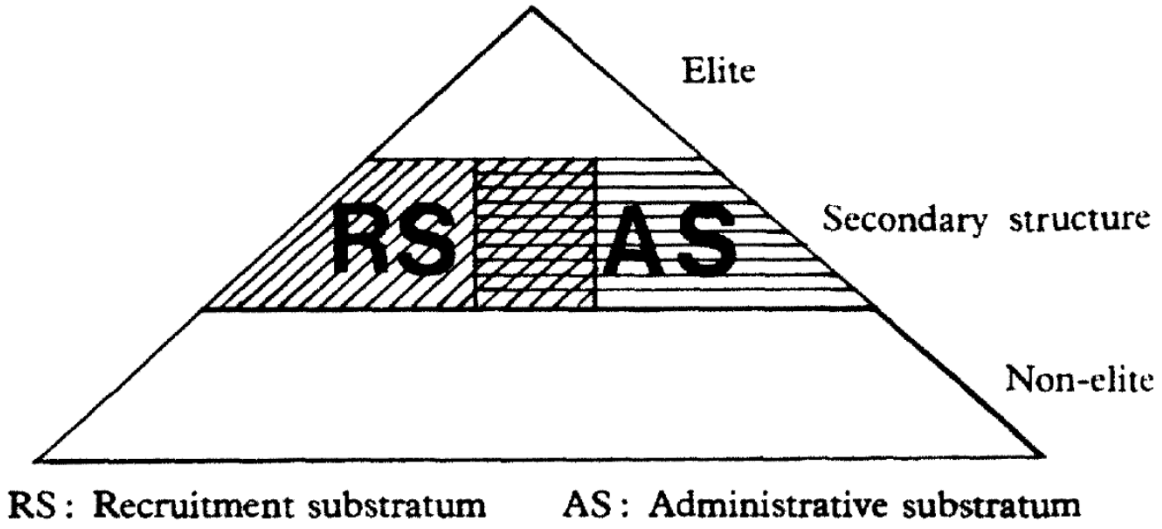
The position in relation to the distribution of capital in a particular field is important in its own right as well. Both are analytical strategies. Identifying elites by their integration in social networks and their distribution of capital allows us to make the composition and structure of the elite empirical questions, but the empirical questions are grounded in strong sociological arguments of what constitutes a tie or an indicator of a form of capital. Describing and classifying the elite through either patterns of life trajectories or network ties is thus not abstracted empiricism. Rather, these two parameters specify exactly the relational foundation of cohesion and class consciousness of the elite described in chapter 1. Furthermore, drawing on the idea of identifying the underlying dimension by using geometric data analysis, and using network centrality as an indicator of inclusion in the power elite, requires much less radical interpretation of the significance of network roles.

How do we understand power elites?

Defining and understanding elites relationally has important implications for how we understand elites. Anthony Giddens (1972:366) describes how one must identify both the 'vertical' and 'lateral' extension of the elite – its size and composition. Instead of regarding the elite as just the upper stratum of society, a power elite defined relationally – and with an empirical sensibility to the historical struggles leading to the particular composition of the elite – can be seen as the very centre of society.

A relationally defined elite differs markedly from the image of an elite atop a societal pyramid split into the masses, a supporting class and a ruling class ,as used by Mosca (1939) or Giddens (1972) (see Figure 2.1). The image of a pyramid somehow conveys that the individuals in the recruitment stratum or in the administrative stratum have something in common. Although they both strata have lower volumes of capital, a multidimensional and relational view instead depicts individual strategies as tied to the part of the power elite to which they are attached. This may be by virtue of sharing capital composition with agents holding a particular position in the field of power or by belonging to the same institutional order.

FIGURE 2.1: ELITE, SECONDARY STRUCTURE AND NON-ELITE



Source: Giddens (1972:360)

When Mills (1956:11) described the power elite, he invoked the image of circles:

> The people of the higher circles may also be conceived as members of the top social stratum, as a set of groups whose members know one another, see one another socially and at business, and so, in making decisions, take one another into account.

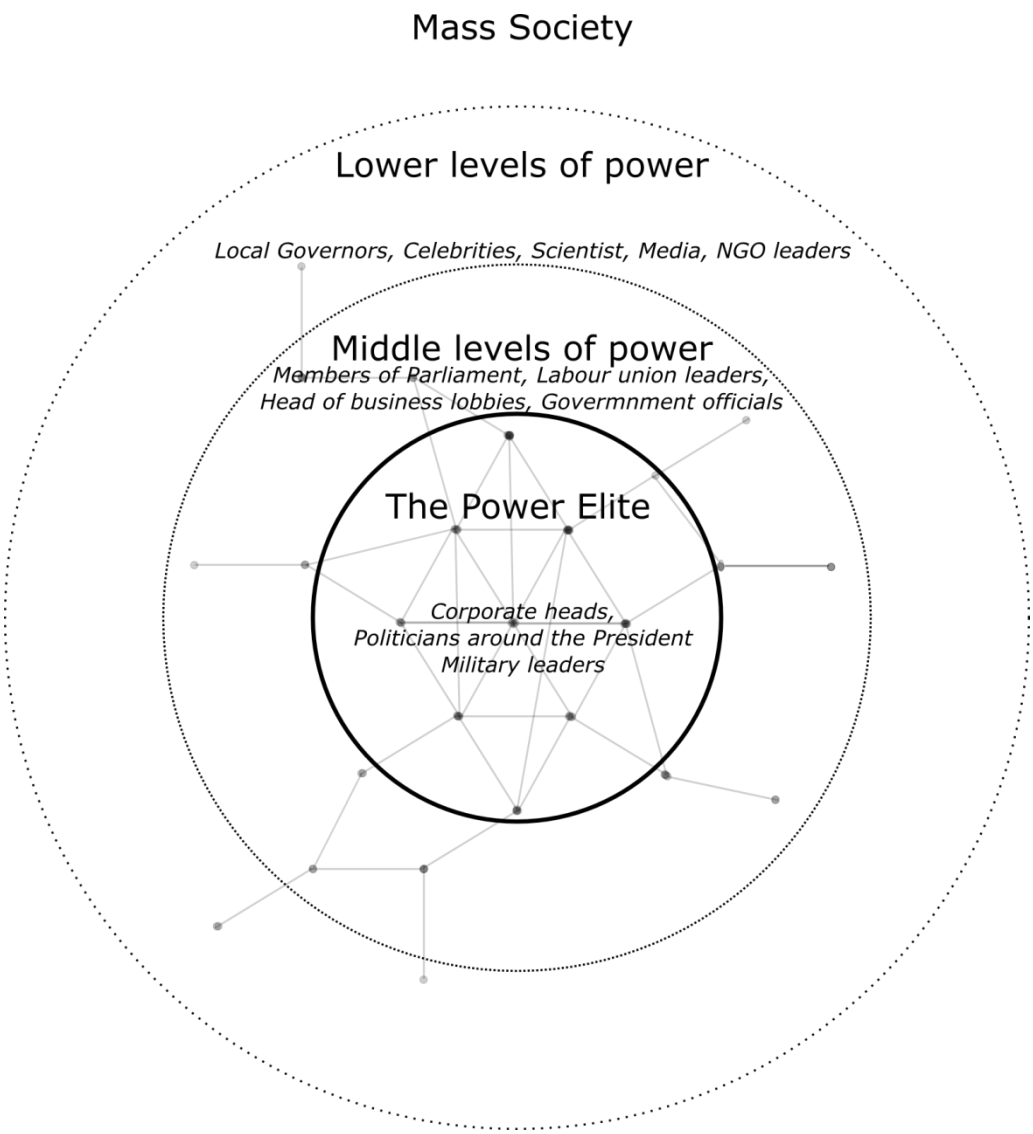
This relational understanding of the elite is illustrated in Figure 2.2. Here, the power elite can be seen as the central circle in a succession of concentric circles leading individuals at the top of different institutional orders, closer or further from the overlapping cliques of the power elite.

This means that the individuals at the middle levels of power are not close to one another socially, nor do they necessarily share any attributes other than similar proximity to the centre of the power network. It is not about moving up through the same ladders in a recruitment stratum, but about working one's way in. However, the closer an individual comes to the centre, the more the majority conform to the culture of the elite, as argued in chapter 1. In Article VI we argue how the coreness score of an individual in the power network can be understood as an indicator of proximity to the overlapping circles of the key institutional orders, thus dividing the more than 7,000 individuals in the network into four levels of power in an attempt to solve the vertical extension of the elite. However, the boundaries of these concentric circles are not set in stone. Their definition is a question of intellectual craftsmanship. As Mills (1956:18) described:

> The problem defining the power elite concerns the level at which we wish to draw the line. By lowering the line, we could define the elite out of existence; by raising it, we

> could make the elite a very small circle indeed. In a preliminary and minimum way, we draw the line crudely… By the power elite, we refer to those political, economic and military circles which as an intricate set of overlapping cliques share decisions having at least national consequences. In so far as national events are decided, the power elite are those who decide them.

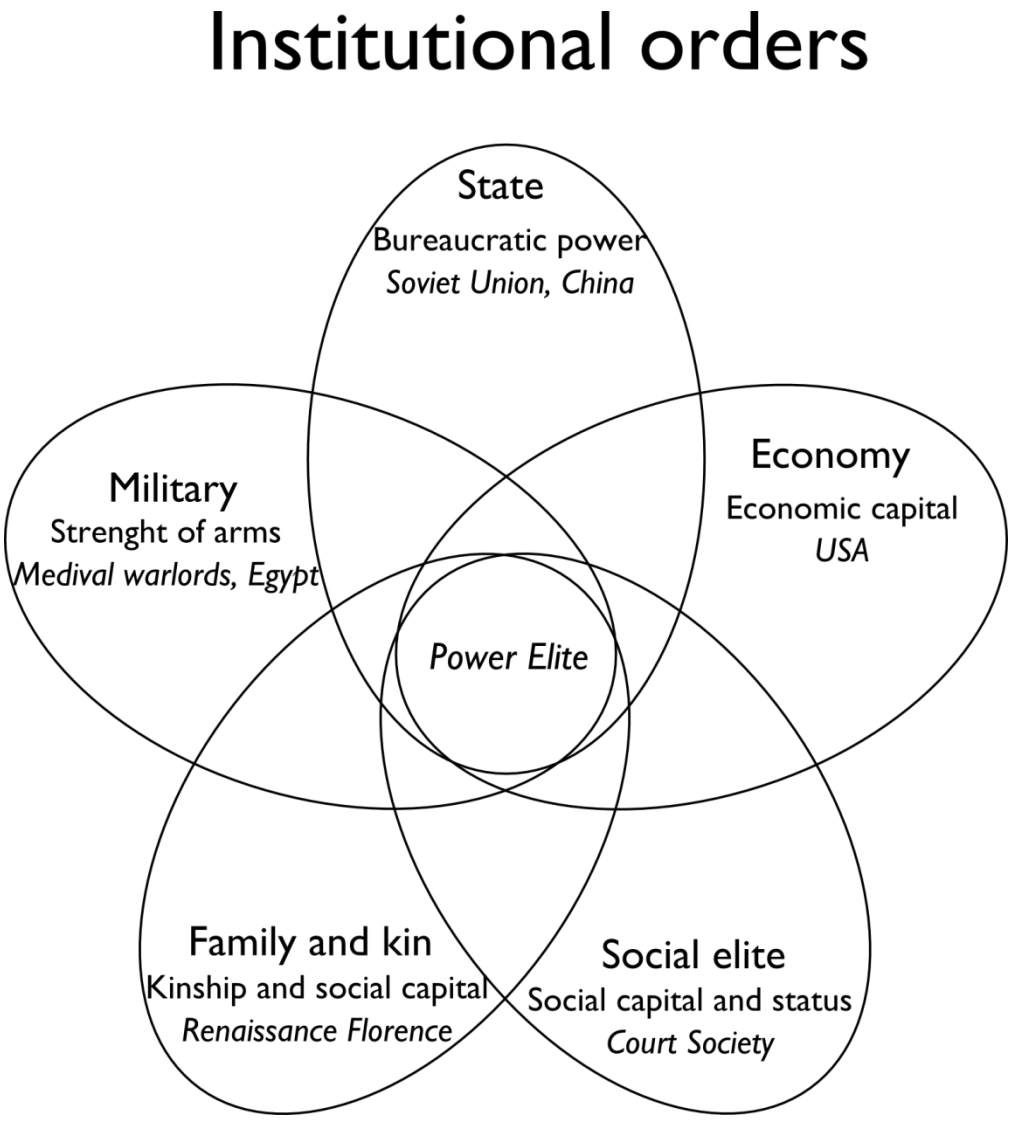
FIGURE 2.2: THE POWER ELITE, LEVELS OF POWER AND MASS SOCIETY, FOLLOWING MILLS (1956)



To solve the lateral or horizontal extension of the elite is to identify which groups or sub-elites are then part of the network core. In Bourdieusian terms we may see this as the fields able to convert capital in the field of power (cf. Bourdieu 1996a). The organisations able to have their leaders become the 'broad-gauge' men (Mills 1956:282) who enter these higher circles through historically established mutual interdependence compose the power elite. Figure 2.3 presents the overlap of some potentially central

institutional orders. Note that it is very possible that one order dominates more than others and that this image of five equally important orders is highly unlikely. In the Danish case, the position of the military is probably far less important than in Egypt (Hinnebusch 1981; Nassif 2013), where the military, after the short Arab spring, now dominates not only with armed forces, but also with control of key corporations. Other key orders could be political parties, as in China or the former Soviet Union; religious orders, as in theocracies like Iran or the Papal States; or scientific or bureaucratic orders in technocracies, perhaps best described in the sociology of professions. If Mills' (1956) imagery is analysed for the dominant forms of capital used by Bourdieu in his analysis of the field of power, we are able to understand the relative strength of institutional orders towards one another (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, and Thine 2011).

FIGURE 2.3: THE OVERLAPPING CIRCLES OF INSTITUTIONAL ORDERS CONSTITUTIONG A POWER ELITE



Model of institutional orders potentially overlapping in a power elite. Note that the integration of orders is a matter of empirical investigation of historical processes. Italics describe cases where the different institutional orders have had dominance over other orders.

As suggested in Article VII, the principal occupation of the individuals in the central circle – the core of the elite network – can be used to get a grasp on which institutional orders dominate a given society while also determing the size of the this group. I will now discuss the comparative potential further.

Comparative studies of elites across borders

The relational definition and identification of the elite outlined above and in Article VI has a distinct advantage. It makes it possible to let both the size and the composition of the elite become an empirical question, rather than be based on assumptions grounded in the more or less elaborate theory of the researcher. This offers a comparative approach that is at the same time sensible to national differences in power elite size and composition and transparent enough to be reproduced by scholars across borders. Even the reflexive solution to identifying fields presented by Bourdieu suffers from a lack a reproducibility across borders and historical epochs. The problem of identification is well-known in elite research, according to John Scott (1991b:58):

> Studies of elites … have often been criticized for their identification of 'top' positions in institutional hierarchies, especially when the researcher offers no real justification for the cut-off threshold used to distinguish the 'top' from other positions in the institutional hierarchy

As mentioned, there arise two related problems of identifying elites – and power elites in particular: the size and composition of the group. A perplexing assumption about the size of a national elite seems to be used in determining its overall size. Usually, the bigger the country, the bigger the political elite. As Burton and Higley (2001:189, references from original) noted in their review:

> political elites in large and institutionally complex Western countries such as the USA number roughly 7500 individuals in the USA (Dye 1983), around 5000 in middle-sized countries like Australia (Higley, Deacon, and Smart 1979), France (Dogan 1994) and the former West Germany (Hoffmann-Lange 1993). Finally in small nations states like Sweden, Norway and Denmark between 1000 and 2000 persons are included (Higley, Field, and Grøholt 1976; Pedersen 1976).

Although these positional approaches often claim to look at institutional power rather than relative strength of the elite member or his or her reputation and membership of an exclusive group, several other assumptions that are actually in line with the relational approach just outlined seem to be at play.

The size of the elite does not correspond to the size of the country in a straightforward way. Although more individuals are included in larger societies, the relation between size and population and the perceived size of the elite is not linear. Although the American political elite is considered to be roughly five times larger than, for example, the Danish, there are fifty Americans for each Dane. This hints that the exclusiveness of being at the very top has significance. If the elite are seen as a network core or as those bestowed with the most symbolic capital as participants of exclusive gatherings, the limit to the size of the group can be understood simply as a restriction based on the sociological form, in the sense of Simmel (1950). There is, quite simply, some physical restriction to the size of power elite networks, since the schedule of powerful agents restricts the number of people they can interact with and create network ties to. Most, if not all networks these agents interact in, do have importance for their ability to reaffirm and consolidate their social capital. Only so many network clubs can hold up to the standard of Groucho Marx, quoted at the top of this chapter.

Furthermore, interaction rituals may, according to Randall Collins (2004:58), yield certain individuals as sacred objects for a crowd. The number of persons able to obtain this symbolical capital, or emotional energy in Collins' terminology, is quite simply limited. As a result of this scarcity of personal connections, membership in prestigious networks with connections to powerful people becomes a status resource (Goffman 1951:299). The maximum number of strong relations a person can maintain is subject to some controversy. British anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist, Robin Dunbar (Dunbar and Spoors 1995; Hill and Dunbar 2003), set the limit at approximately 150 relations and 15 intimate relations, whereas anthropologist Christopher McCarty and his colleagues (2001) estimated approximately 280 weak relations. The exact number – and the wider scientific merits of this approach – is irrelevant here, but if constraints on social and cognitive skills limit the size of a cohesive group, they also place constraints on the size of the power elite.

But if this holds true, why are elites not roughly the same size across nations? One answer could be that holders of the larger volumes of capital, particularly economic and organisational, may enhance elite size. Sheerly by their resources, more corporations or organisations may have stakes in the social division of power. These larger resources may support more actors to create or engage in, for example, pressure groups, think tanks or industrial organisation. In Collins' terms, they may simply be able to create more rituals that consecrate potential elite members. Furthermore, a larger total volume of resources may open up for the creation of more elite educational institutions, which allow for networks to be forged earlier in elite careers and to be more diverse and stronger. A larger total sum of resources

also makes exclusion strategies based on the 'conspicuous consumption' famously described by Thorstein Veblen (2007) available for a larger number of elite individuals.

The different elite sizes appear to be a result of the preconceptions of the researchers. While there may be good reasons for these preconceptions, as mentioned above, they lack empirical grounding. This is provided in Article VI. Perhaps more importantly, this methodology also makes it possible to identify the composition of the power elite. A truly comparative study of elites should not assume the relative strength of different elites or institutional orders beforehand (cf. Anckar 2007). Such assumptions do not take into account how elite configurations also reflect the social, economic, cultural and political structures (Dogan 2003a:3). The power elite and their institutions can be seen as embedded within nation-states, where interactions between micro and macro levels produce and reproduce institutional complexes, as discussed within the framework of the societal approach (Maurice et al. 1980; Granovetter 1985). As such, the analytical strategies used in Articles VI and VII are relevant not only when identifying elites, but for all types of descriptive classification.

The job of theory is thus to provide criteria for the type of relations to be used to generate the specific group in a particular social setting. One example of this is the latent class analysis performed on indicators of forms of capital in Britain (Savage et al. 2013). In that study, the researchers simply prescribed the important forms of capital and let the relationship between individuals determine the number and composition of classes. Another example could be Alderson and Beckfield's (2004) analysis of the dominant metropolis in the world city system. By analysing the network created by *Fortune 500* corporations, Alderson and Beckfield found that dominant metropolises were often at the reviewing end of the network, with local branches of large corporations. This makes it possible to identify a hierarchy of power in the world city system in line with qualitative research of the field (Alderson and Beckfield 2004:832). Both analyses can be easily reproduced and would yield different results if the relations between compositions of capital in Britain or the attraction of world cities changed.

Similarly, the cluster of Danish CEOs identified in Article 1, the fields analysed in Articles I, II and IV, the inner circle found in Article III and the power elite described in Article VII are all sensitive to the concrete historical relationships. The analytical task is to specify which relations should serve as the foundation for classification.

Charting the elite

A relationally defined elite should be described thoroughly, rather than just by classification. The great advantage of both geometric data analysis and social network analysis is that graphical description lies at the very core of these methods (this point is discussed much more elaborately by Larsen, in press). Furthermore, our interest in identifying both the primary occupation (and thus affiliation to a particular institutional order) and other social similarities that enhance the cohesion and class consciousness of the elite can be used to further describe and interpret the networks identified.

The social characteristics of the elite can be used to understand the elite better in other ways as well. The under-representation of one gender – women – both within a particular elite (e.g. the economic elite), or in the power elite as a whole, tells us not only of the enduring patriarchy, but also the cultural conformity and the need for assimilation within that elite group (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 1998). Similarities in age and ethnicity not only tell us that society is still dominated by the middle-aged white men; they also show us the need to undertake a very specific career trajectory before being found worthy of inclusion in the higher circles. Education profiles show us not only which qualifications are held in high regard in the elite, but also the relative importance of the symbolic value of elite education.

The residential patterns of the elite also merit further description. In Article VII, we show how very local areas – like the gilded ghettos around the globe, most notably in London – become elite vortexes. An obvious path for researchers would be to combine sociometric and spatial proximities to analyse the homologies between social and physical space.

Another type of description to be added to the relational account of elites offered in this dissertation is, of course, more serious qualitative enquiry. The theoretical understanding of elites outlined here needs to be further grounded in qualitative methods describing, for example, how the intermingling of elites operates, as seen by Useem's (1984) turn from analysis network interlocks to qualitative interviewing. Qualitative data would also offer a unique possibility of a mixed methods approach, which is much lacking in the analysis presented here. Another perspective is also absent - the elite's own view of itself. Although this would be of great interest if analysed as accounts (cf. Scott and Lyman 1968), it is not as if the power elite have trouble getting their side of the story told. As C. Wright Mills (1956:4–5) noted:

> The truth about the nature and power of the elite is not some secret which men of affairs know but will not tell … No matter how great their actual power, they tend to be less acutely aware of it than the resistance of others to its use.

The aim of our descriptions and classifications in this dissertation is that they may be useful for scholars in describing more field-specific agents in Denmark or in comparing the outlook of elites in other settings within the relational framework outlined above. But most of all, it is hoped that the descriptions offered here will engage a broad public debate about the most influential people of Denmark.

Summary of the papers

The summaries of the papers co-authored with Anton Grau Larsen are identical to the summaries in his dissertation (Larsen in press). The same applied to the shorter summary of papers at the start of this dissertation.

I. A very economic elite - The case of the Danish CEOs

Published as Ellersgaard, Christoph Houman, Anton Grau Larsen, and Martin D. Munk. "A Very Economic Elite: The Case of the Danish Top CEOs." *Sociology* 47, no. 6 (2013): 1051–71.

Taking the 100 most important Danish CEOs as an empirical case, this article shows how the career paths of Danish managers are tied to the specific features of the Danish economy. However, this does not mean that the social backgrounds of the Danish CEOs are not similar to their German, French and British counterparts. Both now and historically, a very disproportionate number of the managers in industrialised countries have come from bourgeois families.

The educational backgrounds and career trajectories of Danish CEOs are compared to their counterparts in Germany, France and the UK, using the framework of Michael Hartmann (2007, 2010). Denmark is similar to Germany in that no elite universities can be identified, even though the Danish CEOs have a very specific educational profile. This can also be explained by the decline of the Danish elite university, the Technical University of Denmark. However, unlike in Germany, very high volumes of institutional cultural capital in the form of doctorates are not commonplace among Danish CEOs and university degrees do not appear to be the most essential requirement for entering top management.

As in the UK, CEOs can move to the top by accumulating organisational capital in the corporation. Furthermore, as shown by multiple correspondence analysis and cluster analysis, about a third of the top Danish CEOs follow a distinct path as salespeople, working in many enterprises and in sales or marketing before reaching top management.

Theoretically, this article attempts to show the pathway to becoming a part of the capitalist class through many years of adaptation within particular institutions and organisations. Although elite universities do not seem to play a central role in producing a certain habitus, as was the case in the Bourdieu's (1996a) analysis, individuals in the few professions allowed to enter management have developed a specific way of thinking. Furthermore, particularly for those not native to, or inheritors in

the field, the habitus of the future CEOs is shaped by many years in the corporate world. Whether they start from the position of expert or salespeople, all must work their way up the corporate ladder and become men of the firm. In their employment, their career trajectories place them close to the values of the corporation. Adding to this, the different reproduction strategies leading to the different career profiles of CEOs in the above-mentioned countries show the arbitrary nature of the skillsets needed to legitimise management, even in highly developed countries. The fact that only two of the 100 top CEOs are women underline the social closure of the management culture.

Methodologically, the article uses MCA and cluster analysis to identify the specific forms and combinations of capital important within the field of management in Denmark. Following the discussion in Chapter 2, we base the differences on theoretically specified relations – career path, education and family background – and let these relations determine the structure of the field. From the constructed field, we use cluster analysis to explore ideal types of CEO career profiles. The ideal types – inheritors, organisational personnel, experts and salespeople – are derived by following a theoretically informed, descriptive approach. The clusters, identified by analysing the reproduction strategies and career trajectories of the Danish managers, are interpreted in relation to the major European industrial societies. Here, the particularly Danish trajectory is that of the salespeople, which has no equivalent in either France or the UK.

II. Status and Integration in the Field of Power of Danish Chief Executives

Published and translated into English from Larsen, Anton Grau, and Christoph Houman Ellersgaard. "Status og Integration på Magtens Felt for Danske Topdirektører." *Praktiske Grunde. Nordisk Tidsskrift for Kultur- og Samfundsvidenskab* 2012, no. 2–3: 9–30.

The top 100 CEOs whose path to the top is explored in Article I, are in Article II explored with regard to their current position in the space of top CEOs. Using Bourdieu's notions of symbolic, social and economic capital, we identify the internal hierarchy of the top managers. The first main finding, however, is that, even among the top 100 CEOs, not everyone plays in the same field. Twenty-eight CEOs had neither participated in other prestigious networks nor been decorated by the Queen, and were thus excluded from key sources of social and symbolic capital. This shows how, even among a very select group such as the CEOs of the largest Danish corporations, it is not sufficient just to hold a commanding position to enter the prestigious networks.

The space of the top CEOs is explored through specific multiple correspondence analysis. However, the space is highly hierarchical, with one strong principle of opposition: the total volume of symbolic, social and economic capital. It seems that these forms of capital are accumulated through the Matthew effect, where possession of capital helps in the further accumulation of capital. The accumulation of these forms of capital does not tell only of internal prestige among top managers; it also tells who is included in the field of power. As for the network strategies of the top CEOs, a secondary opposition is found between owners and managers. Whereas managers principally engage in networks and achieve prestige tied to the economic field, owners are more likely to engage with other subfields in the field of power, having positions in academic institutions, on government committees or attracting royal decorations. This shows the freedom enjoyed by owners in not needing to legitimise their position in management to the rest of the economic field, thus being able to convert their economic capital in the field of power.

The position of a top manager cannot be understood from personal attributes alone. A central feature of the position of the CEO is the economic strength of his corporation. Even more important are the number of employees and the symbolic status of the firm, as seen in the number of books with the corporation as subject. This shows the close relationship between the individual and the organisation or institution he or she leads when entering the social sphere of the power elite. However, the social background and education of the CEO also matters, as shown in the typical educational profiles of the inheritors and the managers who feature in the core elite network identified in Article VII.

Of the CEOs studied in Article I, 46 were also identified as members of the power elite in data five years later, in Article VI. Of these, 42 appear among the 72 active CEOs in this analysis (for more on the relationship between the two analysis, see Larsen in press) As this article was written before the work for Articles III, V, VI and VII, the concluding remarks lay out the reflections leading to the research design of these articles by speculating on the size of a potential power elite in Denmark.

III. The Inner circle revisited – the case of an egalitarian society

Co-authored with Anton Grau Larsen

Submitted to *Social Forces*

Michael Useem's notion of the *Inner Circle* (1984) proposed a key solution to understanding how the class-wide rationality of the capitalist class functions. By using the networks created in the interlocks of top corporate boards, Useem argued how the dominant faction of the economic elite in fact constitutes

a social group. With this notion as a point of departure, in Article III we explore whether or not a similar group can be identified in a very different setting, that of egalitarian, corporatist Denmark.

Methodologically, the article also offers a new methodology for identifying the inner circle, one that is not solely based on numbers of board memberships. By using the proximity measure developed for identifying social circles by Alba and Kadushin (1976) we identified the inner circle of the Danish corporate network, which is in line with Useem's theoretical and qualitative observations. An exclusive group of 171 inner-circle members was found among the 6,154 executives and board members from the 1,037 largest Danish corporations.

The presence of this group and the heavy accumulation of network centrality in the corporate network does indeed suggest the existence of an inner circle in Danish business. But central positions in the corporate sector do not come at the expense of inclusion in the networks of other sectors (described thoroughly in Article V). On the contrary, inner-circle members are much more likely to participate in all other sorts of powerful networks, in particular the most prominent of these networks, than any other group in the corporate network. The inner circle is disproportionately active in the boards within business associations, the state councils and committees, the scientific and academic institutions, and the boards of cultural or media institutions. These boards each constitutes the most important positions in other subfields within the field of power. Furthermore, social clubs and symbolic institutions such as foundations and royal balls constitute key networks integrating the entire elite. The inner circle thus also constitutes the politically active faction of the capitalist class. Thus the inclusion criteria for the inner circle in some ways parallel the inclusion criteria for the field of power.

Much like the top managers described in Articles I and II and the power elite described in Article VII, the members of the inner circle are a very select social group, of whom more than three out of 10 have a known social background and grew up in the managerial class. When it comes to education, as for the power elite as a whole and the top managers in particular, the same select few programmes in business administration, economy and engineering dominate. Although women are over four times more likely to be included in the inner circle than in top management, they remain a tiny minority of only 8 per cent. We argue that the cohesion and class consciousness of the inner circle are further enhanced by the similarities in social origin, educational position and occupational trajectory.

Of the inner-circle members, 30 were also among the 100 CEOs analysed using data from five years earlier in Articles I and II. Of these, only five were not among the 72 CEOs analysed as active individuals in the field of top CEOs in Article II. Ninety-two of the inner-circle members were also

part of the power elite found in Article VI; therefore, 106 of the power elite members from the corporate sector were not part of the inner circle. This reveals one of the weaknesses of this study: that it uses only the ties made on corporate boards, ignoring the multitude of other affiliations that tie the corporate elite internally as a self-conscious class. This means that the identification of the inner circle can be somewhat inaccurate. However, because we explore the activities of the inner circle in these other networks, the use of position to identify ties in these networks would risk becoming a mere tautology.

IV. The elite in the field of power – cohesion and oppositions within the elite

Published as and translated from Ellersgaard, Christoph Houman. "Elite og Magtfelt - Om Sammenhold og Modsætninger Indenfor Eliten." In Socialt Rum - Symbolsk Magt, edited by Christian Sandbjerg Hansen, 99–142. København: Forlaget Hexis, 2014.

In this paper I attempt to clarify the relations between the Bourdieusian framework of the field of power and elite theory, in particular Mills' (1956) notion of the power elite, and to provide empirical evidence for the structure of the field of power in Denmark. Following the methodological strategy used in studies of Norway and France, it is possible to clarify how the Danish field of power is structured along the same overall principles as the French and Norwegian fields of power (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, et al. 2011; Hjellbrekke et al. 2007). The paper also serves as a general introduction to Bourdieu's work on elite, as it is published in a chapter in a book on Bourdieusian class theory (C. S. Hansen 2014). In this way, both methods and theory are introduced thoroughly for the unfamiliar reader.

The structure of the field of power in Denmark has two strong dimensions: primarily as an opposition between economic and cultural capital, or inclusion in the economic order; and secondly, as an opposition between newcomers to the elite and the established elite. The weaker third and fourth dimensions are tied to internal oppositions among the established elite between those with juridical capital and those with cultural and scientific capital. The positions of various sub-elites are identified, their overall positions in the field of power following the relative distribution of economic versus cultural capital, as was also the empirical case of Bourdieu's (1996a) model for understanding the French field of power. Politicians and women follow strategies similar to those of the newcomers furthest from the established elite.

Methodologically, the paper not only constructs the field of power from Bourdieusian methodology, but is also among the first papers to apply the Class Specific Analysis (see Chiche and Le Roux 2011; Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2014; Roose In press; Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:64–7). The positions of the political elite in the field of power are explored. These are of particular interest as they are based on a democratic mandate. Like the second overall opposition in the field of power, the position of politicians relative to other politicians in the field of power as a whole is tied primarily to inherited capital. However, among the politicians, this takes a class-specific form, being tied to having parents who are not only in the elite, but also work in the political field themselves. Furthermore, the oppositions between economic and cultural capital, and between cultural capital and juridical–state-based capital, are transformed into oppositions between affiliation with the private and the public sector in the political elite. Not only do the overall fields of power have quite similar structures in Denmark and Norway, but the internal divisions in the political elite are also alike, when compared to the results of Hjellbrekke and Korsnes (2014), not yet published at time of writing this chapter.

In the discussion, the article show how members of prominent networks are generally placed near the economic and established side of the field of power. The cultural elite in particular appear to be isolated. The same logic of inclusion in the core of the Danish power network is also used in the identification of the power elite in Articles VI and VII.

V. The Danish elite network

Co-authored with Anton Grau Larsen

Submitted to *Connections*

This article serves a dual purpose. First, it gives an in-depth description of the data used in article III, VI and VII. Second, submitting the article to the journal *Connections* allows us to share the data with scholars around the world. The dataset have the specific focus, explored in Articles VI and VII, of identifying the core of the elite network in Denmark. All potentially powerful or elite integrating networks were collected by applying an inclusion principle. However, as argued, all of these networks have also had to provide complete lists of attendance and take the form of physical gatherings, thus being tied to the integrative effects of interaction rituals discussed earlier. The sources and procedures of gathering such extensive data are discussed.

This article accounts for how we have identified and registered all potentially powerful Danish affiliations: the largest Danish corporations, the most important state institutions, and organisations

recognised politically by the state and other potentially powerful or integrative networks such as social clubs or royal events. Furthermore, we present the procedure for enhancing the reliability of the data through checking for overlapping or embedded affiliations, and the name-matching procedure.

As shown in Article III on the inner circle of the Danish corporate network, where an inner circle (Useem 1984) in the network of corporate interlocks is identified through the use of the proximity measure defined by Alba an Kadushin (1976), it is also possible to analyse smaller sub-networks within the Danish elite network or the role played by different organisations within the elite network. Indeed, the data have already been used by our students in various analyses at courses held at the Department of Sociology, University of Copenhagen. Sharing the data and the R software codes used to perform our analysis and weighting procedures, constitute an important step in generating democratic access to the study of the elite. Furthermore, the reproducibility of the analysis is thus greatly enhanced by this technical article.

VI. The methodology of identifying power elites

Co-authored with Anton Grau Larsen

To be submitted

The central aim of this paper is to provide a methodology to identify power elites. Based a notion of the elite as central individuals across power networks, we provide a way to identify the core group of the elite networks based on empirically observed affiliations, rather than by defining the elite a priori. The traditional ways of identifying elites through the positional, reputational, decisional and related methods all rely on ad-hoc decisions based on the researcher's assumptions. These ad-hoc decisions determine the size and composition of the elite, which, as shown in Article VII, are actually key features of the power elite.

This article proposes and tests a three-step procedure for identifying the elite. The first step is to determine the composition of the elite empirically, by constructing a large database (see Article V), using an inclusion principle. Using this principle, all potentially powerful or socially integrative elite networks were taken into account.

The second step suggests using two types of sociometric weights to account for the huge variations in the character of the included affiliations, from the intimate decision-making atmosphere of the corporate boardroom to the splendour of the royal ball. The first and most important weight used a baseline gathering size of 14, below which gatherings are regarded as equally integrative. From this

point, the integrative effect of affiliations gradually drops due to the weight. As the number from which the integrative effect drops is set to a weight constant, the effect of altering the constant is tested, showing that the size of the core group, logically, is enlarged as the effect of the weight diminishes, but that the core of the network continues to be part of the core. A second weight, reducing the effect of sharing multiple common affiliations, was applied as well to reduce the effect of some types of organisations having densely interlocked multiple governing bodies.

In the third step, the core group of the elite is identified using k-core decomposition developed by Seidman (1983), by reinterpreting the extension made by Doreian and Woodard (1994). Looking not only at the direct contacts of elite members, but also at their extended network, individuals within a certain reach are deemed to be connected. A power elite core of 423 individuals was identified, each of whom was connected to at least 199 of the other core members. There was no subgroup with a higher minimum number of internal connections in the network. Each individual was given a coreness score that is the level at which it is peeled from the core. This number of minimum degrees makes it possible to identify different levels of power elite integration. The main advantage of using k-cores is that it does not take into account all the included affiliations who turn out to be of lesser importance. The size and composition of the elite network are thus practically independent from the number of redundant networks included, allowing this to bypass many of the ad-hoc decisions of the four traditional methods of identifying elites.

The approach was tested in several ways. Results were compared to a population selected through the positional method, showing that many, but not all, key leaders are included, especially those from organisations, academia, business, politics and state administration, while the wealthiest, the clergy and the media are often excluded. The consequences of not including data from each data source were also explored. The consequences of excluding both central and peripheral networks were then tested. The method is very resilient to losing affiliations from the periphery, but is fairly vulnerable to losing central affiliations that connect many within core. Finally, the consequences for the size of the power elite were tested by altering the affiliation size at which the weight takes effect or by altering the reach needed to be included in the core, showing how enlarging these enlarges the core size, thus underlining the importance of sound theoretical arguments determining these constants. However, if the arguments are valid, the size and composition of the elite can shed light on central aspects of society.

VII. The power elite in the welfare state – key institutional orders of the power networks in Denmark

Co-authored with Anton Grau Larsen

To be submitted

By reinterpreting C. Wright Mills' notion of the power elite (1956), the key representatives of each societal sector are identified within the core of the power network in Denmark. The power elite are characterised by three points: by simultaneously holding top positions in their respective institutional hierarchies; by having power resources valued by agents from other institutional hierarchies; and by forming a cohesive group tied by multiple shared affiliations. We argue that the composition and size of this group reflects the relative importance of different institutional orders and the concentration of power within the limits of the nation-state.

Using the methodological strategies developed in Article VI, we identified a core of 423 individuals. This core enjoys all the accumulative advantages associated with having large quantities of social capital and status. This means that selection to the potentially powerful networks is skewed heavily towards those elite who are already-established, suggesting that egalitarianism is not a criteria when selecting decision-makers, even in a society heralded as having one of the best practices of state-building. This is also seen by the fact that members of the power elite – and of the most central boards in each sector – are invited to the central boards in networks of other sectors. This logic of inclusion in the network was explored, showing how the core is composed of individuals who have affiliations in many different sectors, typically the most prestigious networks in these sectors. This shows the importance of accumulating convertible capital and explains why media celebrities and artists are not part of the power elite in Denmark.

Even though they are tightly connected, this elite group in the twenty-first century Scandinavian welfare state includes leaders from the key institutional orders: business, state and politics, and unions, whereas the academic world, in particular economists, are among the few outsiders. Other sectors that could be perceived as being part of the establishment, such as law, culture, media and the clergy, all have marginal positions at best. More than half (221 of 423) of this elite have a primary position in either the corporate sector or business associations, underlining the strength of big business. The individuals in the core with ties to the corporate sector are to a large extent the same individuals identified as the most prestigious inside the economic field in Article II and in the inner circle of the corporate network in Article III.

While spanning very different organisation, the power elite are integrated by factors other than their shared ties. The 423 have a homogeneous social profile based on, for example, gender, class background, education and residential patterns. For instance, less than 20% are women. The more elite individuals (15% –12%) are among the 0.2% of Danes who have parents mentioned in *Who's Who*, unlike the 81% coming from the working classes. Almost half have attended just eight university programs (e.g. economy, law or political science) and the elite cluster in particular affluent areas around northern Copenhagen. This strengthens the cohesion and class consciousness of this elite minority.

We argue that the 423 core members of the power elite are a committee for managing the affairs of the power elite as whole. We discuss how the limits of influence of a national power elite such as the Danish may be narrowing because of the rise of transnational capital and the European Union, but the structure of the power elite still reveals insights into which institutions have had the historical strength to become part of the inner circles of power.

Conclusion: Elites in the workfare state

We have been victorious to hell – in a good way
Thomas Nielsen
Chairman of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, 1982

The composition of the elites explored in this dissertation shows which institutional orders are integrated in what C. Wright Mills (1956) calls the power elite and become part of what Pierre Bourdieu (1996a:263) calls 'the organic solidarity of a genuine division of the labor of domination'. It is exactly the individuals leading these organisations or dominating these fields who are found at the core of the elite network. I have argued in chapters 1 and 2 that elites can be seen as a group accumulating resources by holding dominant positions, a conception that extends the notion of the ruling class, and that these elites are best identified with a relational methodology. Using these concepts of the power elite we investigated, first, the economic elite located in the executive offices and boardrooms of the largest Danish corporations; and second, the overlapping circles of the powerful groups composing the power elite. The identification of the power elite rests to a large extent upon our reflections and the findings of our study of the economic elite.

The first three articles explores the economic elite. Article I and II describe how the top Danish 100 CEOs are closely tied to the economic field through their reproduction strategies as inheritors, people of the firm, experts or salespeople, and that even within this exclusive group not all accumulate the social and symbolic capital sufficient to become key players in the power elite. Although we find internal differences between owners and managers and between distinct career paths, the corporate elite constitute a rather homogeneous entity with few clear divides. Article III shows how this cohesion can be explained using the inner-circle framework of Michael Useem (1984). By using ties made in corporate boards, we identified a small community of 171 businessmen at the heart of the Danish corporate elite. This inner circle also constitutes the politically active part of Danish business.

The last four articles lays the foundation of identifying the power elite. Through a multiple correspondence analysis of data of 1,527 leaders from the Danish Democracy and Power Study in Article IV, the economic elite of 1999 are shown to occupy the dominant position in the field of power in Denmark. The dominant position of business is also seen in Article VII, which shows that big business (primarily) occupies more than half of the 423 positions in the core of the Danish power network. By using a unique dataset of 62,841 positions in 5,332 affiliations held by 37,750 individuals,

described in Article V, we identified the core of the Danish power network with a new methodological strategy presented and tested in Article VI. The sectors present in this core, dominated by big business and their organisations, but with the state and union completing the troika – supplemented by academics often tied to economy or technical sciences, and farmers' originations – constitute the key institutional orders that must take one another into account when determining the future strategy of Danish society. Furthermore this elites constitutes a social group based on shared social characteristics – such as very exclusive social background, male gender and particular educations – as well.

These conclusions are of course based on interpretations of the descriptions and classifications offered in the articles. I will now briefly discuss the principal strengths and weaknesses of our argument, then turn to some of the many questions this work raises for further research, before situating our findings in the larger perspective of neoliberal workfare states.

Strengths and weaknesses

The interpretation of our findings rests on a number of theoretical assumptions about the relational nature of power and the strength of networks or indicators of forms of capital to actually identify the relevant individuals and groups potentially exercising power. However, it is also possible to interpret our results as more simple empirical findings that would still be relevant even if other scholars disagreed with our conclusions.

First, the different clusters of career trajectories found in Article I show which qualifications are central to reaching top management. The differences between Denmark, Germany, the UK and France show how these requirements are not natural but depend on the specific state of the economy in the particular countries. The clear division in the number and type of official tokens of status granted to top CEOs shows how recognition from the state and other institutions varies even among top firms and managers.

Second, both among the inner circle and in the entire power network, central positions in one sector appear to strengthen the possibility of holding a position in central affiliations in other sectors as well. Overall, network centrality appears to be heavily concentrated among 171 inner-circle members within the corporate network and among the 423 in the core of the Danish power network as a whole. No matter how one interprets the presence of representatives from various sectors in the power network, the compositions tells us something about who are likely to meet, and who is likely to be invited into the division of power.

Third, no matter what implications are derived from the very selective social background, highly male-dominated, distinct residential patterns and select few educational profiles of the elite populations identified, it is impossible to deny that these form extremely exclusive social groups, not just in terms of concentration of power, but also social origin and life trajectory. Even without the theoretical framework we use to discuss the implications, these findings are relevant for scholars interested in elites in the contemporary egalitarian welfare states.

The cohesive power elite could be interpreted within other frameworks. For example, the concentration of central positions in the hands of a very small group could, from a functionalist perspective, be seen simply as a result of the 'natural' effect of the need for representatives and expert in the governance of advanced and highly differentiated societies. Thus the social and institutional interlock in the core of the elite network could be seen as a positive and efficient organisation of the elite that lets them make well-balanced decisions quickly. Proponents of strategic elites (cf. Keller 1968) would not place emphasis on social exclusiveness, but see this as a functional result of securing the most efficient elites. Furthermore, as Robert Dahl (1958:465) argued, an elite group influencing one scope cannot be assumed to extend this influence to other scopes. However, as shown in Article VII, members of the power elite are more likely to take part in the most prominent networks within all sectors of Danish society. The interlocks of the core of the Danish elite network do not match a pluralist vision of checks and balances proposed in the theory of 'veto groups' (cf. Kornhauser 1961).

In the tradition of democratic elitism, the 'overlap and interlock' between sector-specific networks is understood 'to create inner or central circles circles through which sector elites are tied together and obtain access to key political decision-makers' (Best and Higley 2009:331), while also taming politics from violence. Best and Higley expressed a very different normative ideal of democracy than Mills (1959:188), who claimed that 'In essence, democracy implies that those vitally affected by any decision men make have an effective voice in that decision'. However, in the tradition of democratic elitism, the presence of union members and farmers in the elite simply implies that the interests of these groups are well cared for. On the other hand, scholars such as Michels (1915), Mills (1948) or Bourdieu (1991) have pointer to the problems of representing the constituencies while also remaining respectable in the elite. This discussion notwithstanding, the composition of the elite may inform both proponents of strategic elites and pluralists who are sitting at the tables, if not making the decisions.

Others might argue, in the tradition of Poulantzas' (1969) critique of Miliband, that the intermingling of these elites is just a description of their social life, showing simply that people with prestige or power enjoy one another's company. The network centrality or membership of prominent network, we ascribe

as symbolic status and thus inclusion into the field of power for some CEOs, could thus be seen as just making these individuals part of a social elite. That, whereas this elite is exclusive and prestigious, it is not the forum of real decision-making, only intermingling. However, it is important to bear in mind that the indicators of symbolic capital and the majority of the networks in the database are not just social clubs, but boards of corporations, foundations, state institutions, and organisations such as unions, business associations and other interest groups. These forums make decisions and provide counsel every time they meet. This does not necessarily make the core of the network the most influential group, but it puts this group in a unique position because of its vastly disproportionate representation at these decision-making forums. They have a unique possibility for achieving cohesion and class consciousness and to coordinate action, or at least know one another well enough to take each other into account.

As this dissertation defines both economic elites and the power elite in relational terms, the actual possession of power resources is somewhat neglected. Through multiple correspondence analysis and social network analysis we develop indicators of dominant positions in the power structure, but symbolic capital and network centrality are only indicators and as such are logically imperfect. Two types of dominant positions may be somewhat underestimated by the use of network centrality as indicators: (1) positions tied to 'hard' power based on material possessions or formal 'authority'; and (2) positions based on 'soft' discursive power.

First, as discussed in chapter two, hard power is typified by the material possessions of oligarchs, but it may also be tied to formal positions of authority, such as CEO, Prime Minister or Supreme Court President. Holder of these positions may use their formal authority to impose their will on others. To determine whether or not this is actually the case, one would need to follow decision-making in depth, combined with a clear knowledge of the interest of these individuals. As the public or scientific access to these forums of decisions is diminishing, at least in Denmark, this is not a viable path to identifying the strength of different forms of power. Nonetheless, our results should be interpreted in light of the lack of data on the actual workings of the power networks. As well, the data for material possessions of land or corporations are often blurred by hedge funds, foundation ownership or other constructions designed to conceal the actual ownership of property. On the other hand, as shown in Article VI, a substantive proportion of managers, political and bureaucratic leaders are included in the core of the elite network, whereas the nouveau riches and some politicians have less central positions than their material possessions and formal authority respectively would merit. However, this could also be

explained by the inertia of the field of power. For newcomers to the elite, for example the politicians, converting capital takes time (see Article VI).

Second, another group that has been virtually excluded from the group identified as 'the core of the core' (cf. Denord, Hjellbrekke, et al. 2011) in the elite are those usually seen as shaping societal discourse. Celebrities, authors and media darlings, not to mention reality stars and other subjects of the gossip columns, are all excluded from 'good' society. The few prominent individuals from media and culture are almost all leaders of large institutions or corporations. Access to elite networks appears not to work on fame alone. Likewise, the academics – the only group actually to include individuals rather than leading organisations – are more likely to be counsellors on economics or technical researchers than high-profile public intellectuals. Although celebrities and the media have the ability to set the agenda, it should be noted that this form of influence is very different to that of an elite based on national networks. Quite simply, the potential ability of celebrities or intellectuals to challenge the agenda or be used in discursive struggles cannot be understood in term of elites as social groups tied to time and space.

First of all, the globalisation of culture (cf. Sklair 2001) means that agenda-setters need not have any relationship to Danish society. For instance, the most important challenger of a sexual moral preaching women's passivity is probably not any Danish discourse-setter but the host of primarily American female singers such as Beyoncé. Although Danish celebrities of course stand a better chance to set the agenda within Denmark, there is no way to distinguish their influence on Danish society from that of their American or British counterparts.

Secondly, the producers of important pieces of text or art used in the Danish discourse not only are probably not Danish, they are not necessarily alive. The works of Karl Marx are probably more important to popular Danish discourse than any living Danish social scientist or philosopher, and high school students read Albert Camus alongside both contemporary and long-deceased Danish authors. Analysing deceased or foreign artists as part of the Danish elite would make this group very difficult for any member of the public to comprehend. Whereas creators and mediators of discourse are undoubtedly influential, their power base is very different to that of the elite as a social group and their organisation and cohesiveness pales in comparison with that of the 423 found in the core of the Danish elite network. However, the absence of these groups underlines that the influence of the identified power elite certainly has its limits.

The influence of global celebrities, and discourses and paradigms carried by professions such as neoliberal economists, underlines that the elite groups identified in this dissertation are in no way omnipotent. The external pressure from investors in the current contraction between capitalism and democracy (cf. Offe 1984; Streeck 2011), other forms of transnational capitalist class formations discussed in chapter 1, or global events, most notably the financial crisis, also shapes the available options of the power elite. An assessment of the degrees of freedom of a national power elite – perceived and actual –requires inquiry through points of departure other than description based on quantitative data of networks or fields. To investigate the actual *practice* of power, what the ruling class *does* when it rules, is another focus and new types of data are necessary. The analysis presented here obviously lacks analytical foundation of what Göran Therborn (1978:133) calls 'the power to do'. However, in order to find out what the power elite does with its power, one must first identify it. After this first step, 'the power to do' must be explored through a more qualitative or case-based enquiry, such as by using the strategic-relational approach (cf. Jessop 2008) to determine *cui bono*, who benefits, in the spirit of Harold Lasswell (1950). But any analysis of the winners and losers in contemporary struggles, both within the elites and between elites and masses, requires a sound classification of the elite, for which we hope to have laid the foundation in this dissertation, at least for the Danish case.

A perspective: Power elite and social movements in the workfare state

When in August 2013 the Social Democratic Secretary of Treasury, Bjarne Corydon, claimed on the front page of national newspaper *Politiken*, 'I believe in the competition state', he proclaimed support of the hegemonic ideology of the Danish power elite. The competition state, a phrase popularised by professor in political economy Ove Kaj Pedersen (2011) in the book of the same title, is a form of Schumpeterian workfare state (cf. Jessop 1993) competing with other nation-states to deliver the best conditions of production based on a highly skilled and flexible labour force. The hesitant rejection that the union victory may in fact have been pyrrhic by former Chairman of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, Thomas Nielsen, in his farewell speech, quoted at the beginning of this article, reflects the outcome of the cross-class alliance between employers and unions.

The workfare state is in many ways a result of the cross-class alliances' entanglement with neoliberalism. Since Thomas Nielsen's famous speech in 1982, union density has plummeted and welfare-state retrenchment has come with growing force, under the guise of so-called reforms (Korpi 2003). Coupled with the part of neoliberalism that is not concerned with the liberalist utopia, but with a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of

economic elites (Harvey 2005:19), the workfare state ideology joins the members of the power elite in Denmark. In the division of labour within the overlapping circles of the Danish power elite, unions and academics focus on providing skilled workers and technicians, creating technological advantages. The state elite and a few politicians provide the administrative infrastructure and political discourse of reform towards better conditions for productivity, while the large corporations, in exchange for their profits, provide jobs. Social movements and interest groups tied to productive sectors, such as agriculture, should be seen as key players. Regulation should always be seen in the light of its costs to productivity. However, this alliance also benefits the constituencies, whom unions and politicians represent. Social security, low crime rates, free high-quality education and decent wages – at least for non-migrant workers – all become positive parameters of competition in the workfare state.

To assure and enhance these benefits, social movements must constantly be mobilised to put pressure on – and empower their own members of – the power elite. This means that political parties and social movements must constantly negotiate the dilemma of achieving influence while losing the potential to mobilise. While this dissertation was being researched, this dilemma was played out in public. The Socialist People's Party (SF), a first-time government party, became fragmented by party leadership compromises that were intolerable for the constituencies, and withdrew from government after the sale of government-owned electricity provider DONG to demonised investment bank, Goldman Sachs. The gap between the values tied to the party as part of a social movement and the requirement of entering the circles of the power elite – much like the pyrrhic victory of the unions – proved too deep to bridge. If an alternative to the neoliberal agenda is formulated, it must also provide insight on how to enter a power elite without becoming one.

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The articles

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A Very Economic Elite: The Case of the Danish Top CEOs

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Abstract

Although the business elites in western societies have a very privileged social background in common, there are substantial differences in the reproduction mechanisms and social trajectories leading to a position within this elite group. These differences are explored by comparing the career paths of the top 100 CEOs in Britain, France, Germany and Denmark. In France and Britain, this reproduction is mediated through degrees from elite universities. In Germany, the principle of admission is the incorporated cultural capital acquired through an exclusive bourgeois origin combined with any university degree. Elite universities also hold little importance for Danish top CEOs, partly due to the institutions' historic decline; instead, reproduction is mediated through time spent in the economic field, placing the case of the Danish CEOs between that of their British and German counterparts. Specific trajectories of Danish executives, in particular sales people, are identified using Multiple Correspondence Analysis and cluster analysis.

Keywords

Bourdieu, CEO, commercial capital, correspondence analysis, economic elite, field of power, organizational capital, symbolic capital

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Business Elite Reproduction

We must understand the objective structure of opportunities as well as the personal traits which allow and encourage given men to exploit these objective opportunities which economic history provides them. Charles Wright Mills (1956: 97)

The career trajectory of CEOs in large corporations shows which forms of resources these men – for they are usually men – use to qualify for, and legitimize holding, a position of power and also allows us to view the relative strength of central societal institutions, such as the family, the educational field and the market that transmits resources, and the nature of the respective national economies. As Aron (1950: 141) argues, one of the most characteristic features of any society is how the elite is structured and reproduced. Through a comparative study of the leading 100 senior executives in large, industrial countries, primarily France, the UK, and a Scandinavian welfare state, Denmark, we explore the importance of families, educational system and economic organizations as institutions of elite reproduction.

While the relative importance of these institutions may differ in magnitude, the overall social origin of the top managerial elite is very similar, as shown in Table 1. At least four-fifths of senior executives originate from the top fifth of their respective society. The pathways are relatively heterogeneous, with diverse prevalences of exclusive secondary education, elite university diplomas and elite circulation. Following Hartmann (2007: 61–80) three models can be identified: 1) a French and Japanese model with high importance of elite universities – or *grandes écoles* – exclusive secondary education and high elite circulation; 2) a British and American model with high importance of elite universities and secondary education, but little elite circulation with low intersectoral mobility; and 3) a German model with little importance of elite universities and little elite circulation, with reproduction mediated through a 'class-specific habitus' – the incorporated cultural capital attained through upbringing in the bourgeois family (Hartmann, 2000: 243, see also Bourdieu, 1984: 66) – enabling individual mastery of the behavioural codes of the boardrooms. When looking at business elite reproduction, the question is to what degree the incorporated cultural capital of the business elite offspring can successfully be turned into institutionalized cultural capital in the form of diplomas from elite universities, enabling a 'school-mediated mode of reproduction' (cf. Bourdieu, 1986: 244, 1996: 285–90), or, alternatively, are reproduction strategies based in forms of capital acquired outside educational institutions? The mode of reproduction of a Scandinavian business elite, however, remains largely unresolved vis-a-vis Hartmann's terminology.

The phenomenon left to be explained is the surprisingly stable pattern of reproduction of the managerial elites. This pattern is part of a general image of an extremely homogenous business elite with regard to age, sex and ethnicity (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot, 1999: 16). Even though the reproduction rate of the business elite has decreased historically, the social background of this group has remained very exclusive over the last 250 years in the major industrialized nations (Kaelble, 1980: 415–16). Adding to this, Andrle (2001) suggests that post-communist economic elites have a strong family linkage to the pre-communist bourgeoisie, emphasizing the strength of this particular type of reproduction mechanism. The closer to the top of the business hierarchy, the more important having a

Table 1. Social origin of top 100 CEOs.

	Denmark	France	UK
Year	2007	1998	1998
Upper class	33%	43%	35%
Upper-middle class	35%	34%	29%
Lower-middle class	25%	19%	25%
Lower class	8%	4%	11%
N (of known cases)	78	98	91

Note: The data on France and the UK are based on Maclean et al. (2006: 91), who identify origin in the upper class exclusively by being 'born into a family with substantial wealth and a large income based on inheritance or a parent occupying a leading position in society' (Maclean et al., 2006: 266). Source: France and UK, Maclean et al. (2006: 91); Denmark, authors' own research.

moneyed family background is (Hartmann, 2007: 92). In all the countries compared, the majority – approximately two-thirds – of the top CEOs are recruited from social groups within the top 20 per cent of society, as Maclean et al. (2006: 91) define the upper middle and upper class. Almost the same exclusive background can be identified among a less exclusive part of the economic elite in Norway (Gulbrandsen, 2005: 344). Along with cultural elites, economic elites have the most exclusive social background of all elites in the Scandinavian countries (Ruostetsaari, 2008: 164). The homogenous background of private corporate leaders is also seen in Germany (Hartmann, 2000), with estimates of 82 of the top 100 senior executives originating from the dominant classes in 1995, of whom 34 had fathers engaged as industrialists or bankers, while 11 originated from the middle and lower classes (Hartmann, 2000: 248), albeit the middle class includes only the CEOs with 'Lower-middle class' background in Table 1.

Drawing on the terminology of the field of power developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1996), the notion of forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986) is used as a strategy to identify the resources at stake among the most powerful economic agents. By analysing holders of the top 100 executive positions, we restrict ourselves to a particular subspace – the business elite – within the economic pole of the field of power. These agents acquire the organizational capital needed to enter the upper echelons of corporate management. The concept of the field of power is thus used as an epistemological tool, rather than as a grand theory that ties power tightly to economic and cultural capital (cf. Hjellbrekke and Korsnes, 2009: 44–5), to identify a multidimensional space of different forms of capital within the business elites through geometrical data analysis. The structure of the different forms of capital needed to enter the business elite is explored using geometrical data analysis. Using the Euclidian distances generated within this space, four distinct pathways to top management in Denmark are explored through hierarchical cluster analysis.

Within this framework, convincing comparisons have been made between career trajectories and the significance of educational institutions in large industrial societies (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot, 1999; Hartmann, 2007, 2010; Maclean et al., 2006); other studies have compared less exclusive elites (Useem and Karabel, 1986) or national elites alone (Bendix

and Howton, 1957; Flemmen, forthcoming). Although a study has described the business elite in Denmark (Christiansen and Togeby, 2007), the scope and methods received considerable criticism for their limitations (Andersen, 2005; Ellersgaard and Grau, 2008; Sørensen, 2004), which led to inaccurate characterization of the Danish business elite within contemporary literature (Hartmann, 2010: 314; Ruostetsaari, 2008: 147ff).

While comparing the Danish case with larger, industrialized societies, particularly France, Britain and Germany, we address the following two research questions:

1) To what extent is the institutionalized cultural capital of Danish top CEOs tied to elite universities or elite schools?
2) Through which forms of capital do Danish top CEOs acquire and legitimize their position?

Understanding Business Elites through the Terminology of Fields

Following Savage and Williams' (2008: 15) call to apply the terminology of Pierre Bourdieu as valuable guidance in the study of elite reproduction, we examine the symbolic elements of the economic field (Lebaron, 2000: 124) used to legitimize the positions of executives. CEOs reproduce their position through symbolic capital, which is the legitimate form of capital giving their dominance an 'innocence of natural phenomena' (Bourdieu and De Saint-Martin, 1978: 26). The legitimating value of these symbols is determined in the struggles in the field of power (Bourdieu, 1996: 264–5). The symbolic capital used in the economic field is also determined by other fields, such as the academic field. Accordingly, our empirical findings of the social biography, educational pathway and career pattern of top CEOs are not merely a description of qualifications. These social facts can be analysed as position takings by accumulating legitimate forms of capital in relation to the state of – and struggles in – three embedded fields: 1) the field of the firm; 2) the economic field; and 3) the field of power. The relative autonomy of the economic field from other fields, and thereby its position in the field of power, is therefore indicated in the reproduction of the CEOs.

> The strategies of firms[…] depend also on the structure of power positions constitutive of the internal governance of the firm or, more exactly, on the (socially constituted) dispositions of the directors [dirigeants] acting under the constraints of the field of power within the firm and the field of the firm as a whole. (Bourdieu, 2005: 205)

Hence, executives produce 'the interest of the firm as *their interest within* the firm' (Bourdieu, 2005: 207, italics in original). Bourdieu (2005) notes that firms as fields tend to have homologous or isomorphic structures (cf. DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 148–50; Fligstein, 1996: 657) and thus that the same type of strategies may be successful. Therefore, the population of CEOs examined here can be seen as agents capable of having success in the homologous fields of their respective firms.

We can understand the firm in which the top executives have succeeded as a field both of *force* and of *struggle* embedded within the economic field in general (Bourdieu, 2005:

69, 205–6). Due to the importance of economic capital, these fields are also related to the struggles within the field of power as a whole (Bourdieu, 1996: 264–72). A field of power is structured by particular compositions of capital, making the hierarchies of fields both multidimensional and relational (Hjellbrekke et al., 2007: 245–6). These structures are identified using Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) (Lebaron, 2009).

Bourdieu (2005: 194–5) identifies a number of central forms of capital in the economic field. These include financial, cultural, technological, juridical and organizational, commercial, social and symbolic capital. 'Capital', Bourdieu (1986: 241) notes, 'is accumulated labor' thus acquired over time depending on the structure of distribution of the different forms of capital. Having access to the capital needed to occupy a dominant position thus enables the agent to influence both the 'games of society' through which these forms of capital are accumulated and the conversion rates between different forms of capital, which is the central stake in the struggles within the field of power (Bourdieu, 1996: 265).

The technological capital – 'the portfolio of scientific resources (research potential) or technical resources (procedures, aptitudes, routines and unique and coherent know-how, capable of reducing expenditure in labour or capital […])' (Bourdieu, 2005: 194) – can be seen as an applied or field-specific component of cultural capital, while not necessarily requiring the same incorporated features as the mastery of a more generalized cultural capital. Therefore, we interpret university diplomas in economy or science, and particularly doctorates, as indicators of cultural-technical capital identifying experts rather than intellectuals. In our MCA, we limit our focus on the reproduction mechanism to organizational, cultural-technical, commercial and what can analytically be labelled as inherited capital. Available through 'the Family Mode of Reproduction' (Bourdieu, 1996: 278ff), inherited capital can consist of 1) financial capital, such as the heritage of the financial resources tied to ownership; 2) cultural capital in the incorporated form allowing the grace of the native within the social games of the dominant classes (cf. Bourdieu, 1984: 339); 3) social capital providing access to the network of the established family; and through this 4) symbolic capital tied to the family name and its 'social investment strategies' (Bourdieu, 1996: 273). Inherited capital thus enables the agents to understand the doxa (Bourdieu, 1996: 35, 272) of the firm as a field, and the economic field in general and gain mastery of the class-specific habitus (Hartmann, 2000), or what Mills (1956: 140) terms the 'sound character':

> Those who have started from high have from their beginnings been formed by sound men and trained for soundness. They do not have to think of having to appear as sound men. They just are sound men; indeed, they embody the standards of soundness. (Mills, 1956: 142)

Data

The Danish data were collected using the prosopographical method (Broady, 2002), while using a wide array of sources to access biographical and corporate information. Data were systematically collected from the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who?* (Kraks Blå Bog), Greens Erhvervsinformation (a private business information database), journalistic portrait articles, article search engines, bibliographic databases, financial reports

and public registers. The method used to identify forms of capital and relations is Specific Multiple Correspondence Analysis, with support from a descriptive analysis of the various business elites.

CEOs from 82 corporations were selected according to their position as CEO in December 2007. We included 18 executives on other criteria, taking into account the magnitude of the corporations and issues regarding ownership and control, leaving us with a final population of 100 CEOs. These CEOs thus compose a business elite holding positions of command (Scott, 2003: 156–7). Inside this exclusive group of top corporations, there is a considerable difference in size. The turnover of the shipping giant A.P. Møller-Mærsk is 50 times higher than that of the company with the lowest turnover (EAC). The corporation with the most employees (ISS), with half a million employed, has more than a thousand times the number of employees than the state-controlled gambling monopoly (Danske Spil). Because of these major size differences between top Danish corporations, more than one senior executive from the largest companies have been included. Moreover, six owner-managers were included – all were both former CEOs and current chairmen within the corporation – as they could be seen as the de facto leaders of the firm, both internally and externally.

The 82 corporations with formal ownership and management located in Denmark were selected through either financial capital, measured as having a turnover of over five billion DKK (€650 million), or organizational capital, defined as having a least 5000 employees; 34 corporations were included on both criteria, 45 on financial capital and three on organizational capital alone. To avoid including investors, rather than executives, a minimum of 500 employees was also required, excluding 12 firms. Companies acting only as subsidiaries were also excluded.

The Comparative Methodology

The historical differences between the nation-state-based business elites under comparison are considerable (cf. Scott, 1997: 16; Windolf, 1998: 321–2). The most significant is the difference in the size of the economy and, consequently, also the number of world-scale corporations. Likewise, the ownership structure varies, for example, with more dispersed shareholding in the UK and more family and state control in France (Maclean et al., 2006: 69) and Denmark. Following Hartmann (2010), a small number of Danish CEOs could be compared with the top 100 from large, industrialized countries. However, this would make it impossible to study elites of the same relational importance, reputation and size within the nation-states.

Apart from being cases of the three models of business elite reproduction, the reason we restrict our direct comparisons to certain studies of French, British (Maclean et al., 2006) and German business elites (Hartmann, 2000, 2007, 2010) is because these studies define the business elites with the same level of exclusiveness as our data: the top 100 senior executives, or the top decile of the dominant segment of the business elite as identified by Useem and McCormack (1981). Here, we present the most important discrepancies. The Danish data include executives only, whereas Maclean et al. (2006) also include non-executives with many top-board memberships. Compared with our selection criteria of either financial or organizational capital, Hartmann (2000) used turnover with the

predefined relation 5:3:2 of corporations from industry, commerce and finance. The solution used for Denmark gives a relative strength of 39:32:17 from industry, commerce and finance (the 12 executives from conglomerates excluded). This should be attributed to the distinctive trading culture that has shaped economic life in Denmark (Fellman, 2008), rather than to bias towards inclusion of commercial corporations in our analysis.

The Disappearance of the Elite School

Capital acquired through exclusive educational institutions has been given a pivotal role in studies of elite recruitment, with the importance of diplomas increasing with the size of the corporation (Bourdieu et al., 1973: 66–70). In this sense, elite universities are defined not so much by their ranking as by their ability to secure 1) a substantial number of alumni placed in the most powerful positions in society (Hartmann, 2000); and 2) an exclusive social selection, often probing the elite socialization through personal interviews (Karabel, 2005), thus enhancing elite consciousness. Consequently, this makes the sole selection criterion of Danish universities – grade-point average – a less efficient exclusion strategy because of the inability to examine, and thus legitimize, more personal traits gained through inherited capital (cf. Bourdieu, 1996: 295ff).

As Table 2 shows, the educational profile of Danish CEOs is similar to that of their British counterparts. A university diploma is certainly important to succeed in the upper echelons of management but is not a prerequisite in the same way as in Germany or France. Rarely do Danish CEOs have educations that are primarily connected with cultural capital, such as the arts, humanities and social sciences. Instead, it is diplomas in applicable business knowledge or technical competences that are required. Hartmann (2000: 252) describes the difference between German universities focusing on technological capital – 'the transfer of subject knowledge' – and French elite institutions reproducing and converting cultural capital: 'abilities such as intellectual brilliance, rapid comprehension, responsibility, leadership drive, and a pronounced elite consciousness'.

No university programme or institution in Denmark can be seen as an elite university according to the first definition: in itself being so prestigious that a promising career leading to a highly powerful position is guaranteed. Most top CEOs (14) attended general business education at the Copenhagen Business School (CBS), the University of Copenhagen or the Technical University of Denmark (DTU); each institution has 12 alumni in top senior executive positions. Considering there are relatively few institutions offering university diplomas, the number of CEOs from each institution is low. Additionally, none of these institutions is important for the recruitment of other elite groups in Denmark.

While research clearly demonstrates that selection into tertiary education in Denmark is tied to parental social position and cultural reproduction (Munk and Thomsen, 2011; Thomsen, 2012), and the engineers and economists are generally recruited within the economic upper class, there is no indication in our Danish data of a strong linkage between parental background and the top CEOs' elite education, as seen, for example, in the UK (Maclean et al., 2006: 119). Furthermore, no more than five of the top 100 CEOs qualified from among the top 25 programmes, measured by grade-point average minimum of enrolled students, in either 1979 (the median graduation year of the CEOs) or in

Table 2. Education profiles of top 100 CEOs.

	Germany	France	UK	Denmark
Year	1995	1998	1998	2007
Education type				
Arts, humanities or social sciences	27	2	12	7
Business, economics or administration	33	42	26	43
Science, engineering or medicine	22	44	27	25
Professional	6	4	29	23
School only	0	7	5	0
Not known	9	1	1	2
Highest qualification				
Doctorate	46	10	6	8
Higher degree	36	80	23	54
First degree	–	2	45	13
Professional qualification only	6	0	20	23
School	–	7	5	0
Not known	9	1	1	2
N	97	100	100	100

Note: Sources: Germany, Hartmann (2000: 248); France and UK, Maclean et al. (2006: 117); Denmark, authors' own research.

2007. Thus the institutionally validated personality gained through exclusive social selection of the student – as used in the second definition of elite universities – is in no way a common feature of the programmes followed by the Danish CEOs. However, through examinations, some programmes may contribute to a selection process and thus gain more exclusivity before individuals take up executive positions.

Despite Germany having no elite universities, the institutionalized cultural capital of a university or doctoral degree is important: almost 90 per cent of CEOs have a higher degree and almost half have a PhD (Hartmann, 2010: 303–4). In Germany, doctorates may also be gained much later in the career trajectory (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot, 1999: 26), tying holders of this title more to their organizational capital within the firm than to their inherited cultural capital. Nonetheless, the number of doctorates emphasizes the importance of scholarly capital compared with Denmark's less than two-thirds with master degrees and less than one in 10 with doctorates, as shown in Table 2. Thus, in Denmark, few exclusive university programmes, or academic merits in general, act as gatekeeper in legitimizing a potential elite member's social qualifications.

Adding to this result, we have not been able to identify Danish secondary equivalents of the British public schools, the American boarding schools or the prestigious French *Lycée* [the *khâgne*] so important for both recruitment and networks of future elite individuals

(Bourdieu, 1996: 84; Maclean et al., 2006: 96ff; Mills, 1956: 67). The most well-known Danish boarding school, Herlufsholm, has only one former student as a top CEO; the two most prestigious secondary schools situated in the most upscale Copenhagen suburbs have two former top CEOs as alumni. No evidence suggests that social or cultural capital gathered through the attendance at specific institutions of secondary education plays an important role in the qualification or selection process of Danish top CEOs. These findings appear to be general for the Scandinavian countries; Mastekaasa (2004: 223) describes the absence of elite institutions in Norway on both the secondary and the tertiary level.

Interestingly, the lack of an elite university or programme is not because none has been established. In the 1950s, DTU was one of two institutions with admission criteria other than a secondary diploma. The DTU had an explicit focus on developing tomorrow's leaders (Reinholdt Hansen, 2000). In 1999 almost one-third of the top 250 Danish CEOs were engineers (Christiansen et al., 2001: 153), whereas only 17 engineers are included in our population of 2007, eight years later. Of these, 10 were born before 1950 compared to only 27 of the CEOs in total, adding to the image of a declining engineering profession. While similar tendencies are found in Norway (Gulbrandsen et al., 2002: 59), the strength of the French engineers leads us to believe that the diminishing numbers of engineers may be due to the lack of exclusiveness. The decline of DTU's prestige may have been due to its relocation in 1974 from the centre of Copenhagen to the suburbs, Kgs. Lyngby, and a subsequent restructuring, resulting in a substantial increase in enrolment. Accordingly, the alumni lost both the symbolic benefits and the *espirit du corps* that a potential French executive gains from the *numerus clausus* at, for example, the École Nationale d'Administration with an annual intake of around 175 students from more than 2000 applicants.

The structural homology between the field of elite universities and the field of economic power found by Bourdieu (1996) in France thus plays a subordinate role in the reproduction of the business elite in Denmark. As our correspondence analysis shows, we can therefore interpret the university diplomas of Danish top CEOs as principally being indicators of technical capital, as in Germany. However, as in Britain, this technical capital is not a prerequisite for a successful managerial career. In this sense, Denmark is placed between the German and the British positions, with elite universities being of little importance, as in Germany, but, as in Britain, academic qualifications in general being of less importance.

Reproduction through the Economic Field

Without the selection mechanism of elite universities, how are the cohesion, homogeneity and exclusive social background of CEOs possible? As Table 3 shows, it is necessary to have a career in the economic field. The degree of elite circulation in Denmark resembles the low circulation found in Britain and Germany (Hartmann, 2010: 304) without the French tradition of *pantouflage* from higher civil service to a managerial career (Bourdieu, 1996: 329). However, loyalty towards one firm, an important component of organizational capital, seems more important in the larger industrial societies. More than half the German CEOs have spent their entire career within one corporation (Hartmann, 2010), whereas this holds true for a quarter of the Danish top CEOs.

Table 3. Career profile and characteristics of top 100 CEOs.

	France	UK	Denmark
Year	1998	1998	2007
Corporate	41	84	57
Enterprise to corporate	9	2	30
Public administration or organizations to corporate	49	3	7
Law to corporate	0	6	1
Media, politics, academia or sports to corporate	1	5	2
Not known	0	0	3
N	100	100	100
Age at first appointment as top CEO	40.5	44.1	44.4
(Standard deviation)	(6.0)	(5.8)	(7.3)
Number of companies to first top 100 directorships	2.2	2.1	2.9
(Standard deviation)	(1.2)	(1.2)	(1.8)

Note: Source: Career profile, age as top CEO and number of companies in France and UK (Maclean et al., 2006: 127, 117, 139), Denmark, authors' own research.

Another important finding shown in Table 3 is that it seems much easier to change path from enterprise to corporate careers in Denmark than in both France and the UK. This suggests that capital and merits gained from the economic field in general, rather than purely the space of top corporations, qualify potential top CEOs. Likewise, Danish top CEOs have had, on average, almost one more corporation as an employer than have their French and British counterparts.

An important characteristic of Danish top CEOs in a comparative perspective is the importance of their corporate career and thus their organizational capital. The relatively high number of 16 CEOs with no educational diplomas, apart from being trainees in large corporations, points to the importance of some corporations, particularly A.P. Møller-Mærsk, as being academies (cf. Cappelli and Hamori, 2005: 25) within a corporation-based mode of reproduction. This organizational capital is not a prerequisite, as the trajectories of several Danish top senior executives point to more irregular careers based in enterprises in the economic field, but outside the hierarchies of large corporations.

Identifying Relations between Forms of Capital: Multiple Correspondence Analysis

Correspondence analysis, Bourdieu (2005: 102, italics in original) notes, can be used 'to bring to light the structure of positions or – and this amounts to the same thing – the structure of distribution of specific interest and powers that determines and *explains* the strategies of the agent'. Through this method, we visualise the opposite positions

Table 4. Contribution of active variables.

Heading	Variable	Modalities	Dim.1 (25%)	Dim.2 (18%)	Dim.3 (14%)
Career	Career start	2	7.9	4.8	0.8
	Years from education to executive	4	12.3	3.7	5.6
	Years in corporation until CEO	5	17.8	6.2	4.1
	Age as CEO	4	8.0	0.3	10.8
	Career changes	3	8.4	8.6	4.1
	MBA	3	4.3	1.6	2.6
	Business diploma	2	3.5	0.0	0.0
	Abroad	3	1.1	2.0	8.2
Total		26	63.3	27.2	36.2
Education	PhD	2	0.8	7.5	1.6
	Education	9	17.1	16.9	8.9
	Author	2	1.9	12.1	2.4
	Career foundation	5	5.6	12.1	5.6
Total		18	25.4	48.6	18.5
Family	Place of birth	5	5.0	13	10.3
	Social background	7	5.1	9.0	20.4
	In-laws in *Who's Who*	2	0.7	0.5	2.0
	Family in *Who's Who*	2	0.3	1.6	12.5
Total		16	11.1	24.1	45.2
All headings		60	100	100	100

generative of practice by graphically identifying the distribution of 'objective positions' within the business elite.

A Specific Multiple Correspondence Analysis, which allows us to ignore missing or redundant categories when determining the Euclidian distance between the individuals by which the principal axes are determined (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004, 2010), was conducted on indicators of organizational, technical-cultural and inherited capital (Table 4). Note that these indicators cover the career trajectory only until the first appointment as a CEO at one of the 82 selected corporations. It is difficult to separate the institutionalized cultural capital tied to academic diplomas from the more work-related and applicable technical capital when no valid indicators of either social or economic capital before appointment are available.

We identified a multidimensional Euclidian space consisting of three interpretable axes accounting for 57 per cent of the total adjusted inertia (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004: 209). The interpretation of the axes is inferred by the modalities with a contribution value above average (Jambu, 1991: 286).[1] Figures 1 and 2 map the geometrical representation of the axes' principal components. When interpreting these, distances between modalities above 0.5 are considered 'notable', while distances above 1.0 are deemed to be 'large' (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2010: 71). As shown in Figure 1, the first axis, explaining

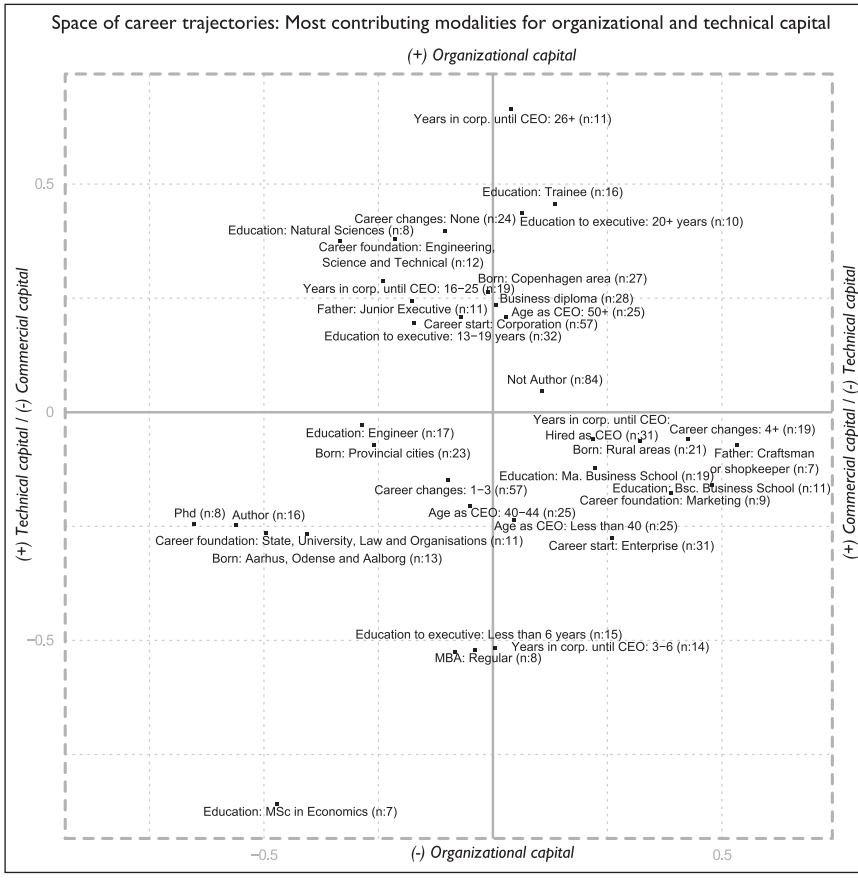

Figure 1. Modalities with above average contributions to axis 1 and 2.

25 per cent of the total inertia, captures a contrast between agents holding large amounts of organizational capital (typically, trainees with long careers within the corporation and no company changes throughout their career) and those who succeeded through other forms of capital, usually with a much shorter career length.

The left side of the second axis, representing 18 per cent of the total inertia, shows CEOs with high amounts of technical or cultural capital before appointment; for example, having authored a book, a doctoral degree and being born in a provincial town. The right side shows CEOs with large amounts of commercial capital. Characteristics of CEOs with commercial capital are a high number of career changes; rural upbringing; father being a farmer, craftsman or shopkeeper; career start in enterprises; and having a BSc and an MSc in Business from the Copenhagen Business School. All modalities of university education are placed on the left side of the second axis of technical and commercial capital, while trainees and those with vocational training are placed with the business school graduates on the right side. Thus it seems that the distinctive features on

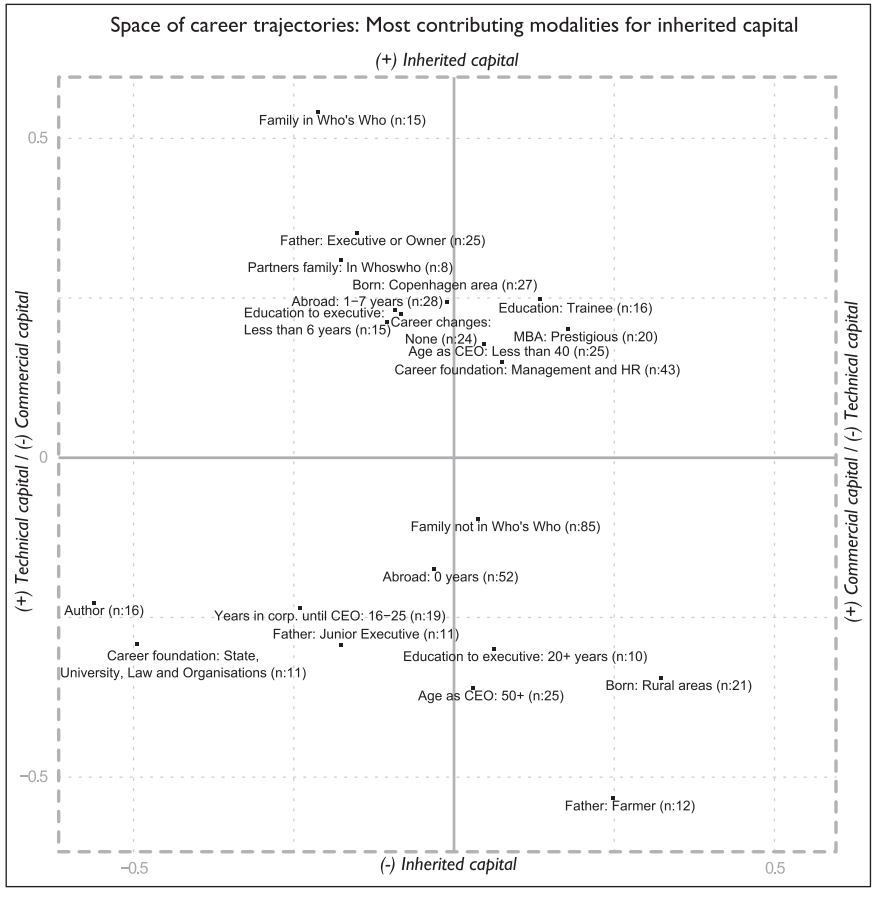

Figure 2. Modalities with above average contributions to axis 3.

the Danish CEOs shown in Tables 2 and 3 are closely tied to a career path dependent on high amounts of commercial capital.

When interpreting the third axis, accounting for 14 per cent of the total inertia (Figure 2), a clear division in amount of inherited capital is seen, with top CEOs with parents (or parents-in-law) mentioned in the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*, parents who were executives or owners, and CEOs born in the Copenhagen area opposed principally to CEOs with rural backgrounds. Those associated with high levels of inherited capital are seen as managerial potential from the start of their career and therefore achieve their first executive position shortly after finishing their education, reaching the top managerial elite before their 40th birthday. Those with a low level of inherited capital reach the top after they turn 50 years and, logically, have longer careers.

This three-dimensional structure, and particularly the important role of commercial capital in recruitment of Danish CEOs, could be a result of the larger commercial sector in this sample and in the Danish economy. This would hold if the sector of the corporation

as a supplementary variable were placed distinctively within the three-dimensional space. However, this is not the case. Industry, commerce, and finance are not distanced from each other by more than a 0.5 distance on the principal axis, allowing no valid interpretation of this deviation.

Cluster Analysis: The Pathway of Inheritors, the Organizational Personnel, Experts, and Salespeople

With the general structure of capital constructed, subgroups of distinct pathways can be constructed by cluster analysis to construct a typology (cf. Denord et al., 2011) of pathways to the top management in Denmark. Clusters of individuals have been identified by way of ascending hierarchical clustering of Euclidian distances within the three-dimensional space of individual career trajectories constructed through the SMCA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004: 106–15) identifying the partition with four clusters as the best fit. The four clusters are shown in Figure 3 and can be described ideally as follows:

1 *The inheritors (C1)* are characterized by high levels of organizational and inherited capital and relatively quick careers within a single corporation. Often sons of executives, born near the centre of the national field of power in Copenhagen, with a trainee background, a career start in management and foreign experience – typically less than seven years, but enough to acquire cosmopolitan capital (cf. Weenink, 2008), these men symbolize a sound character. A quarter (25) of the top CEOs are placed in this cluster. The inherited path is not uniquely characterized by the owners who inherited their position through financial control of the firm. Only seven (28%) of the CEOs in the inheritors' cluster are owners, and these seven account for half the total number of owners (14) in the study. Thus the majority of the inheritors do not follow this path as a result of material inheritance of ownership; instead, it is due to their ability to master the class-specific habitus.
2 *The organizational personnel (C2)* also have a high level of organizational capital but very little inherited capital. These men have worked their way to the top within one corporation and are, on average, seven years older than their peers before their appointment as top CEOs and have a significantly lower number of career changes. On average, their capital structure is slightly more tied to technical than commercial capital, both in general and in comparison with the inheritors. The label 'the organizational personnel' applies to 27 top CEOs.
3 *The experts (C3)* have high levels of technical capital, quick careers, authorships and PhDs. These men have been able to benefit from their merits in scholarly fields. It is also among these agents that we find the few career patterns that involve positions in the state bureaucracy or organizations and an educational background in economics in common with top politicians and bureaucrats – the characteristics of *pantouflage*. With parents without a particularly prestigious background, and with partners in academic jobs, it appears that this relatively rare trajectory – followed by only 14 CEOs – is similar to the path trodden by the highly scholarly qualified German CEOs and the elitist French CEOs.

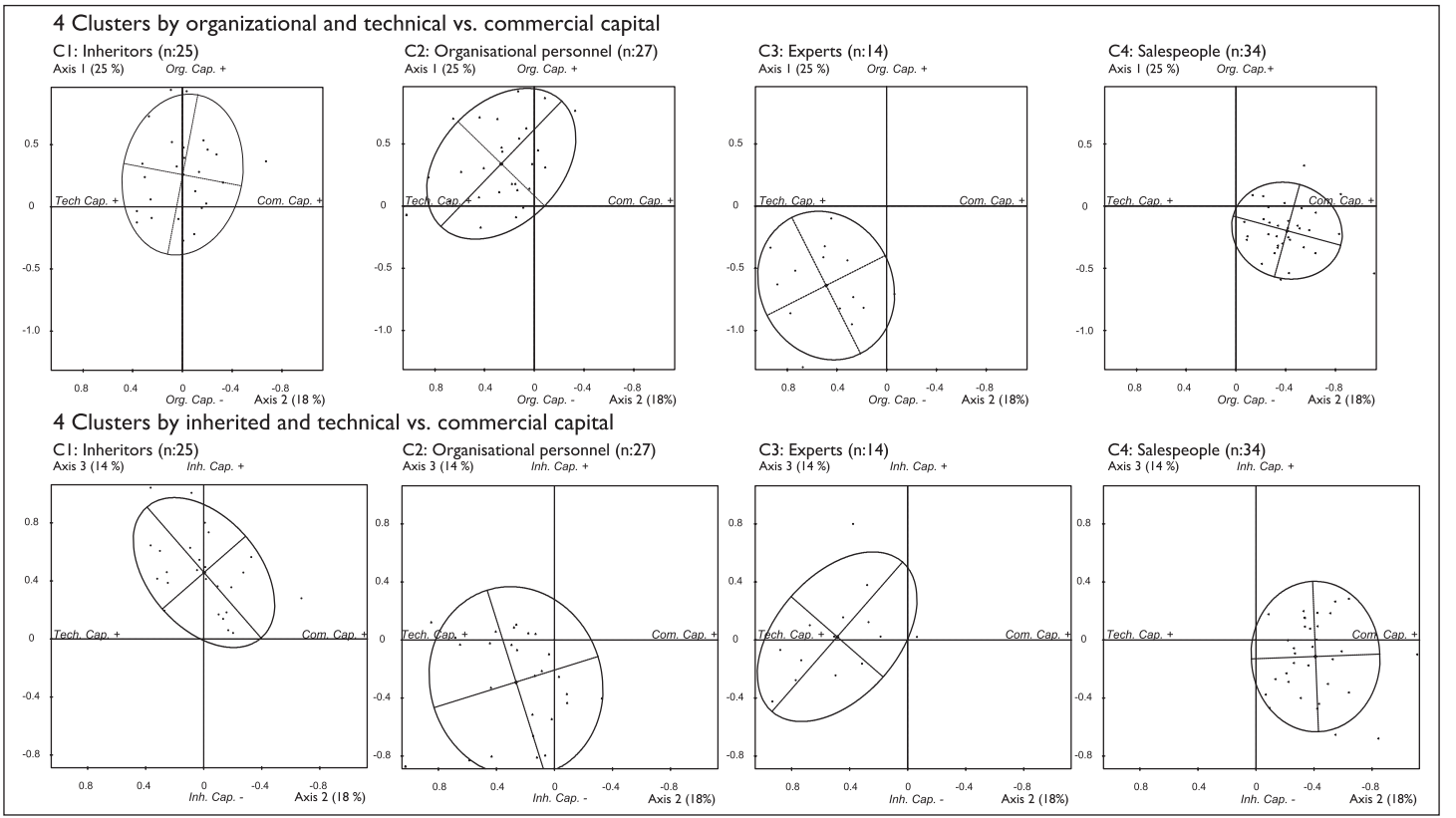

Figure 3. Cluster analysis, concentration ellipses of the four identified clusters.

4 *The salespeople (C4)* seem to have the most homogenous trajectory when looking at the concentration ellipses in Figure 3. It is also the most common of the four trajectories, followed by more than a third (34) of the top CEOs. Typically, these men have high levels of commercial capital, with a career start in enterprises, many career changes and a rural upbringing. Like the experts, these men have not spent many years in their current firm accumulating capital. However, they have spent their entire career in private businesses, usually without prestigious diplomas to catapult them to a certain level of the organizational hierarchy. Instead, they started their career in sales or marketing and gradually worked their way up through different enterprises and corporations. CEOs qualified by their commercial capital work in firms that are younger – the average age of their firms being 51 years – than the average of 82 years for all corporations included here. The firms managed by salespeople are also less profitable and less prestigious than the other firms, as seen by the lack of publicity, both in the number of press articles and books about the firm. These characteristics are correlated to other indicators of firm prestige such as members of other sub-elites on the board of directors and sheer economic size. In many ways these organizations offer a trajectory more compatible with the strategy of a newcomer to the field with dispositions from an upbringing in a self-employed milieu.

Discussion

Adding to Hartmann's (2007) three models of reproduction, we place the Danish business elite as being tied to the German case of both low elite circulation and low importance of elite universities or public schools. The cultural-technical capital acquired through university diplomas in general and postgraduate studies in particular appears to be specific for the German and French case rather than the Danish case. Like the British case, capital acquired through the economic field in Denmark is more important, with the important distinction that not only organizational capital, but also commercial capital qualifies for a position in top management. On the basis of a Specific Multiple Correspondence Analysis, it is possible to identify four clusters of career trajectories: the inheritors, the organizational personnel, the experts, and the salespeople.

Of these groups, only the 14 experts can be seen as legitimizing their power through capital acquired in the educational system. The lack of an institution of elite education thus implies a weaker position of cultural capital – and institutions that distribute it – within the business elite and perhaps within the Danish power elite as a whole. It is possible that the lack of elite schools can be attributed to the egalitarian ethos of the decommodifying, social-democratic Scandinavian welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Nevertheless, it may also be a function of the relatively small size of the Danish elite, which is therefore unable to sustain an elite school.

These findings emphasize the need for the use of Pierre Bourdieu's terminology of the social stratification of the elite in an economic and cultural fraction as a model of the logic behind 'the organic solidarity of the genuine division of the labor of domination' (Bourdieu, 1996: 263) rather than as a theory of the social ontology of elites in all

western nation-states. Thus the analysis follows Hjellbrekke et al. (2007) in showing how the forms of capital structuring the field of power vary across different nation-states depending on the particular strength of different institutions of reproduction. The integration of the corporate, political and military elite into a power elite in C. Wright Mills' (1956) analysis should likewise be interpreted as a theory on the effects of elite cohesion and not as a description of the paramount elite fractions across historical and national boundaries.

However, the reproduction strategies of the business elites tied to nation-state institutions are under considerable pressure because of the rise of transnational corporations and the ensuing integration of corporate elites into transnational communities, demonstrated by Carroll (2010). Even though the vast majority of the included corporations have some – or even all – of their activities located outside Denmark, only five CEOs were not born in Denmark. Of these, all have been tied to the Danish economic field for many years. Two started their career in Danish corporations or in Denmark more than 20 years prior to their current appointment. One married the heiress to the corporation he now heads. Two are Swedes and are thus familiar with the particular social games of the Scandinavian boardrooms. These findings follow the pattern found by Hartmann (2010: 315–16) in Germany and France. Furthermore, fewer than half the Danish CEOs have worked abroad, and, of the 47 who have, 36 were stationed abroad by their Danish parent corporation. While 24 of the 26 MBA degrees of Danish CEOs were acquired from business schools outside Denmark, which confirms that an international market for exclusive executive degrees taken during a corporate career has been established (see also Marceau, 1989), only six of the Danish-born CEOs have their university diploma, or parts of it, from abroad. While networks of corporate power, and the culture of business elites (cf. Sklair, 2001: 255–94), have gone global, access to them is still tied to local dynamics within the reproduction strategies of national business elites.

The exclusive social background of Danish CEOs and the specific trajectories of recruitment question the picture of the open nature of Scandinavian elites, cited below using the analysis of the Danish Power Study. A very particular and strong form of character still has to be formed to be considered top managerial material.

> The social exclusivity of elites increases according to the size of the respective country [while] there are also specific national traditions and balances of power […]. In the Scandinavian countries with their comparably egalitarian basic attitude and their relatively open educational system the social composition of elites is on average less exclusive than in countries with explicit institutions of elite education, a classical upper class, or a tradition as a great power. Hartmann (2010: 222)

The importance of this character can be seen by the fact that the reproduction of business elites is not tied solely to exclusive social background. Women also form a minority. In the Scandinavian countries, there are no more than 5 per cent of women in any of the business elites (Ruostetsaari, 2008: 163). Moreover, there are no more than two women amongst the 100 top managers in France, Britain (Maclean et al., 2006: 7) and Denmark. This suggests that explanations focusing on the more bodily acquired skills (such as mastery of the natural tone of voice, gesture and body language) that enable an individual to play the power games within the firms and the business elites (Bourdieu, 1996;

Hartmann, 2000; Mills, 1956; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1998) can have great explanatory value for the stable reproduction of business elites.

The world economy was shaken by the financial crisis, and questions were raised about managerial legitimacy in the transnational corporations. When viewed from a national perspective, the qualifications and traits of the CEOs seem functional necessities of the managerial position. However, when compared across countries, the arbitrary nature of these requirements becomes apparent. If there were a universal requirement, it would be to have the established social background, which does not resonate well within a meritocratic ethos. A critical perspective on the historically established character of the CEO and its consequences for the quality and ethics of corporate governance is therefore required.

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1. Available through our website: http://www.soc.ku.dk/dokumenter/additionaldata.pdf

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II. Status and Integration in the Field of Power of Danish Chief Executives

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Abstract:

When assessing whether a CEO in a top firm is a powerful agent on the field of power it is not enough to look exclusively at the objective resources of the firm. It is essential to know the accumulated symbolic resources of both the firm and the CEO. We will demonstrate both theoretically and empirically that social capital within the field of power is a good indicator of the symbolic capital of the CEO. Only those directors that have symbolic capital on the field of power are able to influence the field of power directly. With the help of correspondence analysis, we map the distribution of symbolic and social capital among the 100 topmost CEO in Denmark. The analysis is based on prosopographical data from 2007 and finds a strong correlation between indicators of different forms of social and symbolic capital. These findings are used in a discussion of the size of the Danish field of power.

Keywords: Social Capital, Bourdieu, Multiple Correspondence Analysis, prosopograhy, Symbolic Capital, Economic Elites, The Field of Power

Introduction: The symbolic and social integration of chief executives within the field of power[1]

> Of course, the CEO of Danske Bank has power, but the position itself is not enough. It takes a respected person that people will listen to, and Peter Straarup is such a person.
> Michael Pram Rasmussen, Chairman of the Board of Directors of A.P. Møller – Mærsk, in Mikkelsen (2007:105, our translation)

You cannot tell whether a managing director is a part of the field of power, and thus one of the decisive players in the distribution of resources in society, simply by looking at his job position. Inclusion in the core of the field of power does not simply follow from the size of a company, or from the "performances" of a CEO. The distribution of contacts to the field of power and of influence within it, is mediated through a symbolic economy. The CEOs who have influence are the ones who are symbolically recognised by the other players within the field. In this article, we will argue that social capital plays a special role in the distribution of symbolic recognition within the field of power. By knowing the social capital of CEOs we can thus assess the degree to which they are included in the field of power.

The ability of a company to integrate their senior managers in the field of power can be of decisive importance for the company, the sector and the capitalist. Danish companies do not merely make decisions focusing on the behaviour of the markets or the disciplining gaze of the investors. According to Neil Fligstein (1996, 2002), business success is largely dependent on alliances with the state actors who create the framework of the game in the economic field. In the words of Ralph Miliband (1969:1), these agents are fighting 'for the state's attention, or for its control'. Particular interests are universalised through the state.

However, as Pierre Bourdieu (2010) has shown, the state – and the field of power more generally – cannot be reduced to a superstructure, which merely reflects the economic basis and the division of power, as simplistic readings of Marx would. Instead, the connections through which economic

[1] In preparing this article, we have benefited greatly from the advice and guidance from our colleagues at the Department of Sociology, especially Kristoffer Kropp, and Martin D. Munk. In addition, thanks to Toke Skou Larsen. We are also grateful for the advice and comments from the anonymous reviewers. The responsibility for the content of the article is of course our own.

organisations influence state bureaucracy and other institutions connected to the field of power, are borne by concrete individuals and relations, with their relatively independent dynamics. Both conservative and Marxist elite theories show how contacts are established through common class or educational backgrounds, and overlapping social circles, etc. (see e.g. Aron 1950; Miliband 1969). For a field theory-based analysis of the overlapping circles of the elites within the Scandinavian counties, see Denord et al. (2011).

Apart from these common features, Bourdieu's keen eye for the symbolic dimension of power helps us understand how these common features creates an integrated potential for action. When the CEOs of the largest companies master the broad elite culture, they demonstrate that they are not merely capable actors within the economic field, but personal carriers of a power resource that makes them central intermediaries between different forms of capital within the field of power. They become 'sound person'. Only by engaging in this symbolic economy of honour can CEOs win the favour of the rest of the field of power, and engage in relations of capital conversion. For this reason it is central to understand the criteria of inclusion within the circles of power (cf. Mills 1956). The struggles within the field of power largely concern the definition of legitimate forms of power (Bourdieu 1996:265) and thus there is not one fixed hierarchy of recognition and distribution of symbolic capital. Yet, when a person is invited to join a network, a board, or other spaces where powerful people are found, it seems like a symbolic consecration of the individual. Thus social capital can function as a measure of symbolic capital within the field of power. To be included means that to be recognized as an individual within the symbolic economy of honour of the field of power.

The relation between symbolic and social capital can be understood as structured by the Matthew effect (cf. Merton 1968). Access to the right social circles opens for symbolic recognition, which gives access to new social circles in turn. Symbolic and social resources are accumulated, and partake in a further process of accumulation of symbolic and social resources. This effect must not be understood tautologically as "you gain contacts because you are powerful and you are powerful because you gain contacts, but as processual. If agents gain a position with sufficient symbolic capital – or convert another form of capital – it gains the possibility of participating in the social and symbolic economy of the elite circles.

This article will attempt to throw light on this dynamic from a prosopographic study of the hundred highest-ranking CEOs in Denmark. The dynamics of the integration of the chief executives in the field of power is specifically interesting, because they administer the economic and organisational capital, which according to Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1986, 1996:274, 2005:194) makes them the representatives and

possessors of the dominant and most easily convertible form of capital within the field of power. For this reason, the relation between a company and its CEO's position is interesting: Which executives from what companies achieve social and symbolic capital within the field of power? Which differences are there in the forms of social and symbolic capital different types of CEOs – owners and managers – gain access to? How many chief executives are integrated within the field of power?

Initially, we answer these questions through a theoretical clarification of the role of social and symbolic capital within the field of power according to the works of Bourdieu and Mills. After a brief description of the data that forms the basis of this investigation, we analyse chief executives according to their relation to the field of power. Through a description of the allocation of royal recognition through orders and invitations, of positions on boards and in networks, connections to the state, politics and science, as well as their salaries and residencies, we arrive at a picture of the chief executives as a symbolically recognized and well-integrated group. The relations between these different indicators of symbolic, social and economic capital is investigated through specific multiple correspondence analysis. Through this investigation, we construct the space of social and symbolic capital within the field of power between Danish chief executives. We analyse this space with the key characteristics of the companies and the social background of the CEOs. The analysis results in an assessment of the coincidence between social and symbolic capital. Finally, we discuss the meaning of the Matthew effect for symbolic capital in relation to the size of the power elite in Denmark.

The field of power and circles of power

Bourdieu's and C. W. Mills' descriptions of power within the elites of western societies are quite similar (Burawoy and Von Holdt 2012). They both describe society as built up by hierarchically organised sectors, and the actors at the summit of these sectors (or fields) participate in a unifying and integrating field where the struggles over resources between sectors play out. Bourdieu speaks of a "field of power" and C.W. Mills (1956) of the "power elite" or "the higher circles of power".

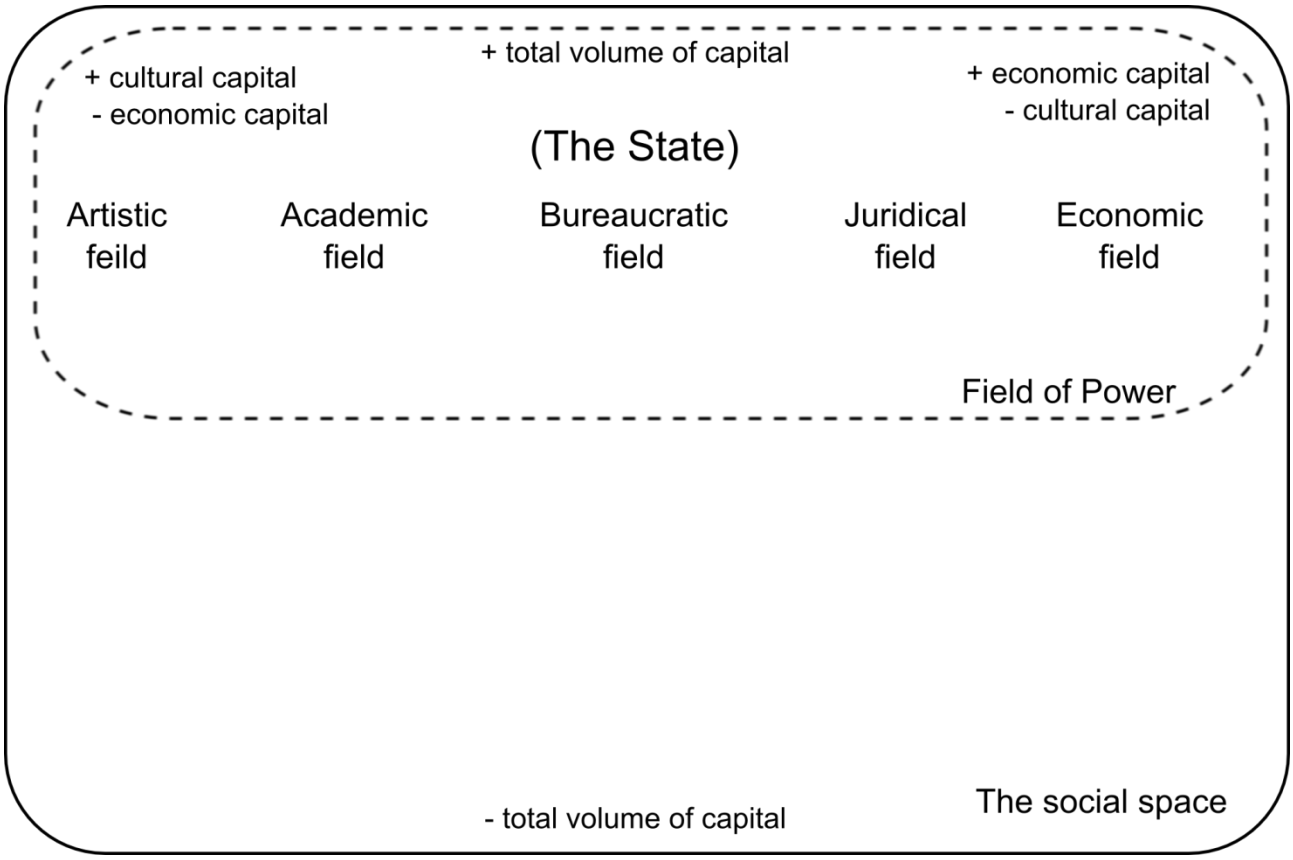
Mills found that power in the USA is centralised around the spheres of the economy, military and state. Bourdieu found that in France the central contradictions in the elite is between the economic and cultural elite, see Figure 1. The struggles in the field of power decide the exchange rate between different forms of capital, yet they work towards integration:

> The existence of a plurality of partially independent principles of hierarchization sets a de facto limit to the struggle of all against all among the dominant. It fosters a form of complementarity which is the

> basis of a veritable organic solidarity within the division of labour of domination. Thus the couple of those who act and those who speak is at once antagonistic and complementary, the division of labour of domination being accomplished within and through the conflict which links them.
>
> Bourdieu (in Wacquant 1993:25)

Through these struggles, a form of meta-capital arises in the field of power (Hansen and Hammerslev 2010). This meta-capital is crucial for the determination of the exchange rate between the forms of capital, and the struggles over this rate is a struggle over the state and the definition of the state. That the state becomes the point of focal point of the power struggles in the top of society is a result of the state's function as 'the central bank of symbolic credit' (Bourdieu in Wacquant 1993:39). The state's recognition of the different types of capital is necessary because, according to Bourdieu (1996:265) no power is satisfied by existing in its raw form, and because the recognition of the state can lend particular interests a universal form.

FIGURE 1: THE FIELD OF POWER



The field of power following Wacquant (2005:143) and Bourdieu (1996:267).

The struggles are carried out by individuals who, as a result of the mechanisms of reproduction that underlie the field of power, are already disposed to the structure of the field. Thus, the struggles take

place between individuals who by and large recognise the existing order. Therefore, the results of the struggles within the field of power will not radically alter the power relations between the sectors (Aron 1950:10). According to Aron, such changes demand a radical break with the composition of the elite and with its the mechanisms of reproduction. From this follows that any study of the elite and similar closed circles must have an eye for the ways in which people gain access to the elite, and what the criteria of access do in terms of creating a more or less uniform elite character. We will now briefly summarise the dynamics of reproduction (see Ellersgaard and Larsen 2011) in relation to the position of chief executives before we explain what significance mechanisms of reproduction have for the access to social and symbolic capital within the field of power.

Habitus and character

The understanding, that the field of power is integrated organically by opponents mutually recognising each other's power resources (capital forms) can be supplemented by empirical studies that show a significant homogeneity in the culture and opinions of the elite (Bauer and Bertin-Mourot 1999; Bürklin and Rebenstorf 1997; Gulbrandsen 2005; Hartmann 2000; Maclean, Harvey, and Press 2006; Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1990). The majority of the 100 chief executives share an exclusive social background (Ellersgaard and Larsen 2011), just as they did in 1955 (Hansen 1964). In the larger industrialised countries, the social recruitment of the elite has remained exclusive during the past 250 years (Kaelble 1980:415–6). At the same time, homogeneous class conditions tie the actors in the field of power together. They all share relatively high incomes, similar housing conditions, stable employment and the opposition to the lower ranking employees. These cultural and structural conditions make possible a certain "mechanical" solidarity based on homogeneity. Mills points out the homogeneity of the elite in his description of the routes that give access to the partially overlapping circles that make up the power elite:

> All the structural coincidence of their interests as well as the intricate, psychological facts of their origins and their education, their careers and their associations make possible the psychological affinities that prevail among them, affinities that make it possible for them to say of one another: He is, of course, one of us. And all this points to the basic, psychological meaning of 'class consciousness'.
>
> Mills (1956:283)

This solidarity is not only an expression of similarities in class background and education, but to a large extent a result of the mechanisms of selection that let new individuals enter the decisive circles (Mills 1956:281). These pose clear demands of what Mills terms the character of chief executives (which can be understood as derived from their symbolically dominating habitus and hexis, see below).

> The fit survive, and fitness means, not formal competence – there probably is no such thing for top executives positions – but conformity with the criteria of those who have already succeeded. To be compatible with the top men is to act like them, to look like them, to think like them: to be of and for them – or at least to display oneself to them in such a way to create that impression
>
> Mills (1956:140)

Among CEOs, it is easier for those who have the right class background to gain inclusion in the 'best' circles (Hartmann 2000; Marceau 1989:6; Mills 1956:142). Even though the 'right' character is inherited to some extent, it is more important to understand that character is shaped by the dominant criteria of recognition. One will therefore find a partial correspondence between the relations of power between different forms of capital within the field of power and the criteria of recognition which shape individuals in the highest ranking positions (in this case chief executives). Before they enter into the field of power the dominant actors are therefore already disposed to recognise the existing order, because this was a criteria of their inclusion.

> 'We instinctively recognize the ones who are and the ones who aren't,' a top industrial leader states, adding that 'when you're part of the establishment, you don't talk about the establishment.' It is obvious that 'there are truly no men of the left in the establishment' but here again it all comes down to the way one behaves; and [...] people have nothing but scorn for the "trouble-makers" who in their progressiveness, betray their caste and give the game away.
>
> Bourdieu (1996:317)

Inclusion within the field of power can therefore be understood as a result of several different selection processes which produce a homogeneous, integrated elite within a high degree of mutual solidarity. An executive's inclusion within the field of power is not directly inherited, nor determined solely by the strength of his or her organisation. Therefore, the actors with most economic and academic capital do not necessarily become the most powerful players within the field of power[2]. The field of power cannot be reduced to simple relations of strength or "nobility", but must be understood as a result of a symbolic economy of honour, which benefits people and classes with certain characteristics. In the following, we will clarify the relation between social and symbolic capital in the field of power. Through this, we will attempt to show that symbolic capital in the form of reputation and honour is the dominant form of capital within the field of power.

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[2] In the case of academic research this is exemplified by the eccentric top-physicist.

Symbolic and social capital in the field of power

The concept of symbolic capital springs from Bourdieu's analyses of the Kabyle economy of honour. The symbolic economy of honour masks the "raw" economy in such a way that the material conditions do not appear "too visibly".

> Symbolic capital, a transformed and thereby *disguised* form of physical "economic" capital, produces its proper effect inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in "material" forms of capital which are also, in the last analysis, the source of its effects.
>
> Bourdieu (2007:183, italics in original)

Symbolic capital reflects the other forms of capital, but it cannot be reduced to them, and it functions as a euphemism for them. In this sense, symbolic capital can be understood as the legitimate form of other forms of capital.

> If belonging to the establishment is so closely linked to the senoirity of one's establishment in business, this is undoubtedly because symbolic capital consisting of recognition, confidence, and, in a word, legitimacy has its own laws of accumulation that are distinct from those of economic capital.
>
> Bourdieu (1996:318)

This legitimate form of capital is a result of the actor's display of the necessary symbols and ability to maintain relations of gift giving. Over time this transforms the actors forms of capital to specific form of trust that Bourdieu terms symbolic capital. As Bourdieu (2007:181) writes:

> Once one realizes that symbolic capital is always *credit*, in the widest sense of the word, i. e. a sort of advance which the group alone can grant those who give it the best material and symbolic *guarantees*, it can be seen that the exhibition of symbolic capital (which is always very expensive in economic terms) is one of the mechanisms which (no doubt universally) make capital go to capital.

Here Bourdieu draws a clear parallel to the social capital, which in its most pithy definition is *capital per proxy,* but which is dependent on the symbolic credit the individual has built up within the group he partakes in (Bourdieu 1986:247–8). Thus, it is not possible to understand social capital without the symbolic capital which legitimates the activation of a connection. It is through the exchange of resources, which in the form as presents become symbolic forms of recognition, that a group maintains itself and marks its boundaries (Bourdieu 1986:247).

However, social connections can also function as symbolic capital. By having publicly known relations to individuals with legitimated forms of capital, an actor's own capital gains a seal of approval and its amount is affirmed. These mechanisms are specifically relevant within the field of power where the struggles centre on the exchange relations between different forms of capital. When one wants to

assess the value of a sub-field's forms of capital one of the best indicators of the exchange rate between, for instance, ecclesial, academic and economic capital is whether a specific form of capital is included within prestigious networks or not. In other words, if others in the elite for instance think that a bishop's title is powerful and legitimate enough, they allow the bishop space to speak within the closed circles. At the same time, the membership and amount of symbolic work an actor has invested in the class indicates his legitimacy. These mechanisms are signs that symbolic capital in the form of social capital are strong mechanisms of differentiation within the field of power in the same way that social capital is crucial in deciding whether a manager rises to the position of chief CEO (Harvey and Maclean 2008:111).

The Matthew effect

We will now briefly look at one of the central "laws" of the accumulation of symbolic capital, the Matthew effect (or cumulative advantages), as it is described by Robert K. Merton (1988:606):

> The concept of cumulative advantage directs our attention to the ways in which initial comparative advantages of trained capacity, structural location, and available resources make for successive increments of advantage such that the gaps between the haves and the have-nots in science (as in other domains of social life) widen until dampened by countervailing processes.

The Matthew effect, which takes its name from the gospel of Matthew, describes the process through which all forms of resources are concentrated exponentially until the accumulation is stopped by countervailing tendencies. Those, who already have much of a dominant form of capital (e.g. scientific reputation), have more easy access to those other forms of capital, which makes it possible to produce more of the dominant form of capital. From this follows that resources and capital will grow in tandem in a upward moving spiral.

The Matthew effect of symbolic capital is a result of the collective character of symbolic capital. This means that a network, institution or title gain status according to the collective capital of its members (Bourdieu 1986, 1996:79–81, 201). This means that a reputable member will be elevated by the other members, and that they will be elevated by him. A network is prestigious because it only lets in the finest members, and the members have prestige because they are part of a prestigious network. This almost tautological circle of mutual recognition plays a part in creating vast inequality in the concentration of symbolic capital, and it can function as an efficient barrier between the executives who are a part of the establishment and those that are not. Thus, according to Mills (1956:282), it also shapes the individual's character to be placed in this circle of mutual recognition:

> In these diverse contexts, prestige accumulates in each of the higher circles, and the members of each borrow status from one another. Their self-images are fed by these accumulations and these borrowings, and accordingly, however segmental a given man's role may seem, he comes to feel himself a 'diffuse' or 'generalized' man of the higher circles.

As Mill indicates, the mutual giving of status has an integrating effect. Those that have received much from the status-giving network feel a certain loyalty toward those that are the cause of their symbolic resources. If the Matthew effect applies to the accumulation of symbolic capital within the Danish field of power, we have to expect a rising concentration of capital culminating in a small group possessing the major part of the symbolic resources.

While the field of power integrates through conflict and division of labour, as we have seen, it is also kept together by homogeneous habitual dispositions and mechanisms of reproduction. Because the struggles in the field of power concern the legitimation of the forms of capital, symbolic capital – the legitimating capital – is decisive in the field of power. Due to the kinship between symbolic and social capital, networks come to function as a central form – and indicator – of symbolic capital within the field of power (De Nooy 2003). The actors mutually legitimate their symbolic capital within prestigious networks. We assume this leads to a Matthew effect, through which capital is not accumulated linearly, but exponentially.

Data and methods

The basis of the present investigation is prosopographical data from publicly available sources, including Kraks Blå Bog, Greens Erhvervsinformation, OIS, FOA, CVR and an assortment of journalistic portrait articles found through the common archive of Danish newspaper articles, Infomedia. Our selection of data sources and the construction of variables and indicators drawns on the designs of earlier prosopographical studies (see e.g. Bourdieu 1996; Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009a; Maclean et al. 2006)[3].

We have included chief executives from 82 companies based on the size of the company's turnover and staff. The lower limits of these are set at 5 billion Danish Kroner (760 million USD) and 5.000 employees, respectively. Further, financially large companies are only included if they have more than 500 employees. In this way, the investigation captures both companies with strong financial and organisational capital (Bourdieu 2005:190). From these 82 companies we have collected data covering such things as: turnover, size, number of employees, age, ownership structure and publicity. We have

[3] See Ellersgaard and Larsen (2010:147–57) for further details.

drawn data from the companies' annual financial statements from 2004 to 2007.

For the largest companies such as A.P. Møller - Mærsk, Danske Bank and Arla, we have not only investigated chief executives but also an additional 12 board members. Finally, we have included six owner-managers, all former CEOs who are now chairs of the boards of the companies they own at least a significant portion of. Thus Lars Larsen from JYSK and Tom Kähler from Rockwoll have been included. This gives us a total population of 100 chief executives.

The construction of the space is undertaken through geometric data analysis (see Andrade, Karlson, and Bæk 2011; Denord et al. 2011; Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009b; Lebaron 2009) in the specific form of *multiple correspondence analysis* (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004, 2010). This allows us to include individuals, for whom we do not have information on all variables, in the construction of the spaces[4]. In this way we can identify the "hidden relations" in the data (Jæger 2006:52) using statistics in a way that does not break with, but lies in extension of Bourdieu's relational perspective on the social (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, and Passeron 1991:251; Broady 1988). The method is thus not only descriptive, but also capable of uncovering the structures that are generative of strategies within the field (Bourdieu 2005:102–3). In this way, correspondence analysis can be used to identify capital forms within the field of power (Bourdieu 1988, 1996, 2005; Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009b).

The prestige of the company

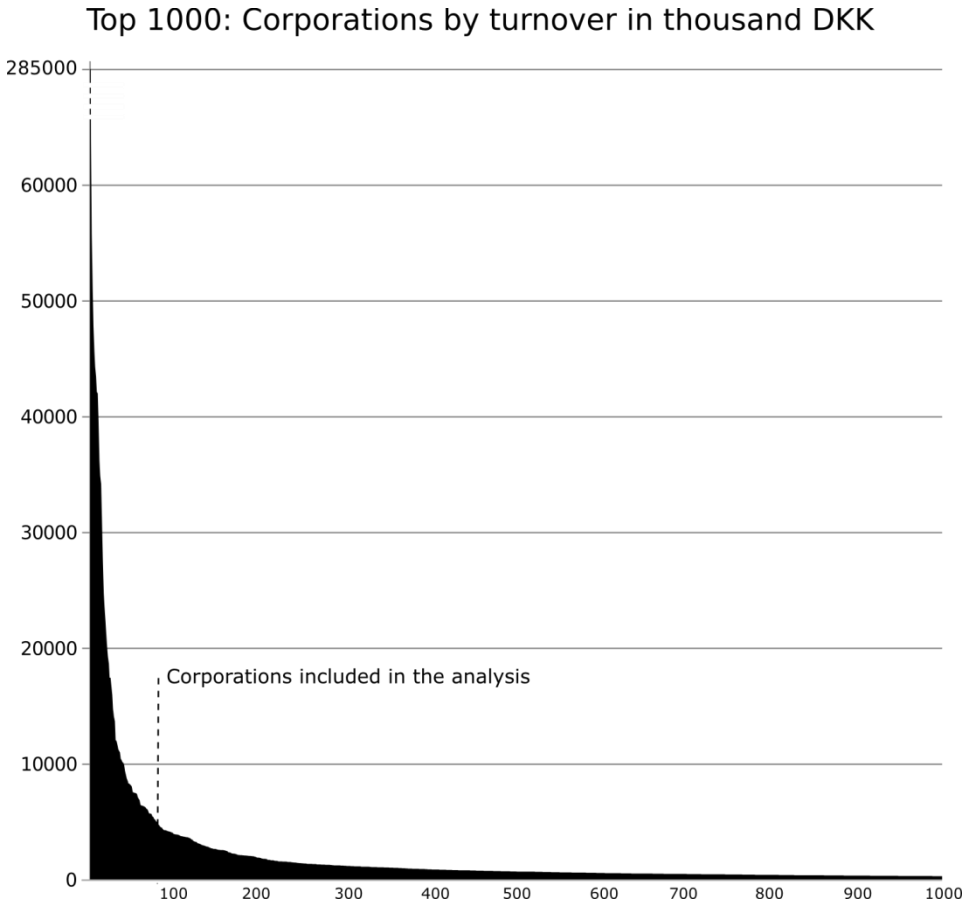
In order to investigate the relation between the integration of an executive in the field of power and the organisational capital of his company, we will now sketch out the field of large companies today including the relation between size and prestige. To describe how chief executives can operate within the field of power it is essential to understand how large companies are given prestige.

The Danish economy is largely characterised by its few, large actors. As we see in figure 2, the concentration of capital in Danish companies follows an exponential curve. This shape is a product of different strategies of consolidation, which have accelerated from 1970 until today (Iversen 2005). The result is the structure seen in figure 2, in which the largest five companies have a turnover 25 times (607

[4] The analysis conducted with the help of the Soc.ca-package to R (Larsen, Andrade, and Ellersgaard 2012). The code of the package is based on Michael Greenacre's "ca" package (Greenacre and Nenadic 2007), but it has a more user-friendly interface, with new graphic functions and relevant help-features. Methodologically and mathematically the package implements Brigitte Le Roux's specific correspondence analysis (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004, 2010). The package can be downloaded at: https://github.com/Rsoc/soc.ca/

billion kr.) as high as the five smallest of the 82 companies included in this analysis. These 82 companies account for 72% of the total turnover of largest 1000 companies in Denmark, and the 10 largest companies alone account for 33% of the total turnover. Thus, there are significant differences between the 82 companies, which have been included in the analysis. Even though the population is small, it captures a large part of the total economic activity in the largest Danish companies. If we had included more companies, it would have been hard to argue that the CEOs were faced with comparable challenges. For instance, there is a huge difference between managing the company with the largest organisation, ISS, with its more than 400.000 employees, and managing the company with the smallest in the investigation, Danske Spil, which with its 261 employees has several thousand times fewer employees than ISS. Overall, however, the absolute top of Danish companies have been included in the analysis, and the power potential of their directors is significant.

FIGURE 2: THE DANISH TOP 1000 CORPORATIONS BY TURNOVER



However, in order to understand the differences in the allocation of symbolic capital among chief executives it is not enough to look at the size of companies. One must take into account the symbolic

resources of the company, what we call a company's *prestige*. The prestige or reputation of a company is an important factor in deciding whether a CEO is included and decorated by the Royal Family. Prestige, i.e. the symbolic strength or the brand of the company, is an aggregate expression of the company's size, publicity, fame, the industry's importance within the national economy, the age and ownership structure of the company, and much more. However, even though many different factors can boost a company's prestige, much evidence suggests that we are dealing with a Matthew effect in which the different factors grow together (see our analysis of the space of top companies in Ellersgaard and Larsen 2010:134–5).

In their factor analysis, Rose and Thomsen (2004) have found that different types of reputation can be reduced to one form, in which an increase of one type leads to an increase in another. At the same time, they demonstrate the probability of investors buoying reputable companies, making them less vulnerable to market fluctuations or bad financial statements. Historically leading companies such as EATC [Danish East Asiatic Trading Company] can draw on this symbolic capital for decades. With a turnover of DKK 4.4 billion EAK it is one of the absolutely smallest companies in this analysis, yet it was mentioned in 8,081 articles within four years, which places it as number 32th in terms of publicity. Just as a bad press story need not have any lasting effect on a company's reputation, swings in economic performance need not affect its prestige.

The symbolic economy regulating the prestige of companies moves according to its own logic, which only partially follow the economic performance of companies. For instance, the role a company plays in the national self-understanding is important, e.g. in relation to the strategic interests taken by the state in certain companies. This is especially the case for export companies that bring foreign currency to Denmark, thus helping the Danish trade balance (Iversen and Andersen 2008:316ff). The interests of the state become the interests of the population, which is reflected in terms of publicity. For instance, export companies are mentioned in books thrice as often as home-market companies (Ellersgaard and Larsen 2010:117). An executive's possibilities of achieving social and symbolic capital in the field of power will follow the company's prestige and not merely its size. In the following correspondence analysis, we will compare the distribution of symbolic and social capital among CEOs with the companies' distribution of size and prestige.

The forms of capital

This investigation will look at the differences between chief executives, but it is important to remember

that this group is extremely homogeneous. Of the 100 chief executives two are women, six are from working class families, five are non-Danes, 92 are married, 54 have master-degree level education and 41 had their first professional position in management and leadership[5]. The fact that this group is so exclusive might lead us to expect that there will not be large differences in the amount of symbolic resources each CEO has achieved.

However, as we will see in the following table and correspondence analysis, the distribution of the different forms of social capital in in fact characterised by significant unevenness. In the following, we will look at those indicators that play an active part in the construction of the field. Table 1 is organised in headings (see Lebaron 2008), of which each capture the recognition of different parts of the field of power. The table also shows how large a contribution the different modalities and variables make to the two first dimensions in the correspondence analysis. Most of these measures have a mainly symbolic character and are therefore not direct expressions of the power resources of the CEO. At the same time, a variable is rarely expressive of symbolic capital alone. The aim of the following run down of the table is to give the readers a detailed insight into the forms of capital and in how they relate to the field of power.

TABLE 1: CONTRIBUTIONS OF ACTIVE VARIABLES[1]

	1st axis (%)	2nd axis (%)	Active indivi-duals	All indivi-duals
Publicity and biographies	*16.4*	*3.4*		
Articles: 0-10	2.3	1.9	19	36
Articles: 50-300	0.2	0.0	33	44
Articles: more than 300	4.5	1.4	20	20
Total	*7.0*	*3.3*	*72*	*100*
Biographed	8.5	0.1	7	7
Not biographed	0.9	0.0	65	93
Total	*9.4*	*0.1*	*72*	*100*
Royal recognition	*16.2*	*15.1*		
Danish decoration	4.6	5.6	23	23
No Danish decoration	2.1	2.6	49	77
Total	*6.7*	*8.2*	*72*	*100*

[1] The average contribution per modality is 1.8%.

(continued from previous page)

[5] For an international comparison of the population, see (Ellersgaard, Larsen, and Munk 2013).

	1st axis (%)	2nd axis (%)	Active individuals	All individuals
Foreign decoration	1.5	5.8	10	10
No foreign decoration	0.2	0.9	62	90
Total	*1.7*	*6.7*	*72*	*100*
Royal invitation	4.3	0.1	32	32
No royal invitation	3.5	0.1	40	68
Total	*7.8*	*0.2*	*72*	*100*
Directorates and board memberships	*23.7*	*27.1*		
VL groups: 1, 3 or 46	1.5	1.2	23	23
VL groups: Not 1, 3 or 46	2.1	2.5	23	23
VL groups: Not member	0.0	6.4	26	54
Total	*3.6*	*10.1*	*72*	*100*
Leader of the year	6.1	0.4	10	11
Not Leader of the year	1.0	0.1	62	89
Total	*7.1*	*0.5*	*72*	*100*
Top networks: Samtalegruppen	5.5	2.0	5	5
Top networks: Netværket	0.6	5.7	7	7
Top networks: Not in top networks	0.9	1.5	60	88
Total	*7.0*	*9.2*	*72*	*100*
Board memberships: +4	0.7	1.5	9	11
Board memberships: 1-3	0.4	0.4	44	55
Board memberships: None	0.2	0.0	19	34
Total	*1.3*	*1.9*	*72*	*100*
More than one membership of other top corporate board	0.5	3.7	7	7
One membership of other top corporate board	2.8	0.5	15	15
No memberships of other top corporate board	1.4	1.2	50	78
Total	*4.7*	*5.4*	*72*	*100*
State, politics and science	*13.9*	*21.5*		
Scientists on own board	1.5	2.9	15	18
No scientists on own board	0.4	0.8	57	82
Total	*1.9*	*3.7*	*72*	*100*
Politicians on own board	0.0	2.8	14	15
No politicians on own board	0.0	0.7	58	85
Total	*0.0*	*3.5*	*72*	*100*
Denmark-America foundation: Member of the Board	1.8	1.0	29	29
Denmark-America foundation: Corporation member	0.5	0.6	16	21
Denmark-America foundation: Not member of the Board	3.8	2.5	27	50
Total	*6.1*	*4.1*	*72*	*100*
(continued from previous page)				
Position in scientific institution	2.4	5.9	12	12
No position in scientific institution	0.5	1.2	60	88
Total	*2.9*	*7.1*	*72*	*100*

	1st axis (%)	2nd axis (%)	Active indivi-duals	All indivi-duals
Position in state commission	2.5	2.6	12	12
No position in state commission	0.5	0.5	60	88
Total	*3.0*	*3.1*	*72*	*100*
Corporation and residence	*29.4*	*32.9*		
CEO more than 10 years	1.8	4.8	23	27
CEO 5-10 years	0.6	1.0	23	35
CEO less than 5 years	4.0	1.2	26	38
Total	*6.4*	*7.0*	*72*	*100*
Salary: +11 mio. DKK	4.6	2.7	7	10
Salary: 10-11 mio. DKK	1.2	1.8	13	13
Salary: 6-9 mio. DKK	0.0	2.1	12	21
Salary: 3.5-6 mio. DKK	3.5	0.2	20	28
Salary: less than 3.5 mio. DKK	0.1	4.9	8	10
Total	*9.4*	*11.7*	*60*	*82*
Residence: Affluent Northern Copenhagen	0.8	3.5	27	41
Residence: Central Copenhagen	0.3	0.1	10	12
Residence: Copenhagen suburbs	0.2	0.2	7	12
Residence: Århus and Aalborg	2.1	0.0	8	9
Residence: Provincial cities	0.2	1.4	8	11
Residence: Estates and summerhouse	3.2	5.5	9	11
Residence: Abroad	0.9	0.0	3	4
Total	*7.7*	*10.7*	*72*	*100*
Real Estate: +12 mio. DKK	4.5	0.3	12	12
Real Estate: 8-12 mio. DKK	0.0	2.3	19	24
Real Estate: 3.5-8 mio. DKK	0.2	0.2	31	48
Real Estate: Less than 3.5 mio. DKK	1.2	0.7	7	12
Total	*5.9*	*3.5*	*69*	*96*

Publicity and biographies

As we have pointed out earlier, there are vast differences in the total capital of the different companies in our investigation. The exponential and monopolistic character of these differences reappear among executives. Thus, even within an extremely elitist group such as the 100 chief executives there are distinctive differences in symbolic recognition. As Table 1 shows, publicity is very unevenly distributed. Whereas most executives are mentioned in more than 50 articles in a year, very few CEOs have had their biographies written. Largely, the amount of publicity depends on the PR strategies of the companies. For instance, listed companies and their CEOs are generally much more visible. A strongly

networked and publicly known executive can also contribute to drawing attention to his company[6]. Yet it is important to remember that companies actively support the public profile of their CEO. Whereas articles are part of the daily news consumption circle, biographies are reflect the longer sales horizon of publishes. Biographies thereby capture different assessments of the executives, stressing the gravity, history and distinctive features of their subjects. It is thus largely the most important companies' managers or owners, who have their biographies written. This publicity can be a resource because it confirms the importance of the CEO: if he is famous, he unavoidably becomes a figure to reckon with. It might be expected that "too much" publicity will be a liability within this space, but as we will see this is not the case. This is due to the connection between publicity and company prestige, and the fact that publicity is seen as a condition for the CEOs of the largest companies.

Royal recognition

Royal recognition reflects the executive's connection to and recognition within a certain high bourgeois elite circling the Danish Court (Maclean et al. 2006:182). The Royal Family gives invitations and orders based on a judgement of the CEOs character and the company's prestige. Because it is state ministries who nominate executives, orders are to some extent an expression of the state's assessment of the character of the CEO, the company, and its national importance[7]. It is worth exploring to what extent the Royal Family functions as one of the central gatekeepers to the most powerful circles in Denmark, and if they control the access to a Danish equivalent of the French "establishment" (Bourdieu 1996:315ff). As seen in table 1, only a minority of CEOs are found worthy of the different forms of symbolic recognition given by the Royal Family and foreign states.

Executives and board members

In table 1, we see different forms of professional networks and boards. These networks have the double character of exclusive groups: they are both symbols and resources. Because the time of

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6 A good example is the difference between the two insurance company CEOs Stine Bosse of TrygVesta and Henrik Ramlau-Hansen of Danica. Despite great similarities in the size, publicity and business profiles of their companies, Ramlau-Hansen was personally mentioned 45 times, while Bosse was mentioned 438 times, and one of the only eight CEOs to have their biographies written.

7 However, there is also an element of social networking in the granting of orders and invitations, in which the CEOs who maintain relations with the Court are given more recognition as a result of personal friendships.

powerful individuals is a naturally scarce resource, to be given the time and attention of a chief CEO can raise your status (Goffman 1951:299). When a social relation becomes known, e.g. through official membership lists, the capital of the individuals is concretised. The symbolic value of membership follows from the total capital composition of the involved parties. A good example are the VL-groups who mainly count CEOs among their members, but also permanent secretaries of government ministries, professors, Vice-Chancellors, journalists, etc. These groups are closed career networks, and the old members pick new members based on their weight and personal characteristics. The most prestigious VL-groups are presumed to be 1, 3 and 46, where group number 3 counts people such as Niels Smedegaard Andersen (A.P. Møller - Mærsk), Karsten Dybvad (Confederation of Danish Industry), Karsten Ohrt (National Gallery of Denmark), Maria Rørbye Rønn (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) and Ove Ullerup (Lord Chamberlain). The VL-Groups thus reflect inclusion in the networks that integrate across the field of power. Contrary to networks (not only VL, but also Netværket and Samtalegruppen), boards of directors have decision-making powers. To entrust an actor with influence over a company is an expression of a very high level of trust and integration. The composition of boards of directors is therefore often used as a measure of the level of integration of the elite (Christiansen, Møller, and Togeby 2001; Gulbrandsen et al. 2002; Hjellbrekke et al. 2007; Schøtt 2003; Scott 1991a; Vedres and Stark 2010). In the study of boards of directors there are many pitfalls in identifying the central form of membership.

Most chief executives have positions on boards, but they rarely gain access to the boardrooms of other high-ranking companies. Almost one fourth of the chief executives are members of the three most prestigious VL-groups, while more informal network such as ”Netværket” and ”Samtalegruppen” are reserve for a small minority. Most forms of social capital within the field are only bestowed on a minority of the CEOs. The question, then, is if different CEOs are considered suited for specific board posts, or if these are concentrated on the hands of a smaller group of especially integrated chief executives.

State, politics and science

In figure 4, we see how many of the executives who have been able to successfully integrate across different elites. Such integration is expressed most clearly in the small number of chief executives who have been given posts in public commissions or who have politicians in the boards of their companies. These are the executives and companies that are recognized by the rest of the elite as having sufficient capital to be tied more closely to, for instance, the state elite. This integration is, as can be seen,

relatively rare. On the other hand, it is a sign of exclusion if an executive or company is not represented in the *Denmark-America Foundation*[8]. A strong relation to the state can be seen as a consecration of the executive, which identifies him as a representation of interests and opinions that are valid beyond his specific company. Such a relation makes the CEO a representative of the economic field in general.

The company and the home, economic recognition and position

A CEOs choice of residency also mirrors his connection to the field of power. When an executive settles in Northern Copenhagen, close to the rest of the Danish elite (Christiansen et al. 2001:233), it is often in the search of the opportunities of social integration that are connected to such an exclusive address:

> The importance attached to place of residence can be understood not only in the value attached to one's address, one's sign of nobility among others, but also in the importance that being at the very heart of "society" takes on for one's social life (parties, dinners, encounters).
>
> Bourdieu (1996:331)

The importance of the a centrally located home is also shown in a study of friendships within the French business elite (Kadushin 1995), which found that friendships are often made between the actors that live near to one another in the prominent quarters of Paris, a finding that resonates with Mills' (1956:47) description of the urban elite.

We also see that most common habitat of CEOs is the most prestigious part of of Northern Copenhagen, the so-called "Whiskey Belt". Often the executives who live elsewhere are employed by companies with very strong regional ties, such as Lego, Grundfos, Danfoss and Arla. The location of their homes is a reflection of company owners' strong preferences and roots in certain areas.

The size of a residence does not only reflect the economic capacity of an executive, but also his position in the field of tension between owners and managers. The owners can allow themselves a more extravagant life style than the more humble managers can. This is expressed both in salaries and economic capacity. A high salary functions as a signal for the company and the CEO. It gives the CEO a high position in the economic field, and it is perceived as "natural" that the largest companies pay the

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[8] DAF's board of directors bring together leading figures within the state, universities and industry.

highest salaries and have the most valuable executives. However, as with the character of the residence, an executive rarely makes enough on his salary to make the qualitative shift in economic capital, 'the big jump' (cf. Mills 1956:110–1) into the same economic league as the owners.[9] In the choice of address, we again see a fusion of symbolic and social capital where the address with the largest symbolic capital also becomes that which provides the best opportunities for accumulating social capital. The residence constitutes a rare opportunity for converting economic capital to other forms of capital. In Danish society, the choice of address guides a number of other choices concerning strategies of reproduction. When you choose a neighbourhood, you also choose the classmates and day care of your children, and much more. Thus, the choice of address reflects habitual dispositions of the elite to a marked degree.

Correspondence analysis: The concentration of power and status after the Matthew effect

After we have created an image of the distribution of different forms of symbolic and social capital, the question of their *relations* remains. In the following sections, we will investigate these relations by constructing the space for social and symbolic capital through a specific multiple correspondence analysis. However, an analysis based on the indicators we have presented above shows that the Matthew effect applies to such an extent that the space becomes skewed. One group of chief executives have so little social and symbolic capital compared to the others that we find them in an isolated position (see Ellersgaard and Larsen 2010:97). The distribution of symbolic and social capital among the hundred most important chief executives is so uneven that the constructed space becomes extremely heterogeneous. A group of unintegrated chief executives, who are not operating in the field of power, are therefore not contributing any nuances to the investigation. Thus, in order to reach a higher spread in the space, we have excluded them. However, the interpretation of the two primary access has not changed because of the exclusion and the dimensions therefore remain stable (cf. Le Roux and Rouanet 2004:277).

As explained above, the criteria of exclusion from the analysis is non-participation in central social or symbolic relations. Thus, we have excluded from the correspondence analysis those chief executives who are neither part of the boards of other top companies, the Denmark-America Foundation or a VL-group, and who have neither participated in royal events nor received Danish or non-Danish

[9] However, high salaries and stock-options lift the CEOs out of the dependency on wage labour and enable them to live of the interest of their acquired capital. This places them in the lower part of the owning class (Wright 1997:25).

orders. Of the 100 chief executives 28 fall within this group. Of these, only three are vice-executives (of Carlsberg, Arla and ISS) and one (Eelco van Heel of Rockwool) is from a company where the owner-manager is also among the other 100 chief executives. Thus, the whole management of A.P. Møller – Mærsk and Danske Bank are still part of the group of chief executives who, within this perspective, are part of and recognized within the field of power. The rest of the excluded chief executives primarily represent the smaller companies among the 82 in terms of turnover and prestige, with Jesper Lien (Coop) and Kurt Kokhauge Larsen (DSV) as exceptions. However, this exclusion is not only due to methodological concerns. That nearly 30% of the 100 highest-ranking chief executives are unintegrated within the field of power is a surprising and interesting finding. *The social circles of the elite are extremely narrow in Denmark.*

We have thus constructed a space with 72 integrated chief executives. We will now briefly introduce how this this analysis must be interpreted. The interpretation of the axes is inferred by the modalities with a contribution value above average (Jambu 1991:286). The active dimensions are chosen from a criterion of interpretability, as well as their relative strength in relation to one another. The first dimension explains 46% of the total adjusted inertia (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004:205–15), while the other dimension explains 22%[10]. Both dimensions have obvious interpretations, while the third only explains 9% and does not have any clear interpretation. The third dimension captures an opposition between a specific sub-group of Copenhagen-based CEOs and a number of the owners based in Jutland. The present we do not have any theoretical and empirical reasons to presume that this dimension is central for the understanding of the chief executives.

Since we intuitively understand power relationships as top-down, we have exchanged the first and second axis of the map, so that the strongest dimension is vertical. All maps have principal coordinates in order to make interpretation across variables more reliable. Distances of more than 0.5 are considered strong relations, while distances of more than 1.0 are considered very strong connections (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:71). We will now begin a closer interpretation of the two dimensions.

FIGURE 3: THE SPACE OF CAPITAL ON THE FIELD OF POWER: INDIVIDUALS

[10] Two modalities are passive in this analysis: ”Property: Abroad” and ”Salary: Lacking information”. They amount to less than 1% of the total mass in the analysis.

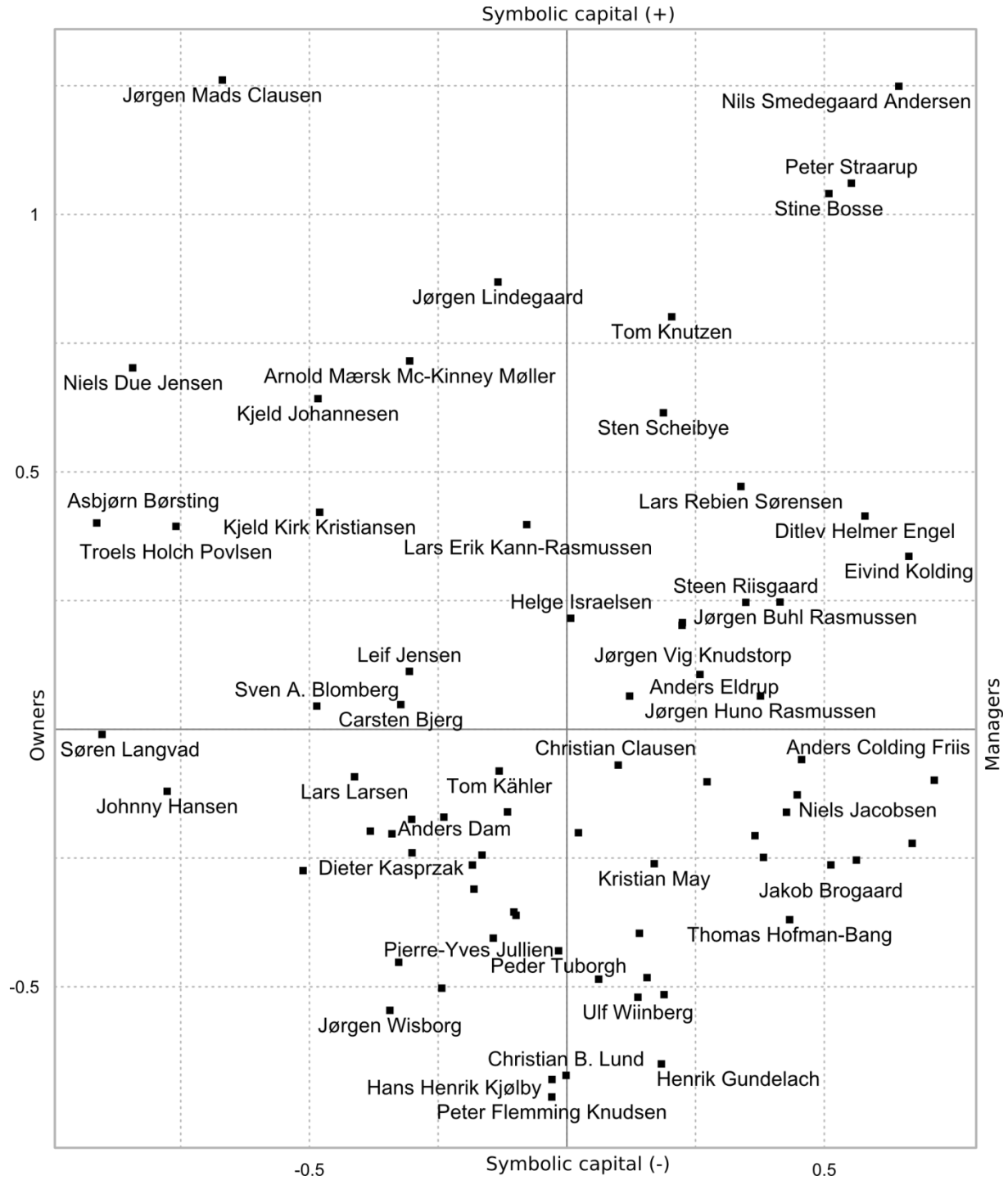
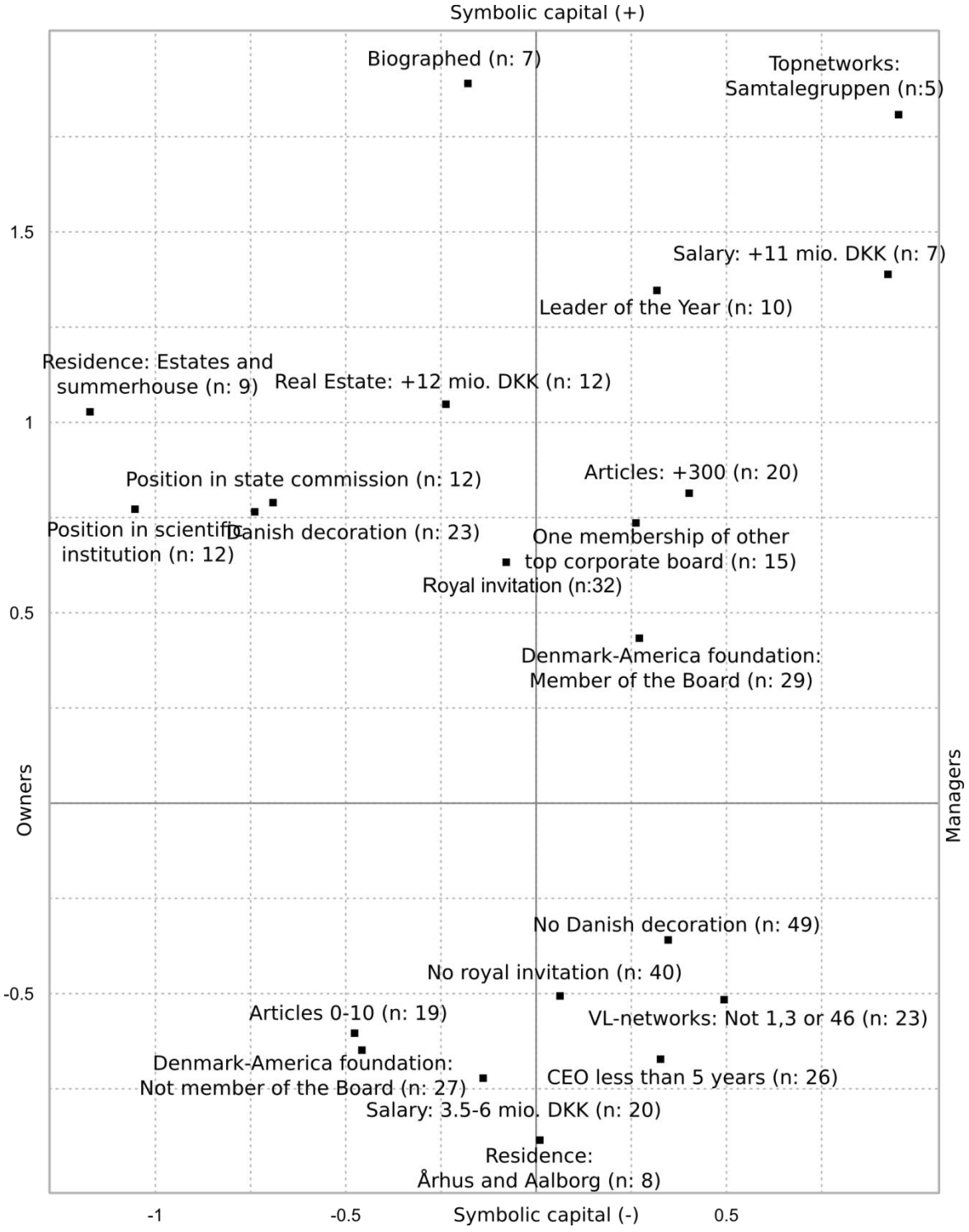

Symbolic capital (+)
Jørgen Mads Clausen
Nils Smedegaard Andersen
Peter Straarup
Stine Bosse
1
Jørgen Lindegaard
Tom Knutzen
Niels Due Jensen
Arnold Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller
Kjeld Johannesen
Sten Scheibye
0.5
Asbjørn Børsting
Lars Rebien Sørensen
Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen
Ditlev Helmer Engel
Troels Holch Povlsen
Lars Erik Kann-Rasmussen
Eivind Kolding
Steen Riisgaard
Helge Israelsen
Jørgen Buhl Rasmussen
Leif Jensen
Jørgen Vig Knudstorp
Sven A. Blomberg
Anders Eldrup
Jørgen Huno Rasmussen
Carsten Bjerg
Owners
Managers
Søren Langvad
Christian Clausen
Anders Colding Friis
Lars Larsen
Tom Kähler
Johnny Hansen
Niels Jacobsen
Anders Dam
Dieter Kasprzak
Kristian May
Jakob Brogaard
Thomas Hofman-Bang
Pierre-Yves Jullien
Peder Tuborgh
-0.5
Ulf Wiinberg
Jørgen Wisborg
Christian B. Lund
Henrik Gundelach
Hans Henrik Kjølby
Peter Flemming Knudsen
-0.5
Symbolic capital (-)
0.5

FIGURE 4: THE SPACE OF CAPITAL ON THE FIELD OF POWER: MODALITIES WITH STRONGEST CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIMENSION 1



First dimension: Symbolic capital in the field of power

The first dimension describes the total amount of capital and opposes one or several of the indicators of symbolic capital against modalities without these properties. As we saw in Table 1 this dimension is

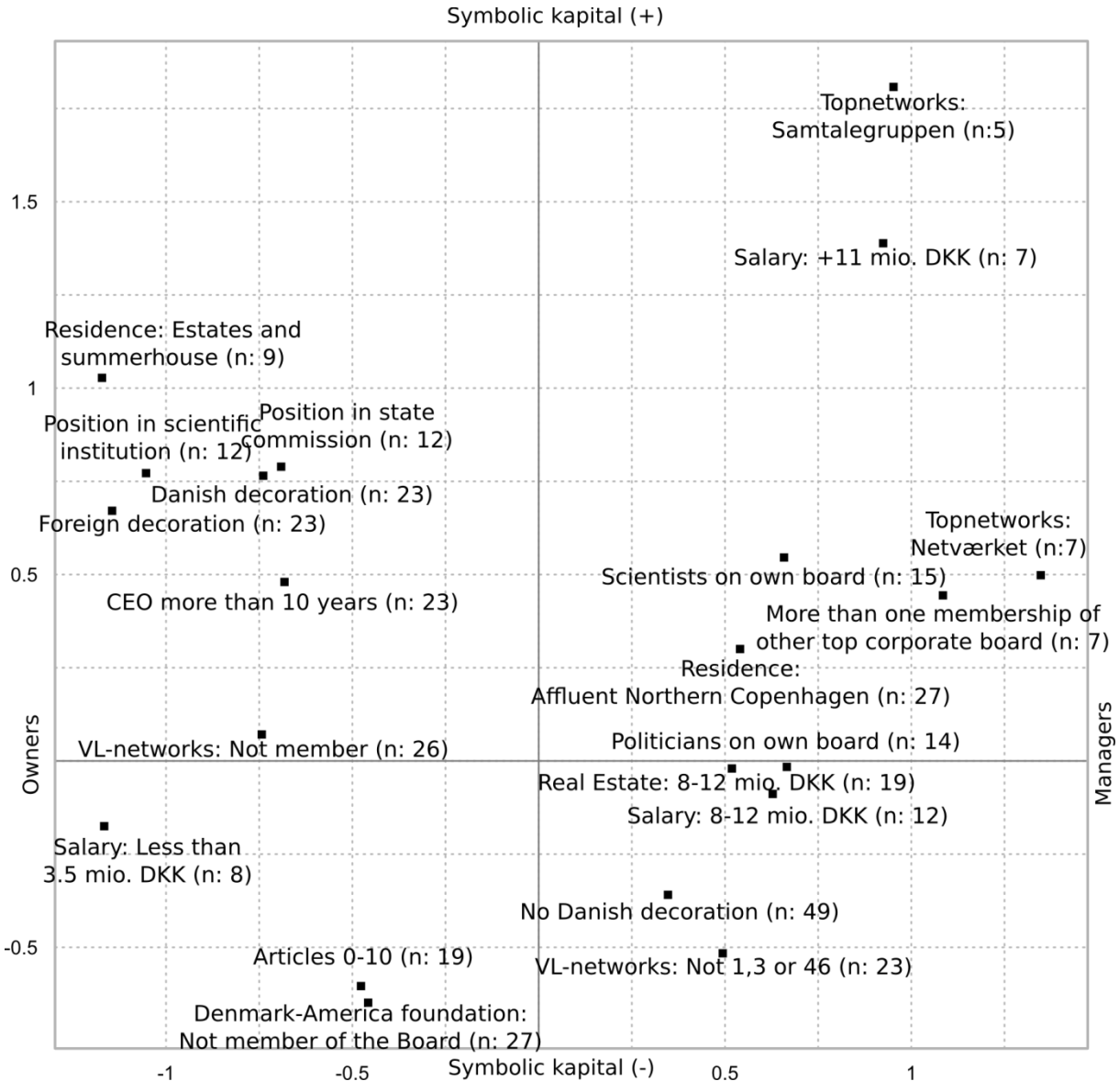
relatively equally determined by the two different headings. However, both royal recognition and publicity are relatively strong. This dimension demonstrates an opposition between the symbolically dominant executives at the top, and the excluded at the bottom. As figure 4 shows, the CEOs with most publicity are in the best networks, they receive the highest salaries and live in the finest and best residencies. They are placed in the top of the space. Opposite we find the excluded CEOs with low publicity and relatively low salaries. Here we also find those CEOs who have been chief executives for less than five years. Some of these will be able to move upwards in the space, as it takes time to convert other forms of capital into symbolic capital.

The dimension demonstrates that the distribution of different types of symbolic capital follows the Matthew principle (cf. Merton 1968). This becomes apparent when such diverse forms of recognition as network membership, awards for being executive of the year, residency and public posts follow the same dimension. It is also supported by the fact that the most recent arrivals within the field are placed at its bottom. Meanwhile, at the top of the map we find the executives of the largest Danish companies, as demonstrated by figure 3. At the very top of the map, we find owner and erstwhile executive of Danfoss Jørgen Mads Clausen and A.P. Møller Maersk chief executive Nils Smedegaard Andersen. At the bottom of the map, we find executives of relatively smaller companies such as Jørgen Wisborg from OK Benzin and Christian B. Lund from Sanistål. At the same time, we see that the cloud of individuals has its centre of gravity towards the bottom, while its spread continues to increase towards the top. Thus, a small number of CEOs possess significantly more symbolic capital than the rest.

One of the individuals placed in the upper part of the map, Stine Bosse, was the leader of the insurance company Tryg at the time of data collection. She later left her post and became more closely integrated in other elites, most prominently as the chair of the board of the Royal Danish Theatre and the think-thank Concito. The interpretation in this analysis would be that executives with lower total symbolic capital would not be candidates to these positions. Here we see that symbolic capital within the field of power is convertible to top positions within other fields.

It is interesting to note that being a member of a low-status VL-group places you lower than those who are not included. This is a result of the fact that several owner-managers are not members of VL-groups, but recipients of many other forms of symbolic resources. However, it is worth mentioning that had we included more executives as active individuals, the modality of lacking VL-membership would have been placed significantly lower in the space. The sharp distinctions between the strength of different VL-groups are made by the already included executives.

FIGURE 5: THE SPACE OF CAPITAL ON THE FIELD OF POWER: MODALITIES WITH STRONGEST CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIMENSION 2



Second dimension: Owners and managers

The second dimension divides the spaces horizontally in an opposition between different forms of symbolic capital. On the left pole we have the owners who gain their income as return on capital; they do not prioritize professional networks, and seek to integrate with the state instead. The integration happens both symbolically in the form of orders and royal invitations, but also through honorific posts and seats on state commissions. The owners also often live further away from the central networks of

North Zealand and Copenhagen. Among them, we find landowners such as Troels Holch Povlsen and Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, owners of Bestseller and Lego respectively.

We thus find an opposition between the heirs and the owners on the one side, and the employed CEOs, who have built their position through their career, on the other (Bourdieu 1996:270). According to the post-Keynesian school of economics (Stockhammer 2004) we find three opposed class position within the capitalist class: executives, capitalists and rentiers. Capitalists and rentiers are both owners, but where the capitalist is an executive owner, the rentier is a relatively passive recipient of dividends. The executive, who is not an owner, is placed in a relationship of contradiction with the circle of owners: theoretically, he is more interested in the growth of the company than maximizing shareholder value. In other words, the CEOs are interested in strengthening their status within their specific field by increasing its organisational capital. This relation explains that the owners of many companies have tried to tie the executives closer to the interests of the owners, by increasingly paying them through stock options and bonus schemes[11].

The managers, i.e. the executives who have not inherited their position through ownership, distinguish themselves by being members of more networks, having more posts on executive boards and much higher salaries. They are also more in the same boards as members of other elites. It is interesting that the Royal Family are bestowing most recognition on the owners, who have the same mechanism of reproduction as them, namely the family based one (cf. Bourdieu 1996:278–85). This opposition between strategies of reproduction has divided the field of power since the days of absolutist monarchy (cf. Hansen and Hammerslev 2010:20).

The differences we find in this correspondence analysis suggest that owners and managers have very different strategies and needs. To some extent we can see the central networks as attempts by the executives to position themselves internally in the competition between executives, cf. figure 5. At the same time, we see that state-actors prefer to include the owners directly in commissions and committees, while the executives integrate themselves through networks. These oppositions demonstrate that there are divisions even within this exclusive and homogeneous group, and that these divisions matter for personal careers as well as for the character of the types of state contacts different companies can achieve. Companies with strong and active owners have other opportunities than companies with diverse or passive ownership circles. The largest companies have the option of

[11] This is happening despite the fact that about 300 studies of the effect of stock options on company profitability have been unable to establish a clear effect (cf. Daily 2003).

harvesting the advantages of both an active owner and a prestigious executive. We see this in figure 5 where both the manager Nils Smedegaard Andersen and the owner Arnold Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller have a high position within the field[12].

Prestige and character

The connections described above are interesting, but if they do not map onto the resources of the companies – in a way that places the largest companies at the top of the map – it would raise the question if the dimensions actually capture integration within the field of power or if it merely shows local connections. Meanwhile, one would expect that the status differences uncovered in the analysis would be the expression of different compositions of habitual dispositions among the CEOs. This would entail that executives from distinguished homes would have their own specific strategies. We can attempt to answer these questions through an analysis of supplementary variables for company prestige and the character of executives.

Prestige

In the analysis of the supplementary modalities (see figure 6 and appendix) we see that the most prestigious companies measured by turnover, employee number and publicity are significantly higher placed in the relatively smaller companies. Not surprisingly, integration and recognition follow the strength of the organisation. This also demonstrates that integration and the distribution of symbolic resources to the executives follows the company's prestige and place within the economic field. This would indicate that the symbolic resources of an executive stands in a dialectical relationship to the resources of the company. In figure 7, we see that this connection is not complete, because relatively smaller companies are pulled up by their symbolic resources, for example in the form of publicity. Here it is clear that some of the family-owned companies with active owners are able to achieve a higher integration than much larger enterprises. This, for instance, is the case of Lego (0.5), which is one of the smaller companies in the population, in comparison with Nykredit (-0.25), which is one of the largest companies measured by turnover. Both are on Danish hands, but Lego is a dynasty, an export company and a "national pride". This has implications for the allocation of symbolic resources. We also see that amount of mentions a company gets in books has a large impact on how included its chief executive is. The accumulated symbolic capital of the company is also reflected in the recognition of

[12] However, not all owners share the symbolic capital, as we see in the relation between JYSK's owner, Lars Larsen, and its manager, Hans Henrik Kjølby.

the CEO. This suggests that the symbolic capital personified in the CEO also, but not only, is an expression of the collective strategy of a whole enterprise.

FIGURE 6: THE SPACE OF CAPITAL ON THE FIELD OF POWER: SUPPLEMENTARY MODALITIES

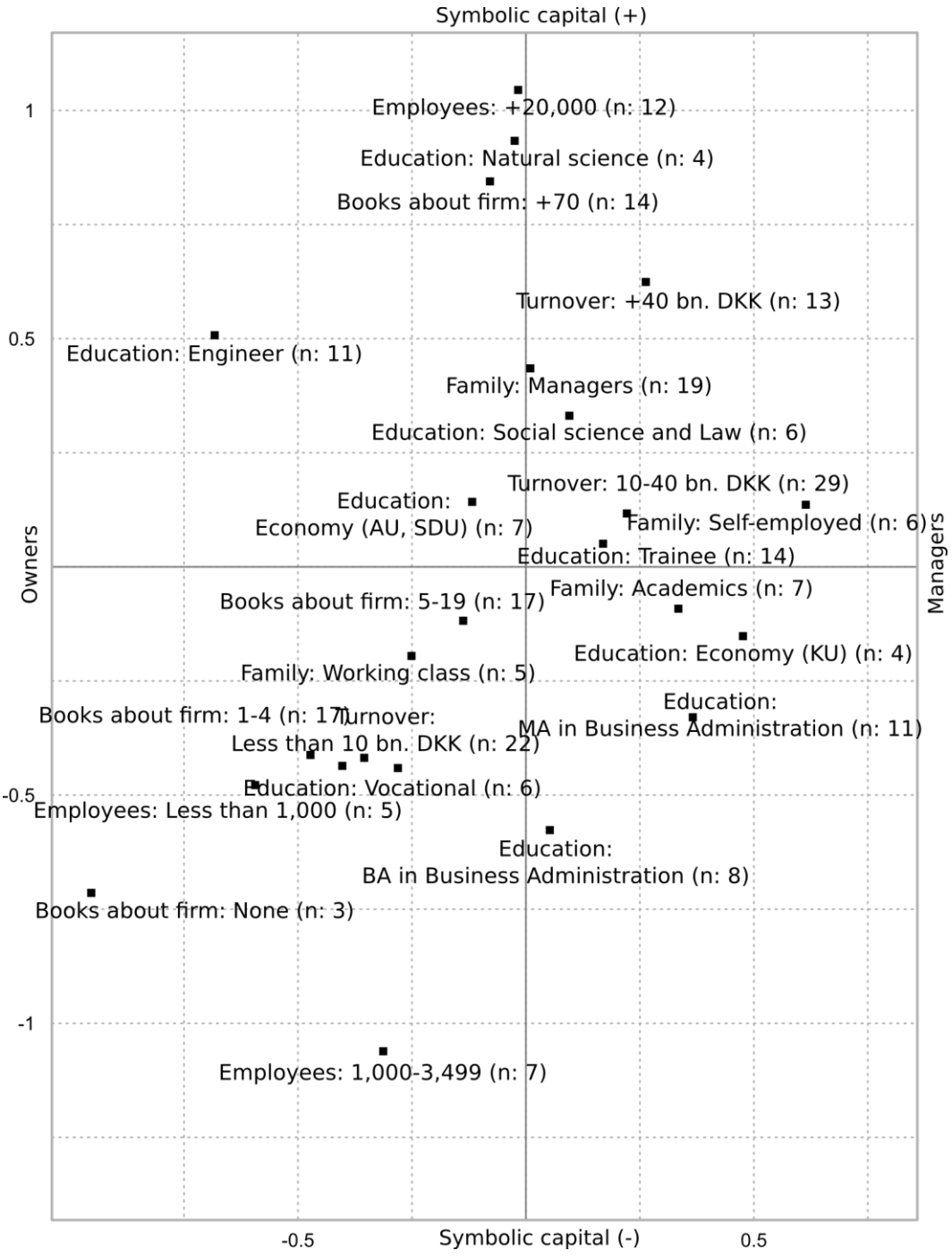


FIGURE 7: THE SPACE OF CAPITAL ON THE FIELD OF POWER: CORPORATIONS

Character

We measure the executive's character through data for his and his father's education, which together give access to what Michael Hartmann (2000:6) describes as the "class-specific habitus". In figure 6, we see that the executive's education varies very closely with the amount of recognition. For instance, we

see that civil engineers or scientifically trained CEOs have stronger positions than executive who merely have degrees in Business & Management. Here the contradiction between owners and managers reappears, because the many more owners than managers have degrees in civil engineering. Simultaneously, it is apparent that CEOs with parents who have also been executives have higher positions. The largest companies often hire executives with family backgrounds in management due to a double mechanism: firstly because they stand more strongly in the internal competition, and secondly because they have resources that can help them gain symbolic capital beyond the symbolic capital that comes with a job in a given company. In this conversion of one form of capital to another, we once again see the Matthew principle in action.

Conclusion: Owners and managers within the field of power

By establishing different measures for social and symbolic capital in the field of power, this analysis has demonstrated that one can identify a dimension of total capital, which follows a Matthew effect in which the different forms of capital grow in tandem. To a large extent symbolic and social capital are expressions of the same upward movement in the space. This is due to the kinship of the two forms of capital, but also to the fact that inclusion (social and symbolic) is the central mechanism of differentiation within the field of power. The importance of social capital within the field power springs from its diverse composition and the fact that integration within it is based on both homogeneity and difference. The inequality in symbolic capital between the 100 top-most chief executives means that including the lowest 28 of them would skew the space downwards, in a way that would make it harder to see the differences within it. This suggests that even within this extremely exclusive group the distribution of symbolic capital, which is important in the field of power, is so uneven that is far from all actors that can assert themselves. The analysis makes visible the divisions between the integrated and powerful executives and the executives who are not capable or do not want to play an active role in the field of power.

The analysis also identifies a contradiction between owners and managers, once again finding internal divisions in the distribution of symbolic resources within the class of capitalists. All this shows that the state and other elites allocate different types of capital to owners and managers respectively and it shows that owners are more frequently invited to participate in public bodies. Managers, on the other hand, are much better mutually integrated, as shown in their status in the field of executives. Recognition is mainly bestowed upon people who are already recognised. Thus state actors also take part in giving certain actors advantages. This group is not representative of the rest of the economic

field and it is therefore worth investigating if this biases economic policy in favour of these actors.

Discussion: Chief executives and the size of the power elite in Denmark

Compared to previous elite studies in Denmark and internationally, the population of this study is very homogeneous and restricted, because we only look at the 100 most important executives. For instance, the elite-study of large state funded research project Power and Democracy in Denmark[13] (Christiansen et al. 2001) included 500 business people, among them 250 executives. It was thus not to be expected that our correspondence analysis would find it hard to differentiated between the least prestigious CEOs in the bottom of the map, because we presumed that these executives were included in the social networks around the power elite. However, that a relatively large group can be described as 'have-nots' (Denord et al. 2011), suggests that the group is too heterogeneous in terms of social and symbolic capital. This finding is in itself interesting, because it raises the question of the size of the power elite in Denmark.

The analysis suggests that only about half of the most important CEOs in our analyses are included in the social circles– both company boards, royal events, foundations and more social clubs such as the VL-groups – around what Bourdieu describes as "the establishment" and what C. Wright Mills defines as a power elite, properly speaking. The integration in these exclusive social circles seems to be limited both in terms of integration internally in the economic field – i.e. with other chief executives, chairmen and owners – as well as in relation to the main players in both the scientific and the political field.

If, in addition to managing directors, one estimates how many actors from the top of the economic field (e.g. chairmen, owners, investors, managers of pension funds, leaders of employers' organizations or representatives from public authorities such as the National Bank) are included in these circles, it may double the amount of inclusions from the economic field within the power elite. In that case, we might deal with some 100 individuals, representing only a fifth of that economic elite, which was identified in *Power and Democracy in Denmark*. While that study contains 1,711 positions in its entirety, and our analysis of its data (Ellersgaard 2014; Ellersgaard and Larsen 2008) suggests that the business

[13] This project, known in Danish as "Magtudredningen" was launched by the initiative of the Danish parliament in March 1997 and officially entitled, "An Analysis of Democracy and Power in Denmark." The study was headed by an independent research committee.

elite is the best integrated[14], we can estimate that such a socially integrated power elite may only consist of between 250 and 500 people.

Thus, we are proposing a significantly more narrow definition of elite size than suggested by the tradition of elite studies. Typically, such studies focus on about 2,000 persons in countries such as Denmark and Norway (Gulbrandsen et al. 2002), about 3,000 in Sweden (Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1990), 5,000 in medium-sized countries such as Australia, France, and Germany and 7,000 in the super power USA (Burton and Higley 2001:189). The tradition presumes that the larger the country, the larger its elite. However, this presumption does not suggest that the relationship is directly proportional. Thus, the elite of the USA is taken to be 3½ larger than that of Denmark, even if the country's population is 50 times larger. Behind this lies a notion of the relative strength of power in relation to other actors within the nation-state-based organized power elite. However, such studies rarely make explicit their criteria weighing the relative strength of power, and most elite studies are very vague about their reasons for choosing a specific population size. Yet such delimitations are interesting results in themselves, especially comparatively, and they are naturally of great importance for the results of the analysis of the selected population.

Here, a definition of the elite, which looks at the actual network connections within the elite, could provide the answer to question of which individuals are found worthy - and thus have the necessary social or symbolic capital – to enter into the highest circles. Memberships are both a power resource in itself and an indication that an actor has been initiated into the division of labour of domination. Based on data from the Norwegian power study, Denord et al (2011) have found an elite with a size of about 290 individuals, which integrates itself across key sectors. This study looks at exchanges between sectors, and the population is not obtained by means of network data, but through the position method. We believe that the development of a method that identifies elite membership through aggregated network connections could contribute significantly to the solution of both the problem of the size of the elite, and provide a computerized image of the elite's composition. This will require a methodological application of inductive social network analysis (see Scott 1991b) to the task of defining elite populations. As mentioned, such a strategy will probably provide a significantly smaller elite population, which can be seen as interwoven by a mechanical solidarity created by many meetings in integrating social communities (cf. Collins 2004).

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[14] These analyses even suggest that certain sub-elites, especially the cultural elite, but also partially the media-elite are almost totally excluded.

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III. The Inner Circle Revisited: The Case of an Egalitarian Society

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Abstract

The interlocks between the corporate elite in a highly egalitarian society, the Scandinavian welfare state of Denmark, are examined through re-establishing Michael Useem's notion of the inner circle, which describes the conditions of the formation of classwide rationality in the corporate elite. In spite of challenges to intercorporate cohesion from the ongoing internationalization of capital, the withdrawal of banks and the limits to networking posed by new standards of corporate governance, a cohesive core group of 171 individuals is identified within the entire corporate elite of 6154 board members of the top 1037 Danish corporations in 2012. Using a new measure of social circles memberships based on proximity in social networks, the identified inner circle encapsulates the notion of the inner circle better than the usual indicator of inner-circle memberships, number of top board memberships. A high level of social homogeneity of gender, social background, education, and career position underlines the cohesion of the inner circle. Further, the members of this inner circle are the main political representatives of the corporate elite in other powerful networks. By data-mapping all powerful networks in Denmark (i.e. business association committees, political commissions, university governing boards, cultural institutions, social clubs, foundations, and royal events) it is shown that the inner-circle members appear more frequently in all fields of power than other the rest of the corporate elite.

Introduction

In the wake of the financial crisis and the subsequent downturn in the global economy, an old spectre returned: the spectre of the upper classes, the ultra-rich, and the capitalist class. And yet, the prevailing impression is that this class no longer has an organized capacity to act in a concerted fashion. This is particularly the case in countries where class action *in general* is viewed as most improbable, such as the egalitarian welfare states of Scandinavia. Of these countries Denmark in particular has been regarded as, if not a pluralist haven, then at least one with relatively weak coherence and high openness in recruitment (Christiansen and Togeby 2007; Ruostetsaari 2007). Along with the perceived waning class consciousness of the working class and relative income equality it is tempting to see Denmark as one of the most likely cases for the "death of class" thesis (see e.g. Bell 1973; Pakulski and Waters 1996). However, the social organization of the capitalist class has been neglected in discussions of the dissolution of class society. A closer examination of the inner circle within the network of the Danish corporate elite questions the notion of the death of class action and reveals a capitalist class that exists, to express it in the most classical terms, both "in and for itself".

Michael Useem's (1984) concept of "the inner circle" provides a framework capable of challenging the misconception of a fragmented corporate community by exploring its networks. The inner circle is a cohesive segment of the capitalist class, organised through interlocking board memberships to create the basis for a classwide rationality representing the interest of big business at large. This inner circle is, in turn, shown to be the also most politically active among the corporate elite, appearing on, for example, university boards, in policy planning groups, in business organizations, and exclusive social clubs. The inner circle both facilitates the formation of class interest and represents this interest among other elites. While demonstrating the existence and framework of an inner circle in Denmark, the authors, along with constructing the inner circle framework, were faced with three challenges. First, the classical boundary problem of elite sociology: Who can be regarded as members of the elite? Second: How can we observe the political action of this group? Third: Under the current business infrastructure, which has been developed to respond to a more and more globalized economy and new standards of corporate governance, is it still possible to form cohesive corporate groups in egalitarian societies such as Denmark?

The primary aim of this study, then, was to establish the continued relevance of the concept of the inner circle. Originally, Useem (1984:63) used multiple memberships of top corporate boards as a "proxy" of inner-circle membership for "technical convenience". However, a more empirically sensitive procedure for identifying the intersection of social circles through social network analysis was developed by Richard Alba and Charles Kadushin (1976). When investigating the inner circle by applying this method to the network of multiple board members of the top 1037 Danish corporations, a core became visible. After identifying this inner circle, the social homogeneity of their biographies was assessed. Finally, the political activity of the inner circle was demonstrated by mapping their participation in other potentially powerful networks, drawing on unique data of all institutionalized power networks in Denmark. This enables us to analyze whether or not an inner circle identified only by positions in the corporate network is more likely to be part of other important elite networks.

Background: The Fracturing of the Inner Circle in Contemporary Capitalism

Recent developments have seriously challenged the inner circle hypothesis. In a number of countries the level of integration within the inner circles of corporate elites has deteriorated for three reasons: (1) the decline of bank involvement in the corporate networks; (2) the emergence of transnational corporate networks; and (3) new standards of corporate governance. The Danish context questions the extent to which these developments have rendered the concept of inner circle obsolete. Contrary to the intuitive notion that a country with relatively strong labor organizations and egalitarian politics such as Denmark would lack a strong corporate elite, perhaps these institutions engender a greater need for corporate elite unity in order to secure the interests of the capitalist class.

First, as the American interlocks had been tied through bank centrality (see Mariolis 1975), the disengagement of banks led to a much more loosely and infrequently tied corporate network in the US (Davis and Mizruchi 1999; Mizruchi 2013). In Denmark, corporate law prohibits bank directors from taking board positions outside the financial sector (Edling et al. 2012). As a result, the network has never relied on banks, therefore changes in their behaviour are unlikely to have had much impact the corporate network.

Secondly, small, open economies such as the Netherlands and Switzerland, both comparable to the Danish economy, have experienced a decline in the number of corporate interlocks (Bühlmann, David, and Mach 2012; Heemskerk and Fennema 2009). Whereas dissolution of the US corporate network can be explained by the bank centers turning their attention away from productive capital, the weakening of ties in the smaller economies can in part be attributed to the influx of foreign capital. Foreign ownership will usually result in foreign directors and board members. As the national networks decline we see the rise of new trans-European or global elites formed by "global interlockers" (Carroll 2010). However, Denmark is still at the periphery of European corporate elite formation (van Veen and Kratzer 2011). Furthermore, both the Netherlands and Switzerland are hosts to numerous transnational corporations, whereas Danish corporations are comparatively small, with the exception of the shipping giant and conglomerate A.P. Møller – Mærsk, the only Danish corporation listed in *Fortune's Global 500*. The Netherlands have 11 listed corporations and Switzerland 14. The Danish case thus sheds light on whether or not the inner circle has also corroded within economies with relatively small corporations[1].

Thirdly, as changes to international standards of corporate governance (see e.g. Ferris, Jagannathan, and Pritchard 2003) question the legitimacy of the "olds boys' " network, the challenge in Denmark arises more from ideological inspiration than direct interest of ownership as Danish corporations have not yet been subject to dispersed shareholding. Of the top 82 corporations in 2008 (Ellersgaard, Larsen, and Munk 2013), 25 were controlled by families, 15 were controlled by foundations, six were state-owned, and nine were owned by cooperatives. Of the 1037 corporations included in this study, only 88 were listed on the stock exchange and some were even retained under a system of classified stocks. Corporations are therefore able to remain more autonomous from stock market influence and to a large extent, include board members they trust. The sparse research on corporate interlocks and interlockers in Denmark also suggests a high degree of clustering (Schøtt 2003) and that the small-world phenomenon is more common in Denmark than in the rest of Scandinavia (Edling et al. 2012).

[1] However, the 1,037 corporations employed around 1,600,000 both inside and outside Denmark, which would be equal 57 % of the total Danish labor force, showing their potential importance in spite of their apparent lack of size.

The international tendency towards the fracturing of corporate elites could also be attributed to the inner circle's decreasing need for coordinated political action, owing to the rise of neoliberal politics (Mizruchi 2013), as the cohesion of the inner circle also derives from the extent of political opposition to corporate interests (Useem 1982). The context of a decommodifying the Scandinavian welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990) and a coordinated market economy (Hall and Soskice 2001) creates a relatively equal and affluent society for the distribution of income as measured by Gini coefficient and high GDP per capita levels (Campbell and Hall 2006).

Furthermore, organized labor still holds a strong, if declining position, with union density at about 70% (Visser 2006). This corporatist environment created by the collective organization of both labor and business also ties union leaders to the corporate world through union-owned banks and employer–employee owned pension funds. However, recent declines in union density, level of equality and corporatism (Blom-Hansen 2001) are challenging the consensus based on cross-class alliances. Thus, the role of union leaders as both tied to and a political challenger of the corporate elite remains unclear. At the same time, business organizations remain key political actors of the corporate worlds, both as lobbyists and through involvement in government (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, and Pedersen 2014). This adds to the paradox of the status of the inner circle in Denmark. Does egalitarian, corporatist society, as one of the last challenges to neoliberalism, remain a place where capitalists have to unite, even outside of the business associations?

Theory: The Notion of the Inner Circle

In emphasizing the creation of class cohesion through social interaction within the elite, Useem's concept of the inner circle follows a current in classic elite theory. From Mosca (1939) and C.W. Mills (1956) to studies of corporate interlocks (Allen 1974; Mintz and Schwartz 1981; for review, see Mizruchi 1996; Scott 1991), this tradition has defined the social integration of the elite by their social integration. This is in contrast to a tradition running across sociologists as diverse as Pareto (1991) and Bourdieu (1996), who in various ways emphasize the resources and formal positions of elite individuals.

Any search for a cohesive elite group struggles with the demarcation of the core group (Laumann, Marsden, and Prensky 1983). In a democratic society, lacking the formal definitions of social standing, defining the exact boundaries of such a group must be akin to demarcating a cloud

(Bourdieu 1996). As a result, the inner circle is not a distinct group with clearly marked boundaries but an axis of inner group centrality within the capitalist class (Useem 1979). The extensive networks create cohesion within this elite group through ties of friendship, kinship, ownership, clubs, business associations, and boardroom interlocks (Cornwell and Dokshin 2014). Furthermore, the cohesiveness created by these networks is in turn enhanced by the members forming a status group exhibiting social closure and shared values and manners (Domhoff 1975; Useem 1978), thus forming a "class-specific habitus" (Hartmann 2000). The connections serve many purposes, but an extended "business scan" is of particular importance (Useem 1982). By tapping into the flow of information that moves in these networks, the directors and their corporations gain privileged information on the plights and opportunities of other corporations. By maintaining direct contact with state officials, the directors gain insights into the workings of the political apparatus. As Bourdieu (1996:368) stated, "information on power is a source of power in and of itself". But these channels of information are also channels for reputation and social control.

Manoeuvring multiple directorates, boardrooms and business organizations may be a tricky business, because of questions of loyalty towards different corporations (Vedres and Stark 2010) and the corporate community as a whole. As a result, formal and informal rules restrict praxis in the inner circle. The ones who are able to manifest the "…capacity to transcend the immediate imperatives of his or her own company to express a broader vision" (Useem 1982:216) become central in the inner circle. These are the individuals who come to embody the classwide rationality of the inner circle. Classwide rationality differs from the diverging, uncoordinated, and atomistic interests of the corporations by "promot[ing] the broader needs of big business" (Useem 1982:201–2). It is important to note that classwide rationality is not a neutral concept. Any definition of the interests of an entire class is likely to be biased towards the interests of the dominating corporations (Fligstein 1996). Rather, the inner circle is able to successfully legitimize their interpretation of the class interest. The cohesive network that is the basis for the formulation of class interest is what sets the definition of the inner circle apart from other business elite definitions. Those who are most likely to embody the classwide rationality are not necessarily the CEOs of the largest corporations or the wealthiest owners.

Since the work of Berle and Means (1932), there has been an ongoing discussion on whether or not CEOs share class relations with the capitalist owners. It was proposed that the diffusion of

ownership would entail a loss of capitalist control and a diminished focus on profits. Although the disintegration of ownership and control has been seriously questioned (Zeitlin 1974), the notion of classwide rationality rests upon the social connections between management and ownership through corporate interlocks (Useem 1979). Thus inner-circle membership cannot be ascribed through the traditional positional method of identifying elite membership, such as holding a senior management position within a corporation of a certain size (see e.g. Maclean, Harvey, and Press 2006). Inner-circle membership requires being part of a social group rather than just holding a position of command (cf. Scott 2003).

Politically, the inner circle can be seen as informal *representatives*. To the extent that the corporate community manages to gain access to other power spheres, those who are inner-circle members will be more likely to take part. This is the case for business associations, cultural organizations, federal and government advisory panels, and university boards (Useem 1978, 1979). These institutions correspond to the subfields within the field of power identified by Bourdieu (1996), allowing inner-circle members the opportunity to engage in the exchange of different forms of capital. Furthermore, when, for instance, state officials seek new persons to take up public positions, they may acquire recommendations for possible candidates from prominent business leaders already holding public positions (Useem 1984). A cohesive inner group both provides a common framework and secures the promotion of internal members. Although this does not mean that inner circle members necessarily hold a firm grip on public opinion or individually be financially positioned to promote certain causes, the inner circle is characterised in other power networks by being the representatives of the capitalist class.

Data: The Networks of the Entire Corporate Elite

The data used in our study to identify the inner circle consists of the names of the board members and management of the top 1000 corporations according to turnover, as of March 2012. Data on board membership and corporation size comes from the Danish Corporate Register. Furthermore,

we have added 36 independent subsidiary firms of these corporations[2]. In addition, to ensure that the recent trend towards financialization of the economy (Stockhammer 2004) is not neglected, we have included the boards and management of the 28 members of the Danish Venture Capital and Private Equity Association and the state-owned Finansiel Stabilitet, which controls the leftovers from failed banks. After removing non-independent subsidiaries, the data comprise 1037 boards, with 7065 positions held by 6154 individuals. This data is fairly inclusive and the differences in size among the corporations is notable. The smallest corporation has a turnover of just DKK 304 million (US $53 million), whereas the largest corporation has a turnover of DKK 315 billion (US $55 billion). The top 100 corporations account for 68.3% of the total turnover of the 1037 corporations.

The network data are combined with data for business association committee membership, governing boards of academic and cultural institutions and foundations, membership of political committees, and the like. These data come from a mapping, conducted by the authors, of all institutionalized power and prestige networks in Denmark. Unless otherwise indicated, the data were collected through the public administration database [FOA], which lists all state-recognized organizations and public positions, and matched with the names and positions provided by the websites of the organizations listed in the FOA. Biographical material for the social homogeneity of the inner circle was gathered from *Kraks Blå Bog* [*Who's Who*], company websites, profiles on LinkedIn, and newspaper articles, and are thus primarily self-reported.

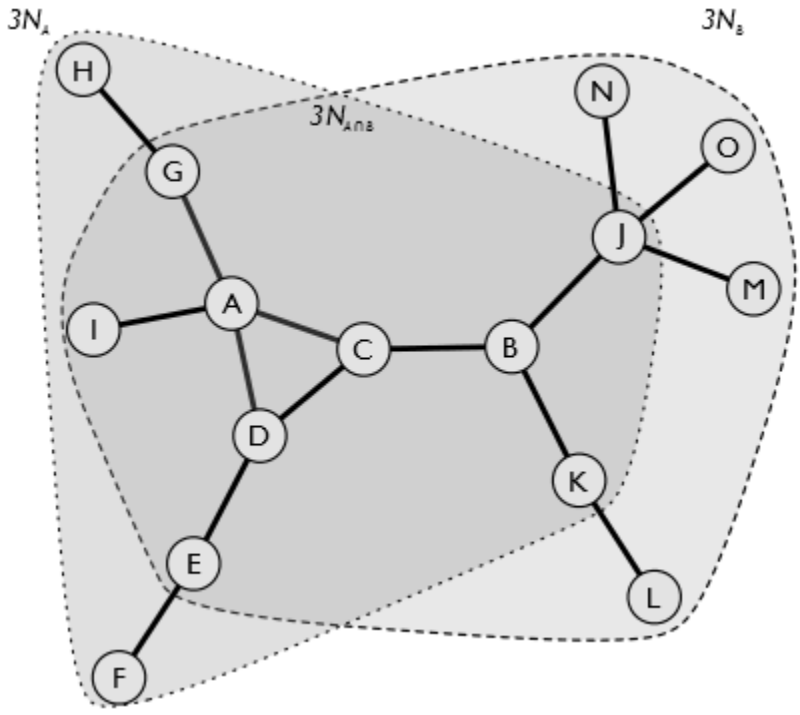
Methods: Reconstructing the Methodology of Inner Circles as the Core of the Corporate Network

One might argue that selecting more than 1000 corporations in a small country like Denmark is too inclusive. The main methodological focus of this *network of the entire corporate elite* is to secure the inclusion of all relevant but still fairly comparable corporate ties that might facilitate cohesion and the diffusion of reputation. Non-prestigious boards are deliberately included, with the result that the

[2] Included subsidiary firms all have board members who are not all employed by or at the parent company board. Further, these companies all have turnovers so large that, were they independent firms, they would have been included in the data.

issues of the scale of ranking (see Carroll and Fennema 2004; Kentor and Jang 2004) are less important in this case. Within the corporate elite, the *network of the connected* comprises the 3166 corporate elite members who are connected to each other in the largest component. It is within this component that the inner circle must reside, because the second largest component comprises only 28 businesspeople and is thus more than 100 times smaller than the largest component. However, many members of the connected corporate elite do not themselves form ties but are tied only through the clique nature of boards: if just one board member forms ties to other boards, everyone in the board becomes connected at a second degree. Thus we have restricted parts of our analysis to the 514 board members and directors who hold more than one position within the largest component of the corporate network, the *network of linkers*.

FIGURE 1: OVERLAPPING 3-NEIGHBOURHOODS AS PROXIMITY MEASURE



The proximity of A and B is determined by the shared overlap for 3-neighbourhood divided by the total size 3-neighbourhood of both A and B. In this case, the shared neighbourhood is 8 (A, B, C, D, E, G, I, J and K - 1) out of 14, giving a proximity score between A and B of 0.571.

This group of 514 linkers would usually be regarded as the inner circle (Heemskerk and Fennema 2009; Useem 1982). When the number of boards increases, this definition rapidly decreases in selectivity. The network grows in size and with it the network dynamics change. The *degree* (the number of connections) or *betweenness centrality* (to be on the shortest paths in the network between linkers) and *closeness centrality* (having the shortest average path length to all linkers—(Freeman 1979), as well as size of the 3rd neighbourhood, all follow a power-law distribution (Barabasi and Albert 1999), not only in the network of the entire corporate elite, but even within the network of linkers (see Figure 1). The diameter—the longest path length within the component—is still 13 degrees in the network of linkers, so that transmission of actual knowledge of each other's reputation through these channels is very unlikely.

In order to identify a more cohesive subgroup, cluster analysis was used as a heuristic tool. A measure of proximity using overlapping social circles (Alba and Kadushin 1976) calculates distances between all linkers, which are in turn cut into clusters by hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis. The advantage of this procedure is that the linkers are placed in mutually exclusive typological groups. The measure of overlapping circle proximity is identified by using the shared overlap of linkers' 3rd degree neighbourhood. A proximity measure ranging from 1 (total overlap of 3rd degree neighbourhood) to 0 (no overlap) is created for each pair of linkers (see Figure 2). Thus linkers are regarded as close and potentially part of a certain circle, to the extent that a large proportion of their network share the same members and to the extent that these ties in turn are composed of the same linkers. The 3rd degree neighbourhood has the advantage of measuring the degree centrality of the 2nd degree neighbourhood. As a result, individuals with relatively selective but central direct contacts can get high proximity scores, because their 3rd neighbourhood grows rapidly in size and therefore has a higher possibility of overlapping with others.

FIGURE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF DEGREE, 3-NEIGHBOURHOOD, CLOSENESS CENTRALITY AND BETWEENNESS CENTRALITY IN NETWORK OF CONNECTED AND NETWORK OF LINKERS

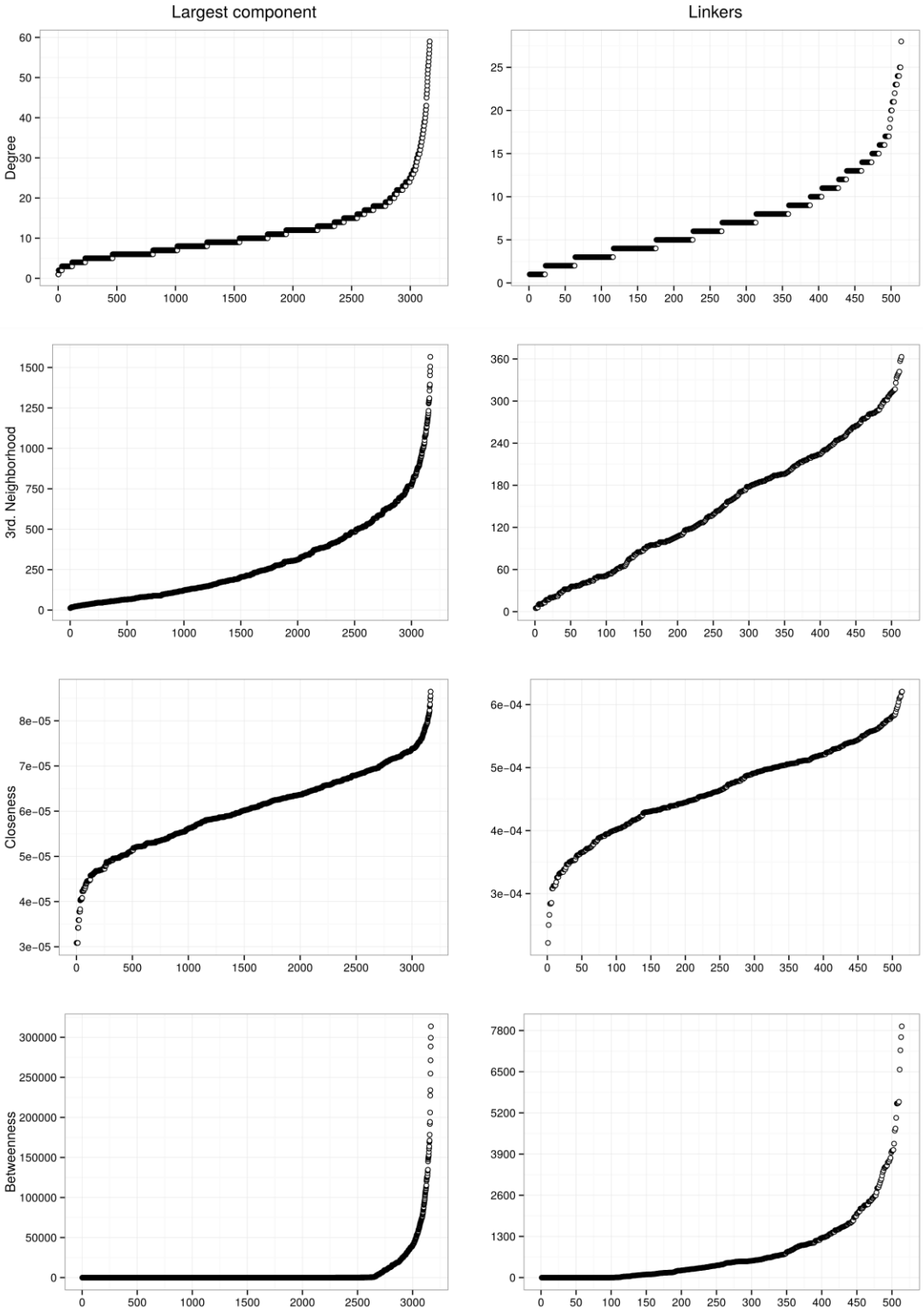
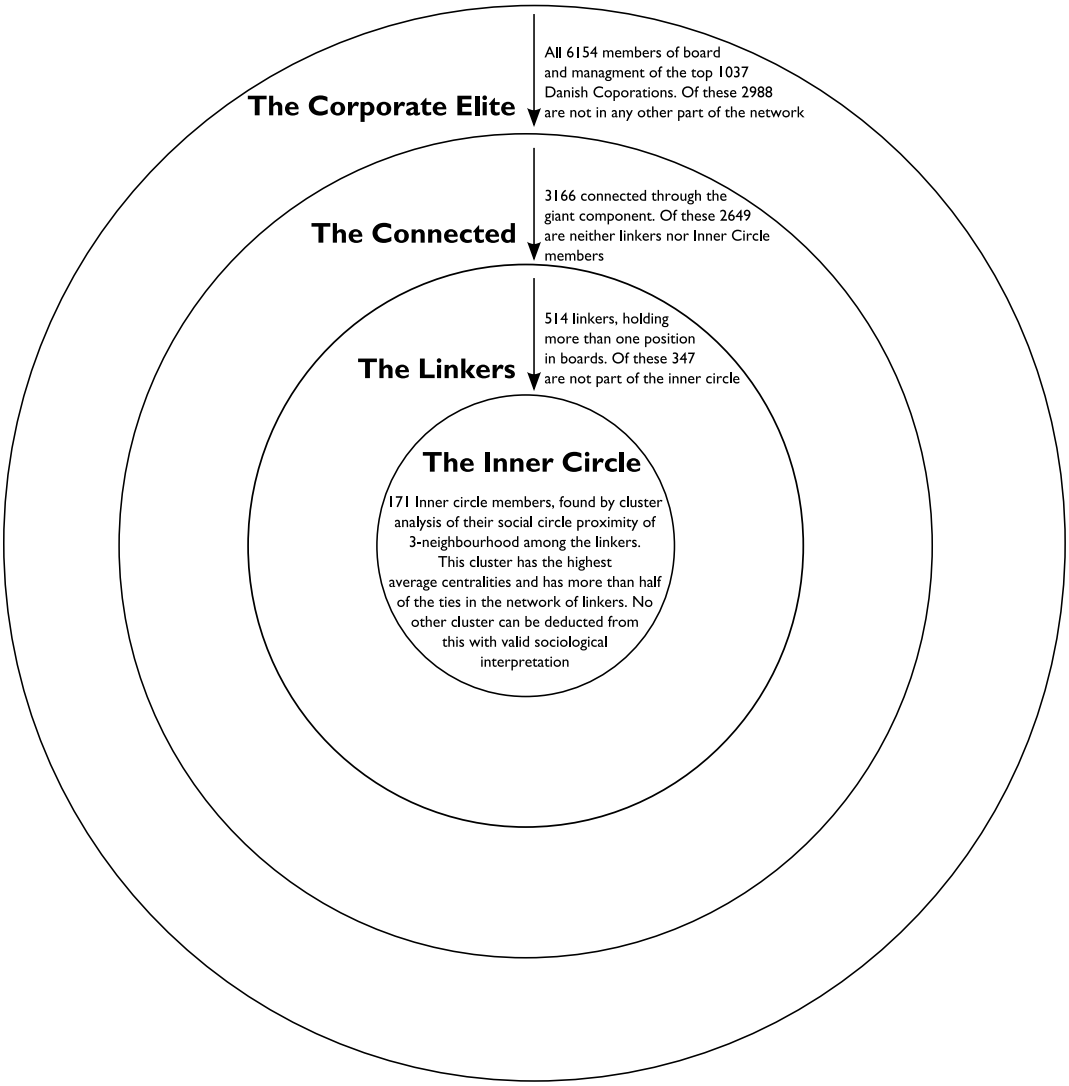


FIGURE 3: THE DIFFERENT NETWORK SEGMENTS OF THE CORPORATE ELITE IN DENMARK



As the clustering algorithm cuts the network into clusters, the group having the largest share of all ties is analyzed. At the partition before this cluster no longer has half of all ties, the procedure is terminated. In this case, 343 linkers are excluded from the network, leaving us with 171 members of a more cohesive network: *the inner circle*, as we define it. The entire procedure is summarised in Figure 3. When comparing the inner circle as clusters are gradually cut off (see Appendix I), the procedure works much like peeling layers of an onion. Less integrated parts of the inner circle are excluded one by one. The excluded clusters do not form a single connected group, but subgroups hanging onto

different parts of the inner circle. A common denominator is provided within each cluster, for example, individuals connected on boards due to cross-ownership of less prestigious firms.

The decision to end this clustering procedure is of course based on an estimate rather than on strong objective criteria, and yet it does rest on both qualitative and quantitative concerns. Thus, the clustering procedure is concluded after four subgroups have been removed from the inner circle because a further reduction would reduce the number of ties from the network of linkers by more than a half to 44.5%. Most importantly, the fifth cut-off would exclude several corporate leaders known qualitatively to be key business representatives. Furthermore, the members of the inner-circle cluster have the highest average degree, closeness and betweenness centrality, all members of the inner circle should remain connected to each other in the same component, and the diameter of the inner-circle network should fall as clusters are peeled off. Hence the inner circle is the cluster in the network of linkers: (1) still holding more than half of all ties; (2) having, on average, the most central individuals; and (3) that does not exclude key corporate leaders.

A central inner circle of 171 members within the network of linkers is identified (see Table 1 and Figure 4). These inner-circle members are on average tied to 11.0 other linkers, up from an average of 7.3 for all linkers. Adding to this, the distance between the members of the network is reduced significantly. The average path length within the network of the inner circle drops from 4.3 in the network of linkers to 2.8 in the inner circle. With no path longer than five degrees inside the inner circle, this suggests a group with very high connectivity. However, inner-circle cohesion is not further improved by the same directors sitting on several boards together (Heemskerk and Fennema 2009); rather, the share of multiple ties drops from 9.4% in the networks of linkers to 7.8% in the inner-circle cluster. Some of the multiple ties outside of the inner circle reflect ownership structures within conglomerates, where several subsidiaries share board members from the holding company. These relations are less frequent in the inner circle than among the linkers. The inner circle connects 205 corporations, 96 of which are from among the top 200 corporations.

FIGURE 4: THE INNER CIRCLE IN THE NETWORK OF LINKERS

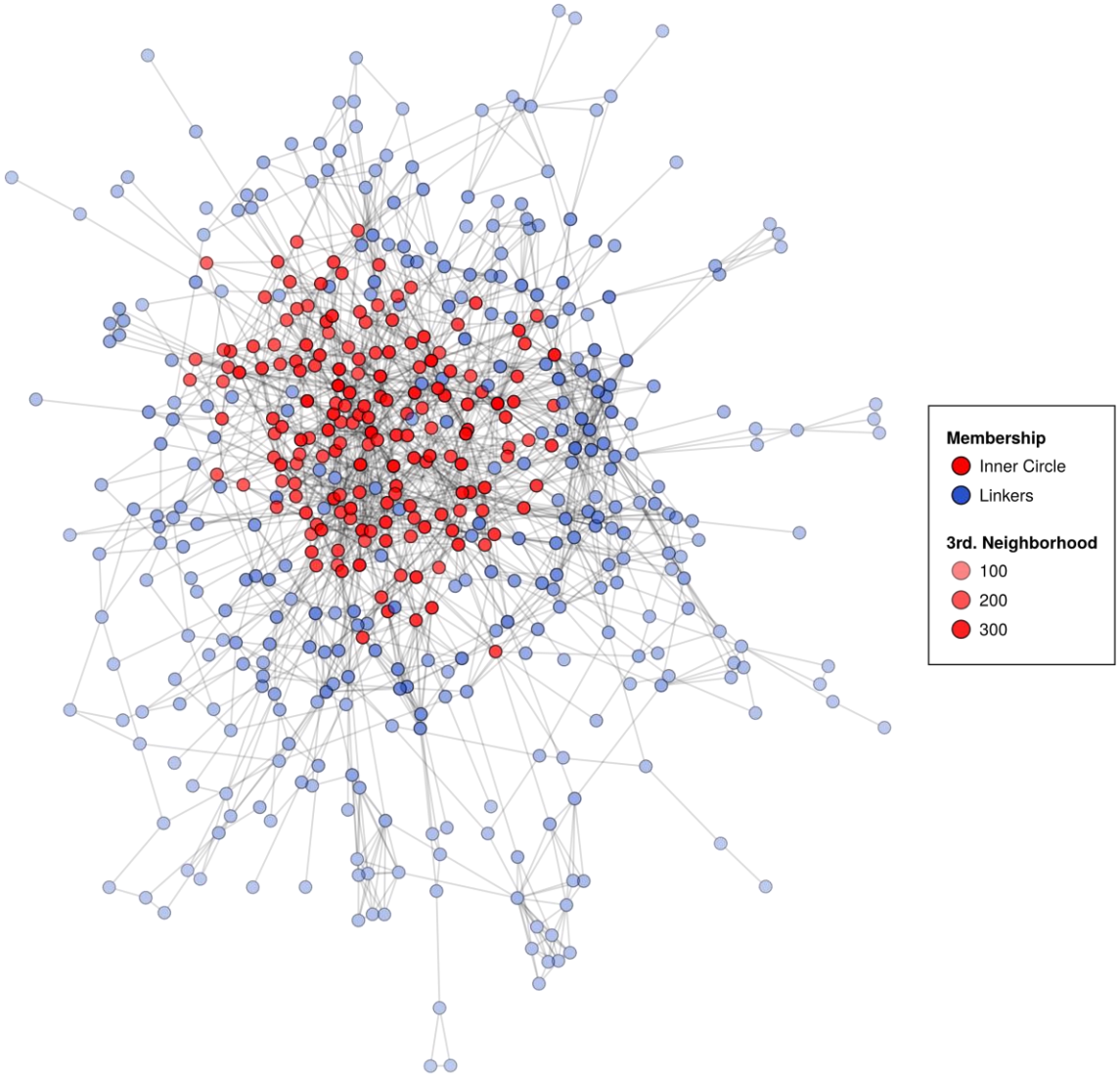


TABLE 1: THE CENTRALITY OF THE INNER CIRCLE IN THE NETWORK OF LINKERS

	ALL LINKERS	THE CLUSTER OF THE INNER CIRCLE
Edges	3728	1873
Density	0.014	0.043
Average degree	7.3	11.0
Diameter	13	5
Average path length	4.3	2.8
Share of multiple ties (%)	0.094	0.078
Average betweenness centrality	833	1555
Average closeness centrality $\times 10^{-5}$	4.7	5.3
N	514	171

Note that comparisons between the network of the inner circle and the network of connected and the entire corporate elite are not possible, as all hangers from these networks are removed.

Results: Who are the Inner Circle? The Reproduction of a Common, Unifying Culture

Aside from sharing connections through membership of the same corporate board–based social circles, other traits may create greater cohesion within the dominant segment of the corporate elite. Shared educational background, along with elitist social background, helps form elite consciousness (Bourdieu 1996; Hartmann 2000; Useem and Karabel 1986) and ensure a feeling of common trust within the circle. The members of the inner circle do, in general, share common traits (see Table 2). More than five out of six (84.2%) inner-circle members have employment only within the corporate world (see Table 2.); 52% hold an executive position, of which around two-thirds (59) are in one of the top 100 corporations based on turnover; and the remaining 48% are professional board members and often former executives. The members of the inner circle are at—or just past—the apex of their careers, with the median and average age being 57.7 years, with a standard deviation of only seven years. With no inner-circle members younger than 41 years, and as seen also in the skewed gender distribution, this is an "old boys' network" in all senses of the term.

Only 14 of the 171 members (8.2%) of the inner circle are women, further underlining the social homogeneity and class-specific cultural norms where mastery of qualities traditionally ascribed to men is an advantage (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 1998). In the corporate elite as a whole, 13.6% of

the positions are held by women, indicating that even after gaining access to the boards, women are still excluded from the networks that form and validate classwide rationality. There are no signs that women in the inner circle have particularly good network positions and they are not more frequently tied to each other. This supports claims of token female presence (Kanter 1977) rather than empowering women's networks to challenge the cohesion and cultural homogeneity of the inner circle.

Only a few inner-circle members have careers outside the corporate sector. These are two academics tied to business schools, six lawyers, a single active politician[3], three central members of the farmers' organizations, and five top leaders of the Danish labor unions. These are included in the corporate elite primarily through their board memberships in pension funds and banks and are highly connected to each other. They are also tied directly to a quite large number of central corporate agents. The leader of the traditional right-wing blacksmith union (Dansk Metal), Thorkild E. Jensen, has the third highest number of connections of all members of the corporate elite. However, it is primarily the leaders of the strong unions with direct ties to industry who are included in the inner circle. Although it may be difficult to see these individuals as representatives of a classwide rationality, they may still be known well enough through these ties to be considered generally acceptable and non-subversive, akin to the "new men of power" described by Mills (1948). Thus the inclusion of labor union leaders into the inner circle should be seen as a remnant of the Danish corporatist capitalist economy based on class compromises as opposed to an inner circle fighting for the interests of untamed capitalism.

[3] The mayor of a rural municipality, who serves as political representative on boards in several government-owned corporations.

TABLE 2: PROFILE OF THE INNER CIRCLE

	N	Percent
Corporate position		
Chief executive officer	59	34.5 %
Executive	30	17.5 %
Board chairman	40	23.4 %
Board member only	42	24.6 %
Other position		
Corporate only	144	84.2 %
Lawyer	6	3.5 %
Leader, farmers' organization	3	1.8 %
Leader, trade union	5	2.9 %
Professor	2	1.2 %
Politician (mayor)	1	0.6 %
Owner of corporation	9	5.3 %
Age		
Mean (s.d.)	57.	(7.1)
Gender		
Female	14	8.2 %
Place of birth		
Copenhagen area	44	34.6 %
Provincial cities (2.000-300.000)	46	36.2 %
Rural	26	20.5 %
Outside Denmark	11	8.7 %
Not known	44	
Fathers occupation		
Manager (or owner)	32	30.5 %
Professional	25	23.8 %
Junior manager	8	7.6 %
Self employed	15	14.3 %
Farmer	10	9.5 %
White collar	6	5.7 %
Blue collar	9	8.6 %
Not known	66	
Education type		
Arts and humanities	4	2.5 %
Social sciences	5	3.1 %
Law	11	6.7 %
Business and administration	64	39.3 %
Economics	30	18.4 %
Engineering	25	15.3 %
Science or medicine	11	6.7 %
Professional	13	8.0 %
Not known	8	
Highest qualification		
Doctorate	14	8.6 %
Higher degree	92	56.4 %
First degree	36	22.1 %
Professional qualification only	21	12.9 %
Not known	8	
Total	171	100 %

Fewer than two-thirds of the inner-circle members have higher degrees or doctorates, which is comparable to the top Danish CEOs (Ellersgaard et al. 2013), but significantly fewer than would be expected in France or Germany, in particular (Hartmann 2010; Maclean et al. 2006). The degrees held are not very prestigious academically, as none of the academic titles obtained by inner-circle members have ever been among the top 25 programs as determined by the average grade required for admission, the sole criterion used since 1979. However, the inner-circle members originate from a select few university programs. Only four of the eight Danish universities and business schools[4] have more than one inner-circle member among their alumni. And only 12.3% of the inner-circle-members have a university background outside business, economics, law, or engineering programs. The alumni of these different principal programs do not appear to form more cohesive subgroups within the inner circle. Thus little seems to suggest an internal division of the inner circle by particular professions, as is the case in France (Bourdieu 2005).

For the 105 we have managed to trace, the social background of inner-circle members is quite exclusive. More than half of their fathers were placed at the top of corporate hierarchies and/or were managers or professionals. The parents of 23 inner-circle members (13.5%) are listed in the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who* (*Kraks Blå Bog*), suggesting a very elitist background[5]. The birthplaces of the inner-circle members are more or less as geographically dispersed as the general population. This is somewhat surprising as the elite in Denmark are concentrated strongly around the capital of Copenhagen. This may suggest that the inner circle is recruited from a broader upper stratum based on habitual dispositions rather than from the core of a socially integrated metropolitan elite, perhaps because of the strong provincial and agricultural ties of Danish business. The general principal of admission appears to be having the right dispositions in the form of interests, manners, and ethics, rather than the inheritance of different forms of resources, such as connections and wealth. The differences in habitual dispositions between the middle and working classes may therefore explain the massive under-representation of working-class children.

[4] The universities with more than one alumni in the inner circle are Copenhagen Business School (41), University of Copenhagen (30), Aarhus University (19), and Technical University of Denmark (11).

[5] There is little indication of network ties or more cohesive subgroups based on shared social background.

Recruitment to the networks of the corporate elite does not appear to be based primarily upon family ties, or an *upper class principle* (Useem 1982), although not being of too different a class origin certainly appears to ease access to the inner circle.

Inner-circle Membership and Corporate Political Representation

So far, we have seen that the networks of the Danish corporate elite seem to have a highly cohesive central circle and that the elite are organised along classwide principles, rather than solely from the corporate or upper classes—And yet a core feature must still be present before it is possible to identify this group as an inner circle; namely, the prerogative of being the primary ambassadors of business in other power spheres. In Table 3, we explore the political representation of the inner circle. Although the other groups of the business elite in total outnumber inner-circle members in these diverse power networks, it is also clear that members of the inner circle are far more likely be part of all these types of networks than are other members of the broader business elite. As the following summary of our findings of the political representation in different spheres will show, the members of the inner circle are not the exclusive political representatives of the corporate elite. However, the logic of inclusion of businessmen in other power networks appears similar to the principles behind inclusion in the inner circle.

Perhaps the most important and least surprising sphere for political representation of the rationality of the inner circle is various business or employers' associations, along with their branch- or policy-specific subcommittees. This institutional setting is at the same time the most important institutional venue through which the inner circle can present and impose its interests as the interests of the wider corporate class. More than one-third of the members of the inner circle hold positions on the committees of Danish business associations, compared to less than one-fifth of the linkers and less than one-tenth of the rest of the corporate elite. More than 40% of the inner-circle members who have a seat on a business association committee sit on one of the 15 central committees. Furthermore, almost 10% of all members in the core committees—which include various specialists from both corporations and business associations—also belong to the inner circle.

TABLE 3: INNER CIRCLE REPRESENTATION IN OTHER PART OF THE FIELD OF POWER

	N	Percent		N	Percent
ECONOMIC FIELD					
Membership of all business association committees			*Membership of core business association committees†*		
Boards=464; Members=3659			*Boards=15; Members=257*		
Inner Circle	57	33.3 %	Inner Circle	23	13.5 %
Linkers	67	19.5 %	Linkers	20	5.8 %
Connected	179	6.7 %	Connected	40	1.5 %
Corporate Elite only	149	5.0 %	Corporate Elite only	21	0.7 %
POLITICAL FIELD					
Membership of all commissions and advisory bodies			*Membership of core commissions and advisory bodies†*		
Boards=73; Members=1038			*Boards=10; Members=250*		
Inner Circle	26	15.2 %	Inner Circle	20	11.7 %
Linkers	19	5.5 %	Linkers	6	1.7 %
Connected	53	2.0 %	Connected	28	1.1 %
Corporate Elite only	20	0.7 %	Corporate Elite only	5	0.2 %
ACADEMIC FIELD					
Membership of other academic and research institutions			*Membership of university governing boards*		
Boards=1253; Members=109			*Boards=8; Members=91*		
Inner Circle	37	21.6 %	Inner Circle	5	2.9 %
Linkers	20	5.8 %	Linkers	5	1.5 %
Connected	43	1.6 %	Connected	4	0.2 %
Corporate Elite only	6	0.2 %	Corporate Elite only	1	0.0 %
CULTURAL AND MEDIA FIELD					
Membership of cultural organization boards			*Membership of media and public opinion boards*		
Boards=71; Members=568			*Boards=23; Members=449*		
Inner Circle	6	3.5 %	Inner Circle	26	15.2 %
Linkers	6	1.7 %	Linkers	16	4.7 %
Connected	21	0.8 %	Connected	71	2.7 %
Corporate Elite only	8	0.3 %	Corporate Elite only	32	1.1 %
SOCIAL CAPITAL					
Membership of all VL-networks			*Membership of core VL-networks*		
Groups=114; Members=3823			*Groups=9; Members=332*		
Inner Circle	75	43.9 %	Inner Circle	50	29.2 %
Linkers	97	28.3 %	Linkers	24	7.0 %
Connected	260	9.8 %	Connected	52	2.0 %
Corporate Elite only	151	5.1 %	Corporate Elite only	9	0.3 %
SYMBOLIC CAPITAL					
Membership of foundation boards			*Participation in royal events*		
Boards=1394; Members=7179			*Events=73; participants=7374*		
Inner Circle	75	43.9 %	Inner Circle	49	28.7 %
Linkers	90	26.2 %	Linkers	47	13.7 %
Connected	281	10.6 %	Connected	132	5.0 %
Corporate Elite only	115	3.8 %	Corporate Elite only	50	1.7 %

†Core business association committees and core commissions are identified by having the highest eigenvector, betweeness and closeness centrality scores in an analysis of these organizational networks

Politicians and state employees are made aware of the policy interests of business through various channels. These include lobbyism, direct personal meetings, and other social events. However, these contacts between top bureaucrats, politicians and corporate stewards are also institutionalized through commissions, councils and the advisory bodies of governmental agencies. Almost 15% of inner-circle members have participated in advisory bodies, councils, and commissions established from 2005 and onwards. More than one-third of all corporate elite representatives of core commissions are members of the inner circle, meaning that the proportions of inner-circle members in core commissions are more than 10 times higher than the rest of the corporate elite. When government wants to include the corporate community in policy debates, it is often the inner circle they turn to. Given the tendency to homophily in social networks, the recommended candidates will often be prominent in the networks of interlocking boards.

By influencing universities, the elite may both help form the skill-set of future employees while also influencing the research agendas that could produce knowledge yielding competitive advantage. Making the voice of business heard in the academic world may involve funding research through foundations, as well as through participation on the boards of different academic institutions, including university governing boards, advisory boards of particular departments or national research centers, and various committees on higher education. In these networks, members of the inner circle are more than 100 times more likely to participate than the members of the corporate elite who are not connected to the large component of corporate interlocks. On the governing boards of eight Danish universities, one-third (five of the 15) university board members are part of the inner circle. The academic field appears to be quite selective when including business representatives on their boards and the prerequisites seems to be heavily associated with inner-circle membership.

Further, representation on the boards of museums of art or history, theatres, and opera companies is, among other things, an opportunity for business representatives to defend upper-class culture. Even if only 3.5% of inner-circle members sit on these boards, the inner circle is still disproportionately represented compared to other parts of the corporate network. However, where the social and political legitimation of corporate interest is at stake, rather than merely looking to the reproduction of "high culture", we see a stronger representation of the inner circle in the production of public opinion: 15% of inner-circle members sit on the boards of TV and radio companies,

newspapers, publishers, and the five major think thanks, making the inner-circle members three times more likely to sit on these boards than even the linkers. As an indicator of social capital outside the network of the boardroom, the participation in the VL network—groups of around 30 members from business, state bureaucracy, media, and academia, who meet informally once a month—offers a glimpse of network cultivation strategies among the corporate elite. Almost half of the inner-circle members are active in the VL groups and 28.8% of inner-circle members are part of the nine core groups, identified by the prestige of their fellow members.[6] Access to diverse top level networks thus appear closely tied to the logic behind inclusion into the inner circle.

Inner-circle members hold positions bestowing high symbolic capital on their holders more often than other members of the corporate elite. This helps form a generalised trust in the good name and honour of inner-circle members (Bourdieu 2005). Membership on the boards of one of the 1394 publicly registered foundations can be seen as an indicator of symbolic capital. These foundations administrate the fortunes and charity activities of rich family dynasties, and as a result indicate the social standing of its directors among the moneyed class. Foundation board membership also opens to influencing other sectors through donations and as a platform for intra-elite networking, and 44.7% of inner-circle members hold a position on one or more of the foundations.

The honour associated with being invited to a royal event is an indicator of a person's social standing and importance within the elite as well as in the eyes of state agencies aiding the court in composing the guest lists. When looking at participation in major royal events—weddings, anniversaries, landmark birthdays, christenings of princes—as well as royal hunting parties and recent royal dinners, inner-circle members once again appear as the primary ambassadors of the corporate elite. Since 1998, twice as many (27.6%) inner-circle members than linkers have participated in one or more of the 73 recorded royal events.

Useem (1978:227) originally used the amount of board memberships as an "appropriate though imprecise" measure of inner circle centrality. When compared to the inner circle identified in this

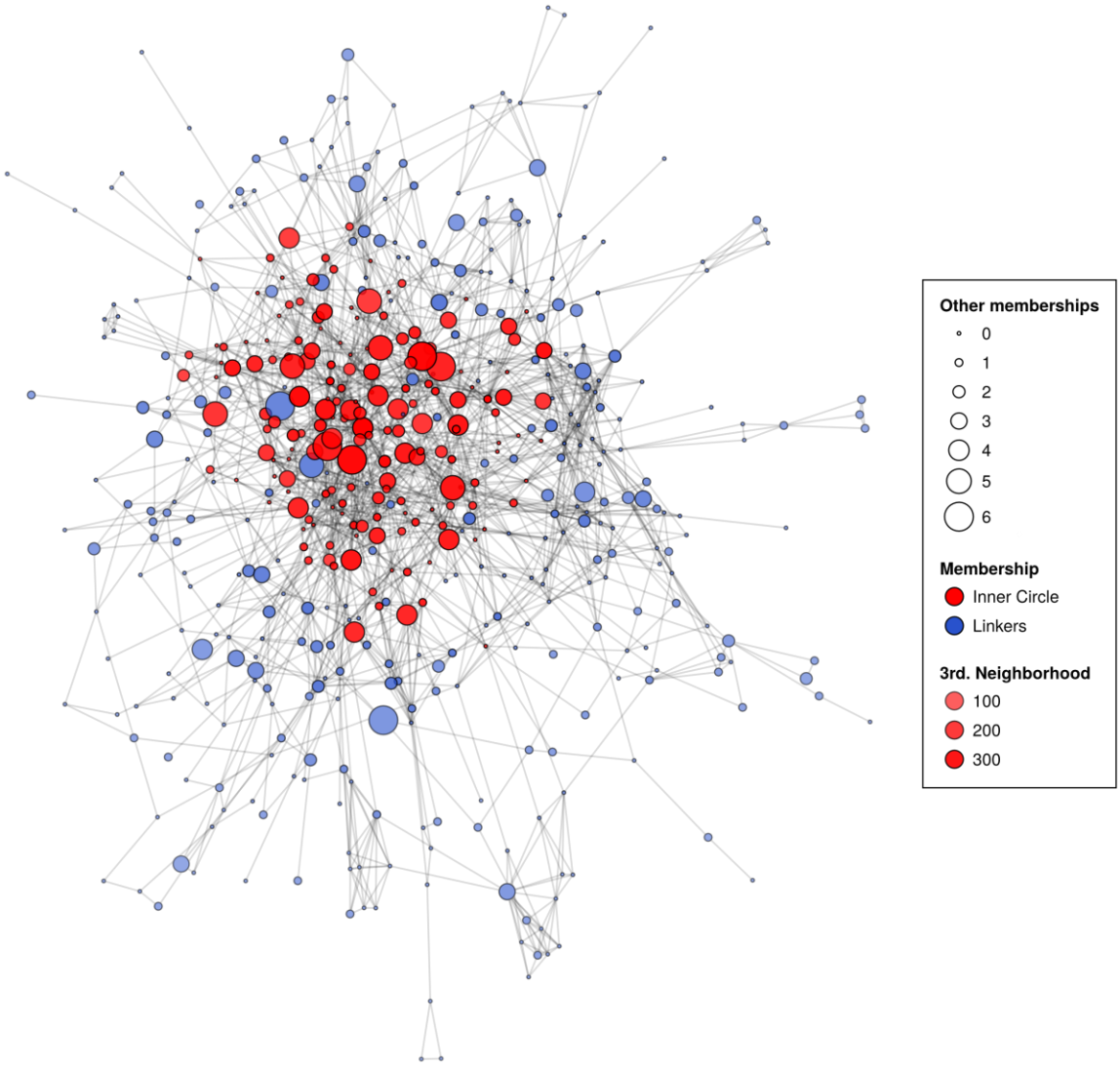
[6] The indication of the core group status of a VL group is participation in these groups of government permanent secretaries, leaders of top business associations, editors-in-chief of national newspapers, and leaders of major public institutions such as universities and museums.

paper the same association of board membership and inner-circle centrality is found. However, when compared with the 206 members provided with Useem's definition of the inner circle based on at least three board memberships, the 171 inner-circle members identified here are 1.25[7] times more likely to be part of institutions of the different power spheres identified in Table 3. Proximity within the most central parts of the corporate network is therefore a better, although more demanding, measure of inner-circle centrality.

This is illustrated by Figure 5. The size of the points relates to the number of sectors (as defined in Table 3) in which each individual holds positions. The parts of the network with the densest connections also have the most well-connected individuals across sectors. The Matthew principle is clearly in operation. A quarter of the inner-circle members sit on at least three boards from sectors outside business, compared to 6% of the linkers and only 1% of the connected. From the unconnected part of the corporate elite, 94% are not part of any board outside business, whereas only 30% of the inner-circle members do not hold at least one of position outside business. However, Figure 5 also illustrates the somewhat arbitrary character of any classification. Just outside of the inner circle, there are several individuals, close to the inner circle, who connect across many sectors. These individuals might have had the necessary proximity if networks other than boardroom interlocks had been included in the definition of the inner circle. As Useem (1979) notes, the inner circle is bound together by many other forms of ties and further studies should try to include them as well. These reservations aside, it appears from this analysis that across all spheres of power, the inner circle are the primary ambassadors of corporate interest.

[7] The ratio of inner circle members to holders of at least three board with regard to positions in other sectoral networks, see table 3, ranges from 0.90 (on cultural organization boards; the only ratio less than 1.06) to 1.53 (university governing bodies).

FIGURE 5: THE INNER CIRCLE IN NETWORKS OF OTHER PARTS OF THE FIELDS OF POWER



Size of nodes indicates number memberships in the nine other power networks presented in Table 3. Only the core networks of business association committees, political commissions and VL-groups are included.

Implications: The Power of the Inner Circle

Even if the cohesion of the inner circle is demonstrated satisfactorily and its prominence in the representation of the business elite is indicated, the actual political influence of the inner circle is still

unclear. Scholars have tried to trace corporate influence by looking at direct political sponsorships (Bond 2007; Burris 2005), but the political campaign contributions are held secret by Danish political parties, making it difficult to "follow the money". But even if the money trails could be documented, the influence gained through these donations is hard to estimate. Contributions are also made through the business clubs of the two main traditional right-wing parties. Two centers in the inner circle are former heads of these business clubs and thus can be used as extreme cases of the connections between the inner circle and others holding power or prestige. Henning Kruse Petersen, chairman of the Conservative Business Club, is ranked first in betweenness centrality, second on degree and third on closeness centrality. He is a former CEO of the largest Danish mortgage provider *Nykredit* and chairman of the board of the state's crisis bank *Finansiel Stabilitet,* along with several other board positions. He is also very wealthy.

Even wealthier is Fritz Schur, chairman of the Liberal Business Club, who owns a top 100 corporation while also serving as chairman on the boards of three of the largest state-owned firms: energy giant DONG and the inter-Scandinavian airline SAS and postal service Posten Norden. Schur is ranked between 22nd and 26th in degree, closeness and betweenness centrality. He also plays a key part in the social elite Schur holds grand soirées in his mansion and an estimated 2000 people—businessmen, royalty, politicians, and celebrities—pass through his salons annually (Sandøe, Sindbæk, and Svaneborg 2012). Furthermore, in less than 10 years he has ascended the honorary hierarchy of the royalty, reaching the rank of *Kammerherre* [Chamberlain]. The numerous connections of Fritz Schur all met at the celebration of his 60th birthday, where the royal family, current and former ministers of both the left and right, celebrated actors and authors, and many inner-circle members gathered to be entertained by, among others, Elton John. The social life of Fritz Schur may provide only anecdotal evidence of a generally closed world, but it hints at how the inner circle converts economic resources to symbolic power.

These findings strongly imply that the inner circle in Denmark is part of a broader power elite (cf. Mills 1956). This power elite comprises overlapping circles that connect individuals centrally placed in the important institutions in Danish society. With the general decline in the cohesion of corporate elites elsewhere, this is surprising. Although our data do not tell us anything about the historical evolution of the corporate elite, they are quite precise on the current state of inner-circle integration with other power spheres. This suggests that in spite of corporate elite fracturing elsewhere, the

inner circle remains a valid concept, useful for exploring the social organization of the capitalist class in Denmark. However, the extended network outside the boardrooms also implies that inner circle formation is in no way restricted to the networks created by corporate interlocks. Several CEOs of the largest Danish corporations only have one directorship and are thus excluded from our definition of the inner circle, but hold several posts in other sectoral networks. Future scholars with interests in the inner circle should aim to incorporate these networks into one broader network of the corporate community.

So far, the challenge of the emergent transnational business community to inner-circle cohesion in Denmark seems to be limited. Only two inner circle members are members of important informal networks, the European Round Table of Industrialists and the Trilateral Commission (Carroll and Sapinski 2010). One sits on several boards of European Fortune 500 corporations and four Danish corporations have been able to attract foreign directors of these corporations to their boards. Several inner-circle members are connected to the group of global interlockers through boards outside Denmark as well. However, these connections do not point to the formation of an international network in competition with the coherence of the Danish network, but rather as the fruits of success, granted only to the most prominent members of the inner circle in Denmark. The obligation to continue to fit into the unifying culture of the inner circle is seen by foreigners as the inner circle in Denmark. Ten of the 11 inner-circle members born outside Denmark are from other Nordic countries, primarily Sweden. Nevertheless, ties made across borders could change the allegiance and primary focus of some parts of business. Both intra- and transnational ties, and the temporal dimension, should be analyzed simultaneously in future research on interlocking directorates.

Conclusion: The Accumulation of Power Through Networks

Through a social network analysis of the 1037 most important corporate boards in Denmark, we identified an inner circle of 171 board members and executives. This inner circle is the most cohesive group tied through shared board memberships. The social background of the inner-circle members does not imply an upper class–based capitalism in which shared ownership and kinship relations are the integrating elements of the capitalist class. While showing a high degree of cohesion within the social networks of the boardrooms, the inner circle is also more connected to other

power spheres than the rest of the business elite. Thus, the inner circle is more likely than the other parts of the network of the corporate elite to take part in the activities and institutions that indicate representation in the field of power. From the economic sphere of business associations, to the forming of policies in political commissions, the governing of universities and research agendas, the central institutions of culture and media, and the symbolic status of participating in royal events, the faces of inner circle appear with stunning regularity.

This study demonstrates the usefulness of the concept of the inner circle developed by Michael Useem for understanding the social organization of the corporate community in the case of an egalitarian society such as Denmark. In spite of the recent deterioration and internationalization of the inner circle elsewhere, the specific position of the capitalist class in Denmark seems to ensure continued cohesion. Rather than challenging inner-circle cohesion, the strong position of organised labor actually led to key private sector labor union leaders being included in the inner circle of the corporate network. The apparent egalitarianism of Denmark does not prevent a socially homogenous group of businessmen, recruited primarily from the upper echelons of society, from being tied closely through corporate boards and frequently invited to join the networks of other power spheres.

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APPENDIX: CLUSTER ANALYSIS IDENTIFYING THE INNER CIRCLE

	LINKERS	1ST CUTOFF	IC I	2ND CUTOFF	IC II	3RD CUTOFF	IC III	4TH CUTOFF	IC IV	5TH CUTOFF	IC V
Total number of clusters in HAC	1	2		3		7		19		33	
NETWORK CHARACTERISTICS OF CLUSTER											
Number of members	514	134	380	158	222	34	188	17	171	21	150
Density	0.0283	0.0134	0.0335	0.0219	0.0418	0.0454	0.0411	0.0252	0.0427	0.0395	0.0431
Components	1	43	1	28	1	4	1	9	1	4	1
Diameter	13	-	7	-	6	-	5	-	5	-	5
Average path length	4.3	-	3.0	-	2.9	-	2.9	-	2.8	-	2.8
Transitivity	0.417	0.613	0.416	0.586	0.439	0.728	0.412	0.857	0.419	0.783	0.427
CHARACTERISTICS OF CLUSTER MEMBERS											
Share of total ties	1.0	0.124	0.876	0.238	0.638	0.106	0.532	0.030	0.502	0.057	0.445
Average degree	7.3	3.4	8.6	5.6	10.7	11.6	10.5	6.5	11	10.1	11.1
Average closeness $\times 10^{-5}$	4.7	3.7	5	4.5	5.3	5.1	5.3	4.9	5.3	5.2	5.4
Average betweenness	833	265	1033	519	1400	907	1489	824	1555	1267	1595
Common denominator of cut-off		Minor boards		Minor boards Specific ownership groups		Bankers State ownership		Minor boards Lawyers		None	

IV. The Elite in the field of power: Cohesion and oppositions within the elite

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Who are 'the elite'? Which groups constitute the apex of society when the distribution of the most important power resources is taken into consideration? These are the questions at the heart of the political struggles of legitimation. In contemporary Danish debate, two very different elitist groups come to mind, both regarded as the epicenter of unwanted political domination. The left wing points at their classic adversaries in the boardrooms of large corporations, whereas the former Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of a right wing government, in his New Year's 2002 address, identified experts, scientist and the cultural elite in general (cf. Lykkeberg 2009). Unfortunately, the social sciences in Denmark have added little substance to this debate[1]. Pierre Bourdieu's (1996a:264ff) notion of the 'field of power' offers a framework to analyse the upper echelons of society by looking at domination within multiple forms of power resources. Thus, the notion of the field of power contains a hierarchy based on both the volume *and* the relative distribution of types of power resources, which together structure the relations of power and domination within and between the different sub-elites.

The power relations between different elite groups hold not only historical interest. Struggles between elites are seen as *the* generator of societal changes by classic elite theorists such as Vilfredo Pareto (1991), Gaetano Mosca(1939), Roberto Michels (1915) and Raymond Aron (1950). The games of internal distribution of status among the elite have repercussions for society at large, as shown by Norbert Elias (1983) in his study of the Court of Louis XIV. The ascribed values of educational diplomas, noble heritage, political connections or self-obtained property are the product of specific social struggles in France of the 1960s, Renaissance

[1] Both positions in this debate remain, to smaller or larger extent, exactly the 'spontaneous sociology' that, according to Bourdieu, Chamboredon and Passeron (1991), should be challenged though the framework of relational sociology.

Florence, the Soviet Union of the 1950s and contemporary USA. Bourdieu's field-analytic approach offers a way to compare these varying configurations of the field of power across time and space and thus investigate how the internal cohesion and oppositions of the elite reflect the state of a nation.

Struggles between different professions or sub-elites take place in various arenas, from the debate of public-sector governance and New Public Management in Denmark, across top chefs scorning the food and retail industry, to discussions about sustainable climate strategies between public bureaucrats and large corporations. What characterises all of these struggles is the fact that participants acknowledge one another, if not as equals, then at least as competent adversaries. Put in another way, they regard the forms of capital possessed by the opposing party as legitimate and valuable, and so they can recognise each other as 'effective agents' (Bourdieu 2005:99) participating in various power struggles. However, effective agents cannot be identified a priori. Who is an effective agent and who is not, is an empirical question that must be answered under the framework of reflexive sociology (Bourdieu 2005; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1996; Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009a). This renders the notion of the field of power as an epistemological approach, by which the researcher must identify the dominant forms of capital.

Using different empirical criteria, studies of the elite take exactly these effective agents as a vantage point by identifying the most powerful individuals, typically within a nation-state. In Denmark, the only studies to have done so are the study of the Danish elite (Christiansen, Møller, and Togeby 2001) from The Danish Democracy and Power Study (Togeby et al. 2003) and a series of studies on subgroups within the field of power, such as judges (Hammerslev 2003), civil servants (Jensen and Olsen 2000; Krarup 2012) and corporate leaders (Ellersgaard, Larsen, and Munk 2013; Hansen 1964; Larsen and Ellersgaard 2012). The image of an increasingly open and pluralistic elite drawn in The Danish Democracy and Power Study—and the publication on the Danish elite (Christiansen et al. 2001) in particular—has been subjected to severe criticism. The study has been challenged on theoretical ambiguities (Sørensen 2004), an unclear normative foundation combined with neglecting to address problematic aspects of elite formation in Denmark (Andersen 2005), and problems of the methodological approach in defining the elite (Ellersgaard and Larsen 2008). The answer to the question of which groups compose the power elite—and their internal relations—remains unclear.

The aim of this study is to re-analyse the data gathered in the study of the Danish elite by The Danish Democracy and Power Study in an attempt to chart the Danish field of power and the

relations among its sub-elites. This permits an empirically grounded assessment of the forms of capitals are most important for the Danish elite. Inspired by Bourdieusian methodology, this charting was conducted through specific multiple correspondence analysis (Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009b; Lebaron 2009). To further investigate the dynamics between the field of power as a whole and a particular sub-elite, the position of the political elite was explored though a class specific correspondence analysis. Finally, the discussion on where the mapping of the field of power leaves us with regard to who form part of the elite was made by analysing network strategies across the field of power. First, however, we attempt to clarify theoretically the relationship between elite theory and the Bourdieusian notion of the field of power.

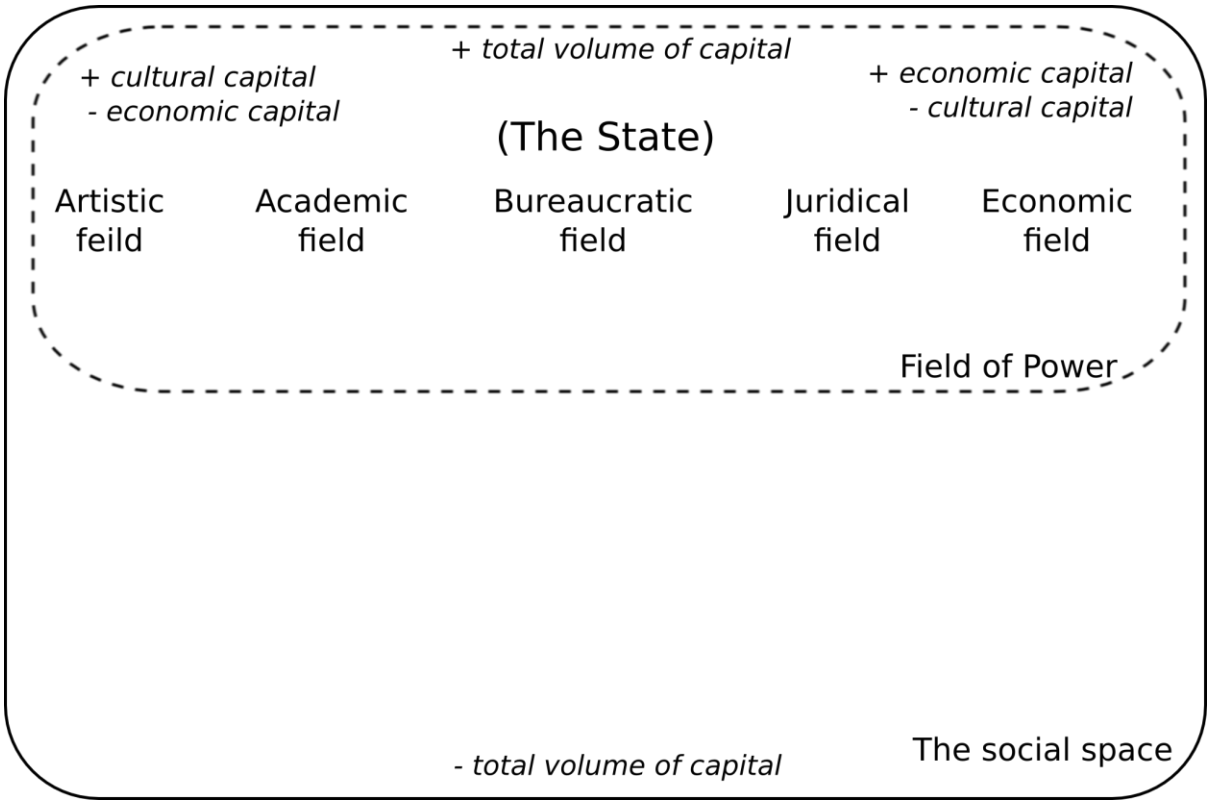
Theory: The elite and the field of power

Since the financial crisis and the Occupy movement, with its focus on the richest one per cent, the elite has re-entered both the public and the sociological imagination. Years before, adter the coming of post-structuralism and the defeat of instrumentalist Marxism, the sociology of elites had gathered little general interest (Khan 2012; Savage and Williams 2008). During this period, the 1980s and 1990s, the field was predominantly concerned with functionalist explanations of how elite settlements within democracy created stable societies in the tradition of 'democratic elitism' (see e.g. Burton and Higley 1987; Dogan 2003; Higley et al. 1991; Hoffmann-Lange 1989).

In the same period, the research group centred around Pierre Bourdieu published several critical studies on the academic elite (Bourdieu 1988), the artistic elite (Bourdieu 1996b) and the economic elite (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1978). With CEOs as an empirical case, the economic elite were tied to the field of elite schools—and the field of power—in France in *The State Nobility* (1996a). In this context, the field of power is seen as the area within the general social space (see Bourdieu 1984) in which agents hold the largest amounts of capital (see Figure 1). The field of power is thus related to the differences between classes in society at large, but is simultaneously a field of its own and hence subject to a particular logic, to be elaborated upon below. In other words, the notion of the field of power describes both the most privileged with regard the different forms of capital within society and those who are able to act or transcend different sectors or fields. Hence, the notion of the field of power contains both aspects of classical elite sociology: the most privileged group and the organised minority. Following this line of argument, the notion of the field of power will now be positioned more precisely in the

framework of elite theory. This allow for an elaboration of the relation between positions in the field of power—'effective agents'—and the elite as a social group.

FIGURE 1: THE FIELD OF POWER



The field of power following Wacquant (2005:143) and Bourdieu (1996a:267).

The point of departure from classical elite sociology was the critique of Marxism by the Italian scholar Vilfredo Pareto (1991). Pareto claimed that history was driven, rather than by class struggles, by the struggles between elite groups. Pareto defined elite groups as the most talented within different societal spheres. If an elite degenerates, or if the area of its excellence loses societal importance, a new, stronger and more virile elite emerges in its place. Like the Bourdieusian notion of fields, the notion of the elite in Pareto's work contains a hierarchisation of different resources or talents. Pareto's Italian contemporary, Gaetano Mosca (1939), also focused on the elite, or the ruling class, as he called it. This minority always has the advantage of organising itself as a class, using this to uphold its dominance. From the classical Italian theorist of the elite comes the image of the dynamics of internal struggles within the elite as a driving force in societal development and an emphasis on how small but well-organised group can dominate the rest of the population through its internally developed solidarity.

The relationship between the organised minority and the masses was reviewed and linked to the organisational hierarchies by the German–Italian Roberto Michels (1915) in his classical study of the tendency towards oligarchy within political parties. Later, Michels (1949:106–7) elaborated upon Mosca's theory of the ruling class, ascribing to it three overlapping social circles: the political, the economic and the intellectual. In his 1956 classic, *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills used the notion of overlap between these different institutional orders. In the 1950s in the USA, the overlap occurred between the large corporations, the president's cabinet and the top generals of the army. This allowed Mills to describe who belongs to the organised part of the ruling class. This power elite was integrated through common interests, shared positions of power within the institutional hierarchies and similar social backgrounds, such as culture and social contacts.

Position within the institutional orders was also used in newer stratification research by John Scott (1996), to reinterpret the Weberian notion of organisational hierarchies in general. To Scott, the elite become holders of top positions within organisational hierarchies, having what Bourdieu (2005:194) would call organisational capital based on knowledge of top positions in and time spent within an organisation. To Pareto, the elite were thus simply the group or groups having the largest amount of some desirable resource or ability, whereas Scott defined the elite as the dominant players within the central 'command' relations of society. *The Power Elite* (Mills 1956), however, was based on the overlap of social circles, coinciding career patterns and internal cohesion between those sitting on the command position within different central societal spheres. The power elite can be, but is not necessarily, identical to domination by people within status or class hierarchies[2].

Thus, the reinterpretation of classical elite theory by Mills and Scott defined the elites as those who hold the leading institutional organisational positions. Following Bourdieu's emphasis on the positions containing the largest volume of capital (the elite, as Pareto described it), this can be expanded to less institutionalised fields, such as the cultural or juridical, which are none the less part of the field of power. The personal and social overlap between these positions constitutes the field of power. If a form of capital is recognised as valuable—and thus reconvertable—in the field of power, the institutions consecrating holders of this form of capital

[2] In a central note, Mills (1956:277–8) rejected the notion of the ruling class as foundation for an analysis of the powerful, as ruling is concerned with political dominance, whereas class describes economic dominance. Whether or not the power elite comprise merely the capitalist class—the owners of the means of production—remained for Mills an empirical question, variable over time and space.

usually will be among the central institutions. Bourdieu's (1996a) classic example was the academic field in which French elite universities—*grandes ècoles*—have a monopoly on the distribution of institutionalised cultural capital in the form of diplomas, which place these universities and cultural capital at the heart of the reproduction mechanism of French society.

Hence, Bourdieu's framework permits a synthesis of elite concepts, combining the amount of power resources with elite concepts and placing emphasis at the top of institutionalised hierarchies. Only those with power resources accepted widely across institutional hierarchies, can be efficient agents in the field of power. However, the question of *who* is able to possess these institutionally recognised resources remained somewhat unclear in Bourdieu's work. As I shall discuss later, Mills's notion of overlapping social circles might provide a methodological tool to answer this question. In the work of both Mills and Bourdieu, a central feature is that the researcher cannot define a priori either the power elite or the efficient agents in the field of power. The composition and relative strength of factions within this group is always the product of specific historical struggles. However, the field-of-power notion contains a greater empirical sensitivity towards the tension between positions that are institutional and those that are tied to a certain volume and composition of capital.

With regard to the first element of elite theory, the possession of disproportionate resources or abilities, Bourdieu's theory offers an opportunity to relate passion to accumulated based on dominant positions in fields. The possession of capital enables accumulation of a specific type of capital (Savage, Warde, and Devine 2005); hence, it is not just ownership of the means of production, as Marx (1970) described with the notion of surplus value, that creates concentration of power resources. As an example, the famous author more easily obtains more cultural capital, because due to her status she gets more publicity and attention from colleagues. However, accumulation of this type is dependent upon having a *dominant position* that enables some sort of relation of exploitation. Bourdieu (1996a:272ff) emphasised that strategies of reproduction must not only be able to secure transfer of capital between generations, but be able to transfer an amount of capital sufficient to secure a dominant position within a certain field and thus gain access to the field of power. Hence, the notion of the field of power contains elements of relations of dominance based on class relations, a relationship otherwise unclear in the Bourdieu reception (cf. Flemmen 2013). However, these relations of dominance are not based only on ownership of material or economic means of production, but also on cultural means of production (Bourdieu 1991:232). Often, but not always, the ownership of means of production will have been institutionalised. Put differently, positions in the field of power often are tied to

positions at the top of institutionalised hierarchies, but depending on the form of capital—and the field tied to the form of capital—the hierarchies may not necessarily be institutionalised[3].

The second element of classical elite theory—the cohesion created through overlapping social circles—can also be incorporated in the notion of the field of power defined by Bourdieu (1996a:263) as a 'complex universe of objective relations of interdependence (established in and through intersecting patterns of domination) among subfields that are both autonomous and bound together by the organic solidarity of a genuine division of the labor of domination'. In other words, every agent in the field of power must to some extent recognise other participants in the games of power—and most importantly, the forms of capital upon which they base their position—as legitimate. Hence, the field of power is simultaneously a field of force and a field of struggle. The struggles are concerned with defining the rate of conversion between the different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1996a:265; see also Wacquant 2005). The holders of victorious forms of capital gain access to an even larger quantity of power resources through the increased valuation of the forms of capital. Because economic capital is most easily re-converted, it is regarded as dominant[4] (see also Bourdieu 1986). However, part of state's magic is that the state acts as a bank of symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1996a:376) and through legislation defines some of the conditions for the exchange of capital. Finally, it is important to bear in mind that the use of another form of capital in a field not only requires investment and conversion of capital, but also an investment of time, that is, labour, which is the foundation of all forms of capital (cf. Bourdieu 1986) The total amount of capital of a certain elite position does not provide the same opportunities across fields. At the same time, not everyone shares the same *illussio*—or interest in—participating in all fields. The combination of a certain volume and composition of capital and a certain field of agency determines whether or not it is possible for an agent to obtain a

[3] An individual's possession of capital can also be seen as the possession of a certain amount of power resources (cf. Korpi 1985). However, an analysis of the field of power emphasises the dominant positions and institutions rather than the overall distribution of power resources, such as civil rights.

[4] In spite of the dominant position of economic capital, Bourdieu offered a theoretical break with the more one-dimensional notion of power in the Marxist model of a ruling class (see e.g. Miliband 1969; Poulantzas 1975), in which non-capitalist elite members are dominated by the capitalist class either because of shared social background and economic dependence or for structural reasons. Thus, all forms of capital recognised in the field of power are important and cannot be reduced to ownership of or control over means of production.

dominant position and thus also bring force from the field outside it. However, this is only possible if one adjusts to the rules of the field by accepting the status quo.

According to Bourdieu's mentor, Raymond Aron (1950:9), the key to understanding society is the composition and, in particular, the reproduction of the elite; how the values and lifestyles of the elite survive across generations, often through their very own offspring. The social closure of elites thus reflects the relative autonomy of each subfield to impose its own principles for 'vision and division' (cf. Bourdieu 1996a:271). A background in the upper echelons of society, *hexis*, which gives access to the bodily mastered ability to navigate in the field, is paramount for engaging in the objective relations of interdependence between the different elements in the field of power. The reproduction of the elite is based on what Michael Hartmann (2000) defined as 'class-specific habitus', which is based on shared background and lifestyle (see also Mills 1956:140–2, for a description of how the top of the institutional hierarchies form a certain embodied character), which in turn generates an almost mechanical solidarity. The similar reproduction strategies for different subfields gives this mechanical solidarity, together with contacts and social interaction between elites, the ability to create a deeper foundation for the exchange of different forms of capital in the field of power.

The field of power is thus the field in which the exchange of different forms of mutually recognised forms of capital takes place. Often this exchange has become institutionalised, especially through the state. This could be, for example, a foundation controlling a large corporation, which, together with the state, uses economic capital to fund a new research centre and thus the foundation and the state gain access to creating new positions holding both scientific capital and the symbolic capital tied to charitable donations. The dominant positions in the different fields will usually be organised in institutional hierarchies, but this is not always the case. The '*effective agents'* in the field of power are not an elite simply because they hold the largest quantity of some form of capital or because they dominate central institutional hierarchies. The defining criteria for an effective agent in the field of power is that (1) the agent has a sufficient amount of capital and (2) this form of capital, subject to a certain rate of exchange, is recognised in the field of power. The objective of exchanging capital will often be to gain access to symbolic capital or honour, which in turn can act as symbolic credit across the social space. For this reason, mapping the elite using the field-of-power notion must explore:

1. which forms of capital exist in the field of power
2. what the relationship between these forms of capital are, and

3. who is able to participate in the process of converting capital while being recognised continuously.

Methods: Charting the Danish field of power

In order to chart the field of power, the notion of field of power must be used as an epistemological tool (Broady 1991; Wacquant 1993), rather than as an ontological model of the structure of powerful positions. The structure represented in Figure 1, in which the field of power is organised by oppositions (in volume and composition) in economic versus cultural capital, is a specific historical case from France in the 1970s that cannot be adapted seamlessly to Denmark in 1999. Rather, the notion of the field of power as a space of struggle in the exchange of capital between agents can be used as the framework for a comparative research program, charting the structure of different fields of power within the setting of nation-states (Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009a, 2009b). Hence, both the analysed data and the methods must be sensitive to the actual relationships at stake. However, constructing the field sets certain requirements for the data. As described in the section on theory above, data must contain the central or effective agents (cf. Bourdieu 2005:99; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1996:223) and the indicators of central forms of capital. Below, I discuss the quality of the data used for charting the field of power. Afterwards, I argue that geometric data analysis—which in the words of Jean-Paul Benzécris lets 'the model … follow data, not the reverse' (Broady 1988:60)—is particularly useful in charting the field of power.

Data: Career paths and positions instead of power resources

Data from the Danish Power Study's *Den Danske Elite* [The Danish Elite] (for more information, see Christiansen et al. 2001:247ff) contain biographical information about the Danish elite of 1999, including social background, and information about current power positions and career paths. In *Den Danske Elite* the elite were described as those 'who hold formal positions at the top of the central organisations and institutions of society, those who have the symbolical or discursive resources enabling them to influence opinion-making in Danish society' (Christiansen et al. 2001:13, my translation). The authors selected 1803 positions from the following sectors: politics (299 elite positions), business (500), the public sector (371), organisations (235), science (156), media (108) and culture (134). A quite broad notion of power was used, including not only the top strata of the 'central organisations and institutions'—Mills's power elite—but also those

who were dominant within the less institutionalised fields, which an analysis of the field of power would include.

The leaders in the sectors of politics, business, the public sector and organisations were all identified through the positional method, in which the authors followed a number of criteria to select the 'central organisations and institutions' (see Christiansen et al. 2001:249-52). However, these criteria were used somewhat rigidly and focused on, for example, the turnover or number of employees of the corporations, whether or not organisations were officially recognised in the legislative process by the government, or the person's formal position (e.g. permanent government secretary or member of parliament)[5]. This skewed the focus to formal power in the organisational structure, rather than to which institutional orders were socially tied to one another. In the science, media and culture sectors, the positional method was used together with the reputational method, in which experts within the field aided in the identification of the members of the sub-elites. In this case, less formal forms of power were identified on the basis of a poorly elaborated form of status within the field[6]. The use of the positional approach led to

[5] The use of rigid selection criteria creates a number of methodological problems, because it is questionable whether or not a number of individuals have enough power resources to be considered as effective agents on equal terms with other agents in the field of power. One example is that the authors automatically included the CEO and the Board Chairman of all selected corporations. Both regional bank Fyns Amts Sparrekasse and banking mastodon Danske Bank were thus represented with two positions each, whereas firms with a corporate structure that included a number of subsidiaries could be represented by up to eight elite positions, as in the case of Tryg-Baltica Insurance. These problems were also present within, for example, the identification of the organisational elite, where leaders of organisations were selected on the basis of the organisation's membership numbers alone, the organisation's right to appoint members of public boards and committees, or being leader of a 'main organization in an important societal sector' (Christiansen, Møller, and Togeby 2001:250–1) was sufficient to be included in the elite. Hence, the Danish Associations of Sports Fishers, The Church Association of the Inner Mission, The Mothers Help, The Danish Association of the Blind, Danish Cyclists' Federation, The Danish Association of Sports for Disabled, The Danish Association of Veterinarians, The Federation of Active Veterinarians in Denmark, The Danish Association of the Hard of Hearing and organisations for the disabled, LEV and Ring i Ring, were all associations whose chairman and director were included in the elite. At the same time, other groups with considerable power resources, such as the ultra-rich, with the largest fortunes of the country, were only included if they also held more formal positions of power.

[6] Unfortunately, the study is very not very informative in its description of the criteria used to include individuals on the basis of their reputation. This could lead to letting the '*principles of vision and division*' of a certain faction within the field delimit the field, rather than subjecting the construction of the field to a reflexive sociological objectivation (Bourdieu 1988, 1996a, 1996b; cf. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1996).

some individuals with several elite position being included more than once in the data. Thus, the elite comprised only 1539 unique persons. Furthermore, missing data on 12 individuals reduced the population actually charted to 1527 elite individuals from 1999. Further, no systematical theoretical argument was presented for the value of the power resources of these 1527 in the Danish field of power or to show that exactly these sectors, with their relative strength represented in the number of individuals included from each, should constitute the relevant institutional orders[7].

[8]Despite these critical issues, the data offer several analytical possibilities. First, the sectors correspond roughly to the different subfields within the field of power as analysed by Bourdieu (see Figure 1)[9]. Moreover, the data contain a variety of relevant information, which, when taken together, can aid in drawing an image of some of the forms of capital structuring the field of power in Denmark in 1999. This means that a space can be constructed from indicators of four different forms of capital (see Table 1). These are:

1. inherited and personal cultural capital acquired through fathers and personal education
2. inherited social capital, based on family demographic[10]
3. personal career experience or organisational capital, by sectors in which the individual has had a career path

[7] Adding to this, the authors have chosen not to disclose the names of the elite individuals. To do so would not only make the discussion of the elite more theoretical than necessary (Dørge 2004) but it would also mean losing some of the analytical possibilities of geometric data analysis in exploring and validating the analysis of the field of power by looking at certain individuals of interest, such as Alan Greenspan in the space of Central Bank Directors or exemplary individuals of different axes (see e.g. Lebaron 2008; Ellersgaard and Larsen 2010; Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, and Thine 2011).

[8]

[9] The field of law was included through judges in the public sector, law firms in the business sector and, of course, the number of lawyers holding leading positions in other sectors. If the rest of the public sector is seen as part of the state, only organisations and the media sector do not correspond to the subfields in Figure 1. In many ways organisations are part of the political field and were used by Bourdieu (2005:89–125) in his analysis of field of housing policy in France.

[10] Unfortunately, only indicators of parents' general elite background (based on being mentioned in the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*, Kraks Blå Bog, and their sector of employment) are available. It is thus not possible to access parental class position or volume of capital, but only their branch of employment.

4. personal social capital through current residential area and memberships in on the boards of a number of central institutions, e.g. corporations, public committees or organisations.

TABLE 1: CONTRIBUTIONS OF FORM OF CAPITAL TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIELD OF POWER IN DENMARK, 1999

Variable	Number of modalities	Axis 1 (35.3%)	Axis 2 (22.7%)
Inherited and personal cultural capital			
Father's education	4 (6%)	7.9%	8.4%
Education	9 (13%)	15.9%	14.0%
Total, Inherited and personal cultural capital	13 (19%)	23.8%	22.4%
Inherited social capital			
Father's occupational sector	7 (10%)	8.8%	7.4%
Mother's occupational sector	3 (4%)	3.1%	3.1%
Place of birth	4 (6%)	3.4%	6.2%
Parents mentioned in *Who's Who*	2 (3%)	3.4%	6.4%
Total, Inherited social capital	16 (24%)	18.7%	23.1%
Work experience			
Career position in business	2 (3%)	17.1%	1.5%
Career position in politics	2 (3%)	0.1%	13.6%
Career position in the public sector	2 (3%)	2.4%	2.6%
Career position in in organisations	2 (3%)	0.1%	2.7%
Career position in science	2 (3%)	3.5%	1.4%
Career position in media	2 (3%)	0.4%	0.0%
Career position in culture	2 (3%)	4.1%	0.2%
Total, Work experience	14 (21%)	27.7%	22.0%
Personal social capital			
Residence area	5 (7%)	4.4%	11.2%
Membership of board in private enterprise	4 (6%)	14.6%	6.7%
Membership of board in economic organisation	2 (3%)	4.3%	0.7%
Membership of board in private foundation	2 (3%)	2.0%	3.4%
Membership in VL groups	2 (3%)	3.4%	4.5%
Membership in the Academy of Technical Sciences	2 (3%)	0.6%	3.5%
Membership of board in state institutions	2 (3%)	0.0%	1.7%
Membership of state council	3 (4%)	0.7%	0.8%
Membership of board in other organisations	2 (3%)	0.0%	0.0%
Total, Personal social capital	24 (36%)	30.0%	32.5%
Total	67 (100%)	100%	100%

The most important deficiencies are better indicators of economic capital (wealth, income, ownership of corporations)[11], but also indicators of symbolic capital (such as decorations, press coverage, invitations to royal balls, membership of exclusive social clubs), cultural capital (academic prizes, studies abroad, more information on parental class) and further information on inheritance (parental elite position) and own positioning (number of children, political stances). This charting of the Danish field of power is thus primarily based on current network, career experience (including education) and social background.

Charting using correspondence analysis

Bourdieu (1988, 1996a)applied multiple correspondence analysis in studies of different subfields within the field of power, including the economic and academic elite. Within the same framework, multiple correspondence analysis has been used to map the field of power for the entire elite in both Norway (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007) and France (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, and Thine 2011). Multiple correspondence analysis constructs a multidimensional space in which the strongest statistical oppositions are expressed in a number of continuous dimensions. The oppositions are based on differences in discrete variables, with each outcome of these variables labelled a 'modality' (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010). Hence, the dimensions express which forms of capital most strongly oppose one another in the field.

A reliable and valid charting requires the included variables—and the forms of capital that they indicate—to be balanced. This means that they must each contain roughly the same number of modalities and that no modalities may be shared by fewer than 5% of the individuals (see Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009a:156; Le Roux and Rouanet 2004:214–6). All modalities in the analysis adhered to this requirement, except for the analytically interesting social backgrounds of 'mother working in the private sector' and 'father working in politics or organisations', shared by 3.6% and 3.3% of the elite individuals[12].

[11] This also mean that this charting of the field of power is able to a smaller extent to distinguish between owners and managers, an opposition clear in the economic upper class in Norway (Flemmen 2012), and thus between reproduction strategies of the bourgeoisie based on either the family (e.g. through inheritance and marriage)or the school as central institutions (cf. Bourdieu 1996a:278–90).

[12] With regard to the balance of the analysis, the indicators of personal social capital showed the largest proportion of the variation, as seen in Table 1. However, this form of capital affected the two primary dimensions less than expected, as it contributed 36% of the total variation but only 30.0% and 32.5% of the variation of the first and the

In the present study, where place of birth or parental background was missing for about 30%, it was still necessary to include the remaining information on these individuals in the analysis. If not, the image of the elite would reflect only those for whom it was easiest to obtain information. The specific multiple correspondence analysis can handle exactly this issue of missing data by removing only the partial omissions from the analysis. In this way, missing values did not contribute to the construction of the analytical space, but the remaining outcomes of the same variable and the remaining outcomes of the individuals did (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004:203ff). Furthermore, rare outcomes that did not live up the above-mentioned 5% criterion, and unlike mother's or father's occupation have great analytical relevance (e.g. 'education in the military' or 'born of Greenland or the Faroe Islands'), could be removed from the analysis without omitting the entire variable.

Correspondence analysis also enables the researcher to explore the constructed space based on the position of other variables or individuals with certain characteristics. In this study these variables, called *supplementary variables*, were sector or gender. These do not contribute to the construction of the space, but describe the aggregated position of groups (e.g. women) in the space. They can help in the interpretation of the space. Here, distances over 0.5 within a single dimension can be regarded as 'notable' (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:71). Adding to this, individuals or groups of individuals can be explored geometrically by concentration ellipses, in which at least 86% of the individuals from a group lie inside (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:69–70), as shown in Figure 3. Finally, it is also possible to investigate the differences within a single group in relation to their position in the overall space through the *class specific analysis* (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:64–7), which will be presented later in the analysis of the specific positions of the political sub-elites in the field of power in Denmark[13].

When analysing the axes or dimensions, one looks primarily at the proportion of the total variation in data—also called *inertia*—they explain. In principle, all constructed dimensions can be interpreted. However, dimensions that explain only a small proportion of the total inertia will not have a valid sociological interpretation and will be tied to issues of data-coding rather than to

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second axes. With nine modalities, one could fear that the education variable would determine the structure of the space, but if the education variable is removed, the overall structure remains.

[13] All analysis was performed, and figures constructed, in the soc.mca package for R (Larsen, Andrade, and Ellersgaard 2012), which is the only current software that can perform class-specific analysis.

substantial differences in the analysed field. Thus, only four dimensions, accounting for 76.6%[14] of the adjusted inertia[15] (Le Roux and Rouanet 2004:194–5), were analysed. The two first axes in particular were the strongest and explain 58.0% of the inertia (see Figure 1 and Appendix_Table 1 and 2). Modalities with the strongest contribution on the same side of the axes express the strongest statistical correlations between the active variables in the analysis.

Analysis: The structure of the field of power in Denmark

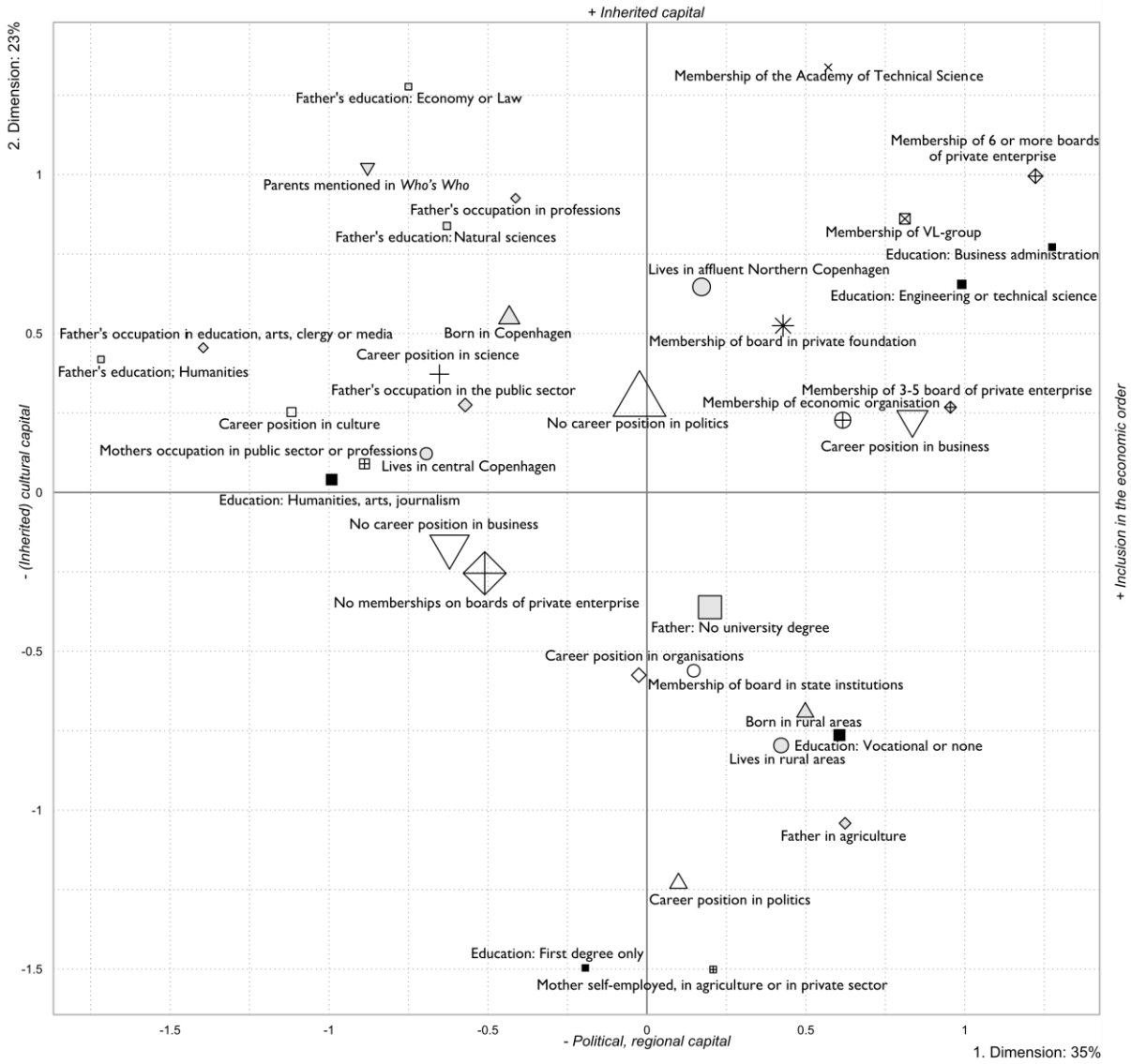
As in Bourdieu's model of France (see Figure 1), the opposition between economic and cultural capital proved to be central in the Danish elite. As the primary opposition in the field of power in Denmark, it explains 35.3% of the adjusted inertia in the analysis. The opposition is illustrated horizontally in Figure 2, with economic capital on the right and cultural capital on the left. The right hand pole describes inclusion in the order of economic institutions (cf. Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, et al. 2011) more than it describes the volume of economic capital, because the indicators of forms of capital used in the construction of the space were linked less to economic capital (income, wealth, property) than to inclusion in the networks governing the large economic organisations—positions on corporate boards, an educational background traditional among business leaders such as in business or engineering[16], career positions in the corporate sector and other types of personal social capital tied to business, such as membership of VL-groups (the social groups administrated by the Danish Management Society) and economic organisations.

[14] Normally it is preferable to analyse dimensions that explain at least 80% of the adjusted inertia (Le Roux og Rouanet 2010: 52; see also Hjellbrekke 1999: 45ff). However, the fifth axis (which, if included would raise the proportion of explained, adjusted inertia to 81.4%) explains only 4.7% of the variation in data (and thus only slightly more than half of the explanatory power of the fourth dimension). This fifth axis seems to capture a specific co-variation of fathers with educations in humanities and fathers with occupations in the more caring parts of the public sector—'the left hand of the state'. Hence, the following dimensions will not be analysed further.

[15] The adjusted inertia reflects that many dimensions in a multiple correspondence analysis are created by the many modalities by limiting the number of modalities in relation to the number of variables and categories (Le Roux og Rouanet 2010: 39-40).

[16] Note that the personal cultural capital tied to these educations are field-specific within the economic field. These are not educations with a high academic prestige or a high criteria of admission when looking at the grade-point-average required for entry (with the exception of the oldest generation of engineers).

FIGURE 2: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 1ST AND 2ND AXES IN THE FIELD OF POWER IN DENMARK



Size of icon denote the frequencies and thus the relative weight of the modality in the constructed space. The shape corresponds to the variable of the modality.

On the left side of Figure 2 are found the elite individuals not included in the economic order. This group not only had personal cultural capital, but were also more likely to have inherited cultural capital by having parents close to the cultural elite, seen most typically by having a father with an academic background in the humanities and by having an education in arts or journalism. These individuals also had work experience from the cultural or scientific sector. The modality with the largest contribution to this side of the axis did *not* have a career position in the corporate sector (see Appendix, Table 1) and tended, just above average, *not* to have a position on board of

a private enterprise. Just as they were likely to possess their own volume of cultural capital, individuals placed on the left of Figure 2 were equally characterised by a lack of contact with economic institutions and were thus excluded from the economic order. But this group was not excluded in other ways. They had inherited social capital through the privileged positions of their parents in public administration, educational and cultural institutions, and the juridical and economic professions. Parents were also more likely to be mentioned in *Who's Who*, whereas the individuals on the left of the chart were also more likely to have been born in the capital. This was a group tied to the metropolitan life of central Copenhagen rather than to the mansions of upscale northern Copenhagen suburbs.

The second central opposition of the field of power was between newcomers and established elite families. Seen in the vertical second axis, this explains 22.7% of the adjusted inertia. At the top of Figure 2 are those who were born into either the power elite or at least the most privileged classes in society (see Appendix, Table 2). These were elite individuals with social capital inherited from parents mentioned in *Who's Who* or from being born in the capital area. Those having fathers with university diplomas in law, economics or natural sciences ties inherited cultural capital, and appear at the top of the pole. Aside from inherited cultural capital, this group participated more frequently in networks that can be a source of personal social capital, such as the VL groups, the Academy of Technical Sciences or positions on the boards of corporations or foundations. Hence, the upper pole is characterised by family and social ties to the *haute bourgeoisie* and through inherited capital and a number of networks typical of this well-established elite also seen through residence in the upscale northern Copenhagen suburbs.

Opposed to this group, at the bottom of Figure 2, are found the group of newcomers to the field of power. In terms of inherited capital, they have a weaker social background; for example by being born in rural areas or having fathers without academic degrees or fathers working in agriculture. This group has also been less able to obtain cultural capital on their own. Elite individuals with only a first degree or vocational training were most often tied to this side of the axis. The social capital of the group is at a greater distance from the central circles of power. However, they may have stronger ties to regional elites. Finally, elite individuals with career experience in politics, and to a lesser extent in organisations, appear at the bottom of Figure 2. These tended to be elite persons who were elected in order to achieve their position, and possessed a low volume of inherited capital. The second axis is to some extent a mobility axis. Opposing the established in power elite was a group that entered by virtue of a democratic and regional mandate. This will be explored further in the class specific analysis below.

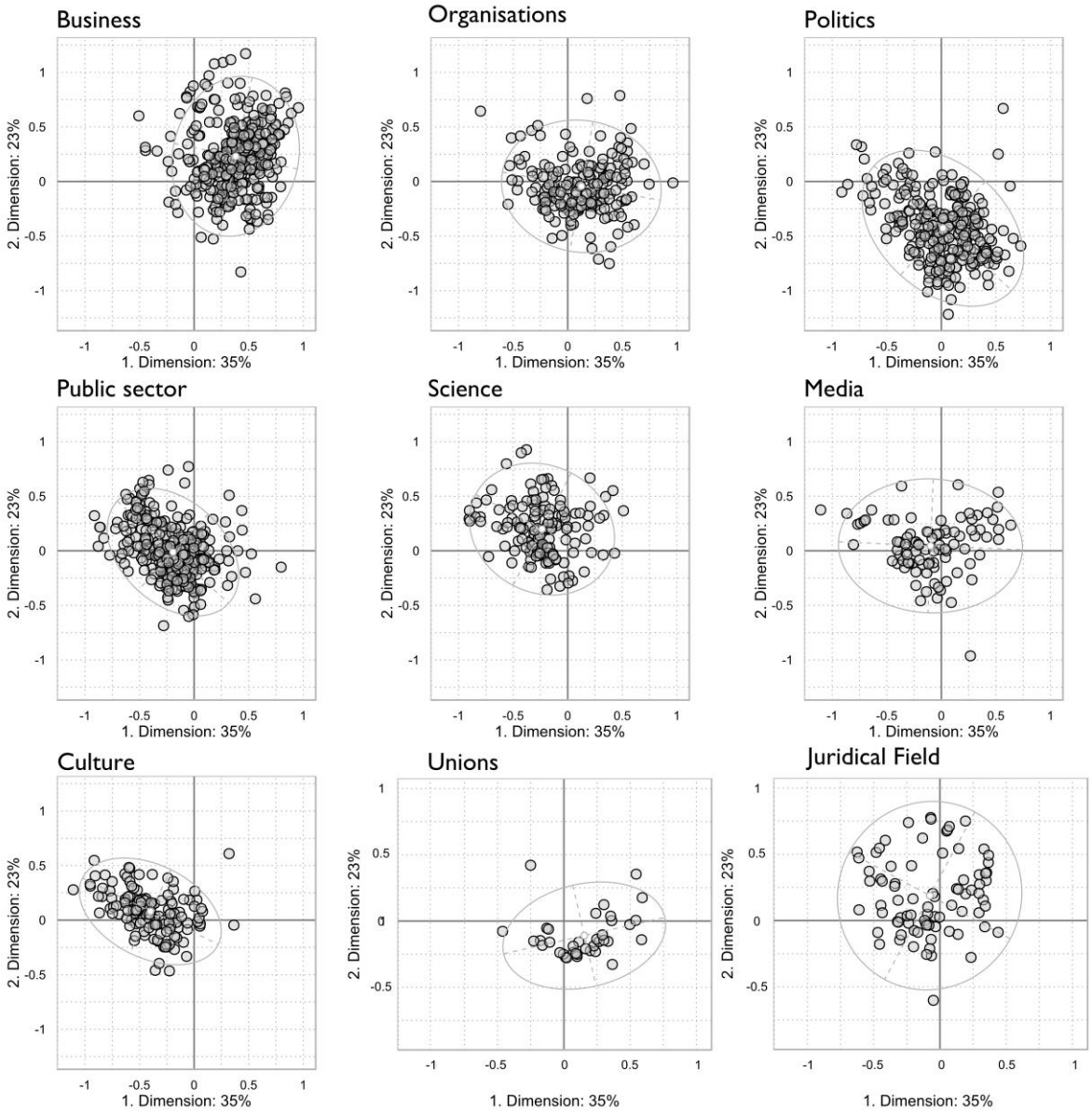
In addition to the opposition between economic and cultural capital and the opposition between the established and newcomers to the field of power, two other interesting oppositions were found. The third of the four oppositions was an opposition between the state nobility together with the juridical field, and the cultural field. In this opposition, individuals with career positions in culture and the media and with educational background in arts or humanities, stand opposed to lawyers with careers in the public sector, members of governing bodies of state institutions and councils, and those with fathers educated in law or economics. This third axis accounted for 10.1% of the adjusted inertia. A fourth opposition, also including the juridical field, but this time opposed to the scientific field, exists. In this dimension, career positions in science, educational background in the natural sciences, and membership of the Academy of Technical Science appear in opposition to having a father with education in law or economy, having parents in *Who's Who*, and an education in law. This fourth axis accounts for 8.6% of the adjusted inertia. The fact that exactly these oppositions were found could also be due to the way the coding of some variables tied the reproduction strategies of some sub-elites closer than others. There was often a connection between being a lawyer, having a father educated in law or economics, and work within the professions, but these connections were less clear for sub-elites less tied to a particular profession. The following analysis focuses on the two primary axes, which are also by far the strongest axes. The second opposition between established and newcomers alone accounts for more than double of the third axis; however, the reader should keep in mind that those with high volumes of inherited capital at the top of Figure 2 have strong internal oppositions, in particular between the juridical field and both the fields of culture and the field of science.

The positions in the field of power in Denmark

Not all sub-elites were differentiated to the same extent between economic versus cultural capital or inherited versus political capital. This is shown by the form of the concentration ellipses of the different sub-elites in Figure 3. The relatively vertical form of the business elite reflects this group being differentiated primarily along the second axis; that is, different volumes of inherited capital are expressed in the classical opposition between old money and the parvenus. It seems that the overall structure of the juridical field, the media field and the field of organisations generally follows the structure of the field of power. The political elite, the elite of the public sector and the scientific elite all appear to be formed by a different principle of structuration than the field of power as a whole: politicians, public sector leaders and positions of the academic

field more often possess combinations of either high volumes of cultural and inherited capital or political regional capital combined with inclusion in the economic order, with the relative position of these sub-elites as a point of reference. Hence, some sub-elites contain other *internal* principles of opposition than to the two primary axes in this analysis. The class-specific analysis below will explore what these differences potentially could be for the political sub-elite.

FIGURE 3: CONCENTRATION ELLIPSES OF SUB-ELITES ON THE 1ST AND 2ND AXES IN THE FIELD OF POWER



The seven sub-elites from the elite of the Danish Power Study illustrated on the first and second axes. Furthermore, elite positions from unions (38) and the juridical field (81, including lawyers, judges, police and state attorney).

The role played by organisations—placed between the political and economic elite in Figure 3—is particularly interesting. In the light of the corporatist Danish model of labour market regulation it seems logical that elite individuals in organisations have a capital composition mediating between politics and economy. It is noteworthy how elite individuals with leading posts in unions were more similar to the political elite (see Figure 4) than were others from the organisational sector. In opposition to the union leaders, leaders from business and employers' associations are located closer to the economic elite. The relative heterogeneity of the organisational elite thus reflects that the field of organisations primarily mediates between other fields. This is confirmed in Figure 3, where the elite individuals from the organisational sector are dispersed evenly across a large area of the entire space. Leaders of benevolent organisations with nonprofit or charitable purposes are placed close to the cultural elite, whereas leaders of organisations providing services for patients are located near the public sector elite, as seen in Figure 4. Elite individuals from organisations more closely resemble the members of the other sub-elites they have contact with in their line of work, than other organisation leaders. This implies that, rather than constituting a field of their own, they form part of other sub-elites in the field of power. This result shows a clear difference between a field-analytic approach and a sector- and institution-orientation from a political science framework.

The internal homogeneity of the different sub-elites is also expressed in the size of the concentration ellipses in Figure 3. Sectors or sub-elites with similar composition of capital, such as the cultural sector, are very concentrated in the space, whereas groups with larger internal differences, such as the media (including CEOs of media conglomerates, directors of public owned media and high-profile journalists), are more spread across the axes. The members of the cultural elite in particular are quite homogenous, located along the same positions on the second axis and characterised by different volumes of inherited cultural capital and the absence of inclusion in the economic order. Interestingly, both science and, as mentioned, media, display substantially larger ellipses than the cultural elite. This suggests that positions in these elites coincide much more often with other elite positions. By contrast, the cultural elite appear in relative isolation in positions that, even if supported by inherited cultural capital, also have an absence of personal social capital and are excluded from the economic order.

The internal oppositions between positions in the cultural elite in the field of power also appear in Figure 4. The artists have a more extreme position furthest to the left, relative to the rest of the cultural field. Bourdieu's (1988, 1996b) analysis of the scientific and literary field suggested that these are often structured by field-specific capital as opposed to forms of capital exchanged

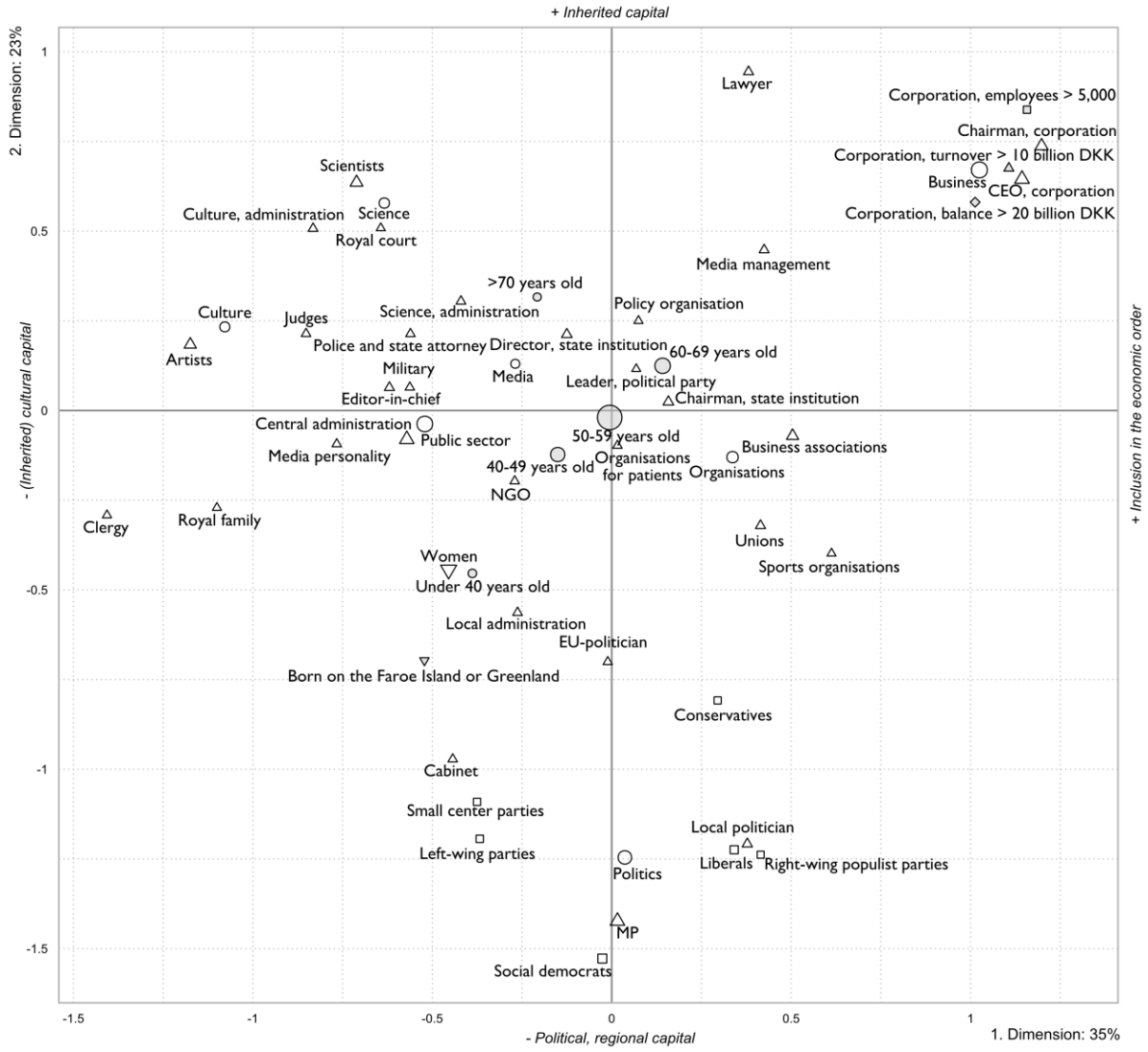
with other fields. Like the artists, scientists are placed in more extreme positions than the scientific field as a whole and scientific leaders in particular. Regular members of parliament are also placed in a more extreme position than the rest of the political elite, whereas CEOs and chairmen of the largest corporations are located on the far right of the space, closed to integration in the economic order. This could be interpreted as if, having a higher proportion of field-specific capital, all of these groups have more difficulty being a part of the actual power elite in which the exchange of capital takes place. However, the specific exchange rates of capital in the field of power (among other things tied to personal social capital, as will be discussed in the presentation of Figure 7) also affected the ability to enter the power elite. Compared to France (cf. Ellersgaard and Larsen 2011), the relative isolation of the cultural elite and the lesser importance of cultural capital for top Danish CEOs could suggest that the artists and cultural leaders included in the data are not part of the power elite; instead, they constitute a field with a high degree of autonomy but a weak relation to the other parts of the field of power[17]. The weak relation to the field of power is also expressed by the exclusion of the cultural elite from the different power networks, which connects the other sub-elites, as seen in Figure 7. The value of cultural capital, its exchange rate in the field of power, is perhaps less than one would expect from a more ontological reading of the work of Bourdieu.

Near the cultural elite, in the south-western corner of Figure 4, are found the newcomers to the field of power. Elite individuals under 40 years of age, women, and persons born in the former Danish colonies of Faroe Island or Greenland, are placed here. This indicates that it is exactly the groups creating diversity in the field of power because of their age, gender or ethnic heritage (cf. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 1998) that do not acquire access to all areas of the field of power with the same ease. The surprisingly small proportion of women in the power elite (13.5%) are placed even further away from both economic and inherited capital. In spite of a larger proportion of the women having elite backgrounds—17% of the women have parents mentioned in *Who's Who* compared to 12% of the men—the capital composition of women is most similar to newcomers to the elite. The disadvantages of having an atypical gender—being a

[17] One could also imagine that the strong homogeneity of the cultural field was based on it being a very closed, totally dominant elite, which the other elites, in spite of their similarities and cohesion, were powerless to resist. However, such a concentration of power as would be seen in a religious elite or theocracy, such as Iran, or in the social circles of the court of Louis XIV, does not seem to be the case for the Danish artists.

woman—seems to matter more to an elite career trajectory than having a larger volume of inherited capital.

FIGURE 4: SUPPLEMENTARY VARIABLES OF THE FIELD OF POWER



The supplementary variables—sub-elite, subsector, age, gender, party (of the political elite) and indicators of the largest corporations (for the business elite)—are illustrative and do not contribute to the construction of the space. Projected on the 1st and 2nd axes. Size of icon corresponds to the frequency, and shape corresponds to the variable of the supplementary modality.

The field of power in Denmark is thus structured by an opposition between (a) inclusion primarily in the economic order versus inherited cultural capital, and (b) inherited capital and politically, regionally based capital. It seems to be particularly near the economic order and the inherited capital that the elite of the *haute bourgeoisie* are found. Opposed to this group is a faction of the elite more open to outsiders, perhaps because these relative newcomers acquire its power

resources through democratic elections. This group, of which the political elite are the most typical, is now explored further through a class specific analysis.

When an elite needs a democratic mandate: A class specific analysis of the political sub-elite

Which characteristics create differences within the particular sub-elites in the Danish field of power? This question can be explored through *class specific correspondence analysis* (Chiche and Le Roux 2011; Le Roux and Rouanet 2010:64–7). In this analysis, the information from the general space (the positions of the individuals on the axes) was used to carry out a new analysis of which active modalities determine the position in the overall space (in this case the Danish field of power) among the individuals in a specific group or class. A new space was created using the distances between individuals in the political elite to explore which attributes among politicians determines their position in the Danish field of power. Thus, the class-specific analysis does not explain the overall space, but the internal differentiation of the class, given the overall space; that is, it investigates which of the politicians' traits are important for their relative positions in the field of power. As mentioned above, the political elite are spread more on the second axis (according to volume of inherited capital) than on the primary axis (according to distribution of economic versus cultural capital). Furthermore, they seem to be structured by particular combinations of the two overall structuration principles mentioned above.

To explore whether or not the structuration principles in the political sub-elite and the overall field of power are similar, we analysed the angle between the axes in the two different spaces. As seen in Table 2, no axes in the class-specific analysis are near parallel. The positions of the members of the political elite were thus structured by oppositions other than those that structure the field of power as a whole. Even though there were substantial differences in distribution of inherited capital versus political capital among the political sub-elite, the cosine similarity[18] between the second axis in the global space and the first axis in the class specific analysis is only 0.45. This is because, in spite of large internal differences among the political elite on the second

[18] The cosine similarity is calculated as the angle between individuals on the axes of the original correspondence analysis and the class specific analysis. Unlike a more standard measure of correlation, the cosine similarity uses information on the absolute position of the individuals on the axes. A cosine similarity of 1 implies that the axes are in the same plane, whereas a similarity of 0 indicates that the axes are orthogonal and have no analytical connection.

axis, almost all politicians are placed on the lower end of the vertical axis (see Figure 3)[19]. Adding to this, all things considered, relative similarity between the first axis in the class specific analysis and the second axis in the global space, a high score on the first axis in the class specific analysis is also tied to a relative low position on the first and fourth axes in the field of power as a whole. Politicians placed high on the first, class specific axis have relatively low volumes of economic and juridical capital and correspondingly high volumes of cultural and scientific capital.

TABLE 2: COSINE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE AXES IN THE CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS OF THE FIELD OF POWER AND THE CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

	CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS (THE FIELD OF POWER):			
	Axis 1(35.3%) *(economic vs. cultural capital)*	Axis 2 (22.7%) *(inherited vs. political capital)*	Axis 3 (10.1%) *(cultural vs. juridical capital)*	Axis 4 (8.6%) *(scientific vs. juridical capital)*
CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS (THE POLITICAL ELITE):				
Axis 1 (32.7%) *(+/- inherited political capital)*	-0.46	0.45	0.21	-0.51
Axis 2 (21.9%) *(private vs. public sector)*	0.52	-0.01	0.61	0.05
Axis 3 (14.6%)	-0.34	-0.05	0.10	-0.25
Axis 4 (11.6%)	0.33	-0.16	-0.19	-0.17

Cosine similarity calculates the proximity of the angles of the axes. A similarity of 1 means that the axes are parallel and a similarity of 0 means they are orthogonal. Negative similarities means that the axes are opposed, so that a high position on one axis corresponds to a low position on the other axis. The interpretations, if any, of the axes are noted in italics.

The second axis in the class specific analysis is to some extent related to the third and first axes in the global space. Politicians with high scores on this second axis have higher volumes of economic than cultural capital, but at the same time rather cultural capital than the juridical capital tied to positions in the central bureaucracy that structure the third global axis. The third and fourth class specific axes are not similar to any of the interpretable axes in the analysis of the field of power as a whole. To answer what structures these relations between the global and the class specific analysis, the axes of the class specific analysis will now be interpreted in depth.

[19] The correlation between the first, class specific axis and the second axis in the global space is actually 0.80. Although the positions on the axes are quite like numerically, the position of the political elite in the global space means that there are substantial differences in their interpretation.

FIGURE 5: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 1ST AND 2ND AXES IN THE CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

Size of icon denote the frequencies of the modality. The form corresponds to the variable of the modality.

As for the specific multiple correspondence analysis, the class specific analysis was analysed as a space in which the contributions of each modalities are used to interpret the axes. The difference is simply that the analysed space takes the position of the individuals in the class in the global

space as a point of departure. There are two clearly interpretable axes in the class specific analysis, explaining 54.6% of the total adjusted inertia within the sub-elite[20]. The modalities contributing above-average to these axes are seen in Figure 5 and Tables 3 and 4 in the appendix. Note that the quite extreme positions of some modalities are a product of the few indicators able to differentiate within the political elite in the overall analysis[21]. Hence, the modality with the strongest contribution to the second axis in the global analysis—to have had a career position in politics—was shared by everyone in the political elite. Other modalities dragging individuals downwards in the overall space have huge importance for internal position within the political elite. The contribution values and positions of modalities and individuals in the class specific analysis should be interpreted with caution because of the limited number of indicators of forms of capital in the global analysis, which returns with far worse consequences in the class specific analysis.

The first vertical axis explaining 32.7% of the adjusted inertia in the class specific analysis seems to describe an opposition between on the one hand, politicians who were political heirs, those whose fathers had a political career, and those with parents mentioned in *Who's Who* (placed high in Figure 5), and on the other hand, the newcomers at the bottom. The similarity with inherited capital shown in Table 2 thus takes a *field-specific form*. What primarily separated the politicians was not the presence of an elite social background but, rather, the presence of a family background in politics. The inheritors are opposed to the newcomers with lower volumes of inherited social capital due to having parents working in agriculture and being raised in rural areas. Within the first axis the politicians are also differentiated by field-specific cultural capital. Economists are placed high on Figure 5, whereas agents with a first degree—a relatively modest educational background in the elite[22]—are positioned very low. Finally, agents from the political elite in the

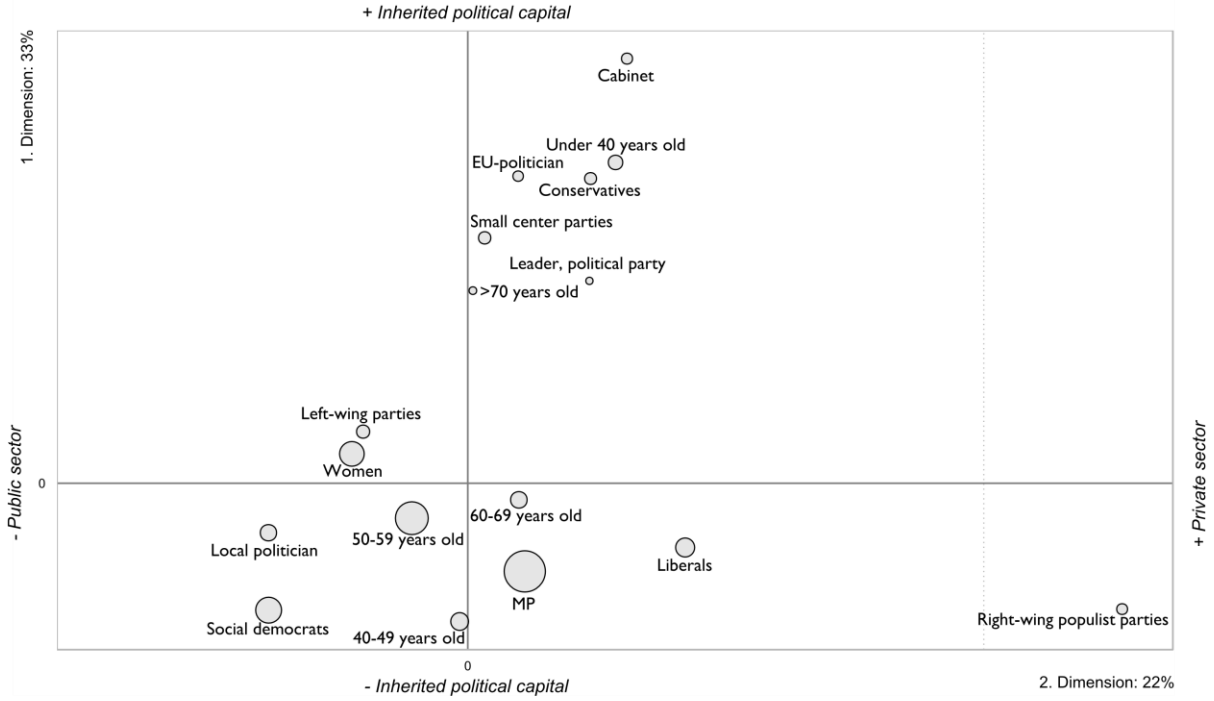
[20] The third and fourth axes in the class-specific analysis do not have a clear interpretation and, as mentioned, there are no clear cosine similarities to the axes in the overall space. They seem to be tied to rare outcomes in other combinations of the already strongly contributing combinations of mother's occupation, first degrees and having a father in politics or in an organisation.

[21] Moreover, the modality of 'First Degree' appears to divide the cloud of individuals on the two first axes into two very separate sub-groups.

[22] Only 88 (5.8%) of the elite individuals had a first degree only, typically being educated within a profession such as teaching or nursing, outside the universities. Furthermore, 253 (16.5%) have a vocational background or no tertiary education. The other elite individuals all had university diplomas or a first degree in either business or engineering, and were coded with these. It is typically within the political elite, as is also seen in Table 3 and Figure 2, that one

top of Figure 5 also possess the personal social capital achieved through living in inner Copenhagen—particularly compared to other members of the elite with high volumes of cultural capital as seen in Table 1 in the appendix—whereas agents without inherited political capital also live further from the power centre in the countryside or in smaller provincial cities.

FIGURE 6: SUPPLEMENTARY VARIABLES IN THE CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE



Illustrative modalities in the Class Specific analysis. Note that the projection does not have coordinates, as no transition formulas have been added to software to calculate them. The reader should thus focus upon a visual interpretation.

The political subfield is also differentiated along the second horizontal axis, explaining 21.9% of the adjusted inertia. Here, there is found a difference between politicians with previous careers in the public sector versus the private sector. At the right-hand side of Figure 5 fall individuals who were formerly privately employed, with vocational training or only primary schooling and with mothers working in the private sector, in opposition to agents on the left-hand side with only a first degree and both personal and parental careers tied to the public sector. As seen in Figure 6, this axis is tied largely to the political right–left wing divide, with private sector ties most typical

finds elite individuals with a first degree only: more than half (49 out of 88) elite individuals with a first degree only were also part of the political elite.

of the right wing and public sector connection more normal for the left wing. With a cosine similarity of 0.52 between the first global axis and the second class specific axis (see Table 2), affiliation with the private sector is also tied to inclusion in the economic order. This is also seen by the fact that 35.5% of the politicians from the traditional right-wing party (the Liberal Party [Venstre] and the Conservatives) have a board membership in a private enterprise, as opposed to only 14.5% of the politicians from the Social Democrats. Being placed near the side of the public sector is tied to the administrative, juridical capital on the third axis of the global analysis (see Table 2). The class specific analysis thus shows a group of politicians included in the economic order on the right, opposed to politicians on the left tied to the public sector rather than to the cultural field.

As mentioned above, the class specific analysis is based on few indicators and should be interpreted with care. Nonetheless, the class specific analysis show that inherited political capital is of paramount importance to the position of politicians relative to other politicians in the field of power as a whole. Furthermore, the oppositions between economic versus cultural capital and cultural capital versus juridical–state-based capital are transformed into oppositions between affiliation with the private and the public sector in the political elite, or an opposition expressed by the left–right wing divide between political parties.

Discussion: Who belongs to the elite?

Where does the overall structure on the field of power leave us? Are we able to proceed in the specification of who holds leading positions in the key institutional orders and has the relational capacity to exchange capital on the field of power? What is the configuration of the overall structure of the field of power? First, it is necessary to assess whether the overall structure of the field of power is a product of specific, perhaps short-lived, logics of the Danish elite or, rather, part of stable elite constellations in developed capitalist countries at the turn of the millennium. The latter seems to be the case, as the two primary axes of the Danish field of power are very similar to those identified in Norway (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007) and France (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, et al. 2011)[23]. In Norway, the political capital is also seen as a channel of mobility

[23] However, the cultural elite is more isolated in Denmark than in Norway. This could be explained by the Norwegian data having better indicators of economic capital, but not so detailed information on inherited and personal cultural capital. As in France, the primary axes in our analysis are tied to the sector in which the elite individuals work, rather than to the volume of cultural or economic capital (cf. Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, et al. 2011:36–7). Furthermore, there are substantial differences in the positions of specific elite groups. For instance,

(Hjellbrekke and Korsnes 2009a:159) through which elite individuals with less seniority in the field more easily gain access to the field of power. As in France, this second axis is tied to inclusion in the *haute bourgeoisie*, but unlike in Norway and Denmark, the group of newcomers in France is not tied to the political sector in particular. Rather, this position is more clearly dominated in France, normal for the least typical elite individuals—women, the young and artists—as in the dominated south-western corner of Figure 4, described above[24].

It seems that the fields of power in Denmark, Norway and France have homologous structures with similar relations of exchange between different forms of capital and similar relative positions of the particular sub-elites. As shown in the class specific analysis of the political elite, the logics of the field of each sub-elite are also important. These logics could be variations in the importance of elite schools and career positions, positioning the political elite closer to the *haute bourgeoisie* in France than in Denmark, where the political elite appear to need to be either socially close to the electorate, handing politicians their mandate, or to have field-specific inherited capital. (on differences between the economic elites in Denmark, Germany, the UK and France, see Ellersgaard et al. 2013). Similar overall structures may be due to different institutional processes, which must be analysed further to understand the strategies, oppositions and cohesions of national elites.

It is also possible that the struggles in the national fields of power are tied to national elites' dependency on elites in other countries or transnational elites. There could be differences in the level of autonomy in relation to the global field of power (Lebaron 2008). For instance, there is substantially weaker cohesion of the economic elite in both Switzerland (Bühlmann, David, and Mach 2012) and the Netherlands (Heemskerk 2007; Heemskerk, Mokken, and Fennema 2012), but stronger ties across countries between the European business elites (Carroll, Fennema, and Heemskerk 2010; Heemskerk 2013). However, most national economic elites still appear to be

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bishops and church councils are among the positions with the largest volumes of inherited capital in Norway, whereas in Denmark these hold political and regional capital (see Figure 4).

[24] Moreover, there are some similarities along the third axis. Whereas this axis in France and Denmark is tied to oppositions inside the *haute bourgeoisie,* the opposition in France is tied closely to membership of the 'state nobility', the technocrats placed at the top of the French republic (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, et al. 2011:50–1). In Denmark and Norway this axis is tied to oppositions between the juridical and the cultural field. In Norway this opposition also includes politics and organisations (Hjellbrekke et al. 2007:260–2), whereas an opposition between law and science is seen on the fourth axis in Denmark.

quite closed to foreigners, in particular those who do not share language and culture with the rest of the local elite (Hartmann 2011). In spite of a growing international scene for the economic elite (see e.g. Carroll 2010; Sklair 2001), it seems that this elite is embedded in national elite constellations (Carroll 2008), which—as the comparisons with Norway and France hint—share an overall field structure. Elites may have become more international and a cosmopolitan capital may be of growing importance (Bühlmann, David, and Mach 2013), but the path to the international elites still goes through nationally based institutions (Hartmann 2010).

This once again leaves us at the struggles over legitimate definitions of 'the elite'. According to Bourdieu (1996a:265), it is in the interests of powerful groups to have their power misrecognised and seen as legitimate privileges based on superior abilities, merits or effort. Bourdieu himself was critical of the term 'elite', particularly because, especially in a French context, it implies that the elite's position at the top of a hierarchy is based on inherited abilities or merits rather than being a product of social struggles (see also Bourdieu 1991:149–51). In a more egalitarian Danish or Scandinavian context, as mentioned in the introduction, the term 'elite' is not necessarily used as praise. On the contrary, there is a symbolic struggle labelling other powerful people as the inbred elite, as is also seen in the UK (cf. Du Gay 2008). This is exactly the reason that identifying the elite should be a task for a critical social science. In this context it is important to focus upon the power structures found in the space of positions rather than upon the individuals constituting the elite (Wacquant 1993:20–1). This charting of the field of power suggests that the power elite are a smaller group than the researchers behind the Danish Power Study had imagined.

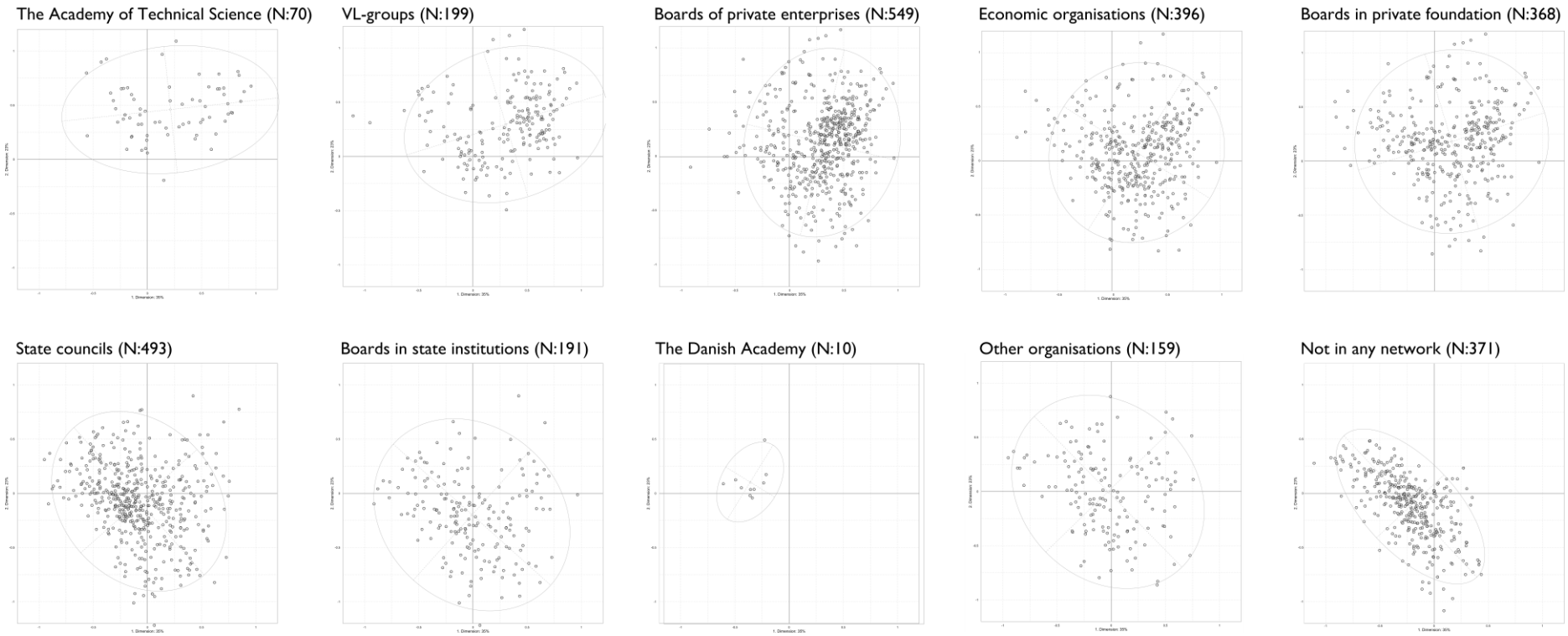
The structure of the field of power that emerged from this study implies that the cultural elite have a position somewhere on the periphery. Likewise, the left-wing politicians and the common members of parliament in the political elite are placed far from the more established members of the rest of the elite. This is seen not only in the positions of the elite in the field of power, but also through the number of connections between them. It was clear that artists and left-wing politicians, as well as researchers and media personalities, are the most autonomous in their respective subfields, being placed furthest from the power centre. When the struggles in the field of power concern the exchange rate between forms of capital, it is important for the agents to have access to the places in which conversion can take place. If a large part of the exchange of capital in the field of power is institutionalised in different types of networks, it is even clearer that certain parts of the charted field of power is home to the individuals or 'double agents' forming an actual multi-positional power elite (cf. Boltanski 1973). The groups that can recruit

the most other elite positions to their networks or which are themselves recruited to pan-elite networks, compose the 'core of core' (Denord, Hjellbrekke, et al. 2011) in the field of power. They hold the necessary volume of personal social capital to define the dominating principles of domination of the exchange rate between forms of capital.

The indicators of personal social capital used in the analysis offer a way to identify the elite individuals who potentially meet and exchange capital. The differences in the placement of personal social capital in the field of power are seen in Figure 7. Here, concentration ellipses indicate personal social capital of the members of different types of networks as projected on the two first axes of the overall space. These networks can be seen as the arenas in which the cohesion of the elite is created. As in Norway (see Denord, Hjellbrekke, et al. 2011), there seems to be a 'core of the core' with regard to social capital in the field of power. This core is primarily located near inclusion in the economic order and comprises of networks in corporate boards, economic organisations, VL groups, the Academy of Technical Science and foundations[25]. This core also appears to be tied to the political capital surrounding state councils and committees. The positions of these networks in the field of power implies that inherited capital, or the class specific habitus, aids when navigating the social relations within these networks. The sheer number, position and reach of these networks are in sharp contrast to the 10 elite individuals included in the only cultural network, the Danish Academy, which is localised at the left of the space. Even if some of these networks appear to be specific to the economic elite, the foundations, private corporate boards and VL groups all reach much further than the economic sub-elite. By contrast, among elite individuals with high volumes of inherited cultural capital there are no signs of localised, strongly institutionalised networks that are able to integrate with other parts of the elite.

[25] As Michael Useem (1984) suggests, these networks of the inner circle of the economic field are characterised by being simultaneously internally integrative and reaching across sectors.

FIGURE 7: CONCENTRATIONS ELLIPSES OF NETWORKS ON THE 1ST AND 2ND AXES OF THE FIELD OF POWER



Clouds of individuals for the members of the networks used as indicators of personal social capital in the analysis, plus the elite individuals in the Danish Academy and those without membership of any of these networks.

There appear to be networks interlocking different elites, but these are concentrated either near the pole of the economic order and having inherited capital, or near the centre of the field of power. The areas to the bottom and at the left side of the field of power appear to have higher degrees of field autonomy but fewer of the contacts that create cohesion across the field of power. Elite individuals located here are less frequently invited to the other networks and there is no sign that networks with bases in these positions can attract agents from other sub-elites. This can also be seen by the 371 elite individuals who are not members of any of the above-mentioned networks and who are generally positioned in this south-western area. An analytical strategy more sensible to who constitutes the core of the elite network, using, for example, the techniques of group identification from social network analysis, could have identified the elite more precisely. It would enable the researcher to distinguish those with high volumes of field-specific capital from those who take part in the mutual, partially institutionalised exchange relations characterising the field of power. It appears that the authors of *The Danish Elite* have over-emphasised individuals placed in positions with high volumes of field-specific capital, in particular within the political and the cultural elite. This also means that mobility into the elite was over-estimated in that study, as these positions are the most likely to be occupied by newcomers or outsiders, as shown in Figure 4.

Conclusion: An open, autonomous elite?

The conclusion of the Danish Power Study, based on the data re-used in this study, was 'that there does not exist one power elite in Denmark in 1999, but several more less autonomous elites' (Christiansen et al. 2001:241 my translation) and that when comparing the elite historically and to other countries, 'all things considered [must be] seen as relatively open'. However, this study's charting of the field of power suggests that these conclusions are much less valid for the 'core of the core' composing an actual power elite. This study found a clear structure in the Danish elite, which is similar In many ways to that of both the Norwegian and the French elite.

The following findings were made about the field of power in Denmark in 1999:

1. The field is structured first by inclusion in the economic order, and secondly according to the volume of inherited resources enabling children of elite parents to reproduce their social position.
2. Inherited power resources are opposed to placement in the cultural and political elite.

3. The social connections enabling the conversion of capital are concentrated among the economic elite and those with inherited capital, whereas the political and cultural elite appear to be more isolated.

Elite integration through networks occurred mostly among the elite of the *haute bourgeoisie* with both economic and inherited capital. These constituted an actual power elite, combining (a) social closure through privileged social backgrounds with (b) possession of the key command posts, and (c) the structural opportunities and the volume and composition of power resources to be able to exchange them. Even as the most open elite, perhaps due to the continuing demand from a public mandate, the political elite does not appear to be as isolated in the field of power as the cultural elite, who can be characterised as an autonomous field. However, as seen in the class specific analysis, the political elite were divided between those with social capital inherited through their parents' political position, and newcomers. At least inside the political field there were special paths to entry for the children of the particular sub-elite. At the same time, the conservative side of the political sector showed a closer relationship to the private sector and were consequently closer to the actual power elite.

This Bourdieu-inspired analysis of the field of power thus suggests that parts of the Danish elite can be closely interlocked in what appears to be a power elite based on mutual, institutionalised contacts and the exchange of power resources. However, the results suggest that an analysis of the field of power requires a well-identified population. The isolation of the cultural field implies that the metaphor of the field of power must be used with a certain caution. Other fields, such as unions or employers' associations, can be more relevant in certain nation-state settings such as Denmark. However, this analysis shows that relatively stable oppositions between those agents who are integrated and those who are excluded from the economic organisations, and between the established, inborn elite and newcomers gaining access through democratic mandates, dominated several Western European societies at the turn of the millennium.

Appendix:

TABLE 1: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 1ST AXIS (35.3%)

+ Inclusion in the economic order			*- (Inherited) Cultural capital*		
Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate	Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate
Career position in business	9.8	0.84	No career position in business	7.3	-0.62
Membership of 6 or more boards of private enterprises	6.3	1.22	Father's education; Humanities	5.3	-1.72
Education: Business administration	3.5	1.27	No memberships on boards of private enterprises	5.2	-0.51
Education: Engineering or technical science	3.4	0.99	Education: Humanities, arts, journalism	5.1	-0.99
Membership of economic organization	3.2	0.62	Father's occupation in education, arts, clergy or media	4.4	-1.40
Membership of VL group	2.8	0.81	Career position in culture	3.7	-1.12
Membership of 3-5 boards of private enterprises	2.4	0.95	Parents mentioned in Who's Who	3.2	-0.88
Education: Vocational or none	2.0	0.61	Mother's occupation in public sector or professions	3.0	-0.89
			Career position in science	2.8	-0.65
			Lives in central Copenhagen	2.7	-0.69
			Born in Copenhagen	1.6	-0.43
			Father's occupation in the public sector	1.5	-0.57

TABLE 2: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 2ND AXIS (22.7%)

+ Inherited capital			*- Political, regional capital*		
Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate	Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate
Parents mentioned in Who's Who	5.1	1.02	Career position in politics	11.0	-1.23
Lives in affluent Northern Copenhagen	4.9	0.65	Lives in rural areas	5.6	-0.80
Membership of 6 or more boards of private enterprises	4.9	1.00	Education: First degree only	5.0	-1.50
Membership of VL group	3.7	0.86	Father in agriculture	4.1	-1.04
Fathers education: Economy or Law	3.5	1.28	Education: Vocational or none	3.7	-0.76
Membership of the Academy of Technical Science	3.2	1.34	Born in rural areas	3.3	-0.69
Born in Copenhagen	2.9	0.55	Mother self-employed, in agriculture or in private sector	3.1	-1.50
No career position in politics	2.6	0.29	Father: No university degree	2.5	-0.36
Membership of board in private foundation	2.6	0.52	Career position in organisations	2.2	-0.56
Fathers occupation in professions	2.1	0.93	Membership of board in state institutions	1.6	-0.58
Fathers education: Natural sciences	2.0	0.84	No memberships on boards of private enterprises	1.5	-0.25
Education: Engineering or technical science	1.7	0.65			

TABLE 3: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 1ST AXIS (32.7%), CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

+ Inherited political capital			*- Inherited political capital*		
Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate	Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate
Father's occupation in politics or organisations	16.1	4.50	Mother self-employed, in agriculture or in private sector	19.3	-4.75
Parents mentioned in *Who's Who*	5.2	1.31	Education: First degree only	17.0	-3.52
Mother in public sector or professions	4.6	1.31	Father in agriculture	6.4	-1.65
Father's education: Economy or Law	2.2	1.28	Lives in rural areas	5.6	-1.02
Education: Economy	2.1	0.92	Born in rural areas	4.1	-0.98
Lives in central Copenhagen	1.8	0.67	Father, No university degree	2.0	-0.41
Born in Copenhagen	1.5	0.50			

TABLE 4: MODALITIES WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 2ND AXIS (21.9%), CLASS SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

+ Private sector			*- Public sector*		
Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate	Modality	Contribution (%)	Coordinate
Education: Vocational or none	17.0	1.92	Education: First degree only	40.5	-5.02
Mother self-employed, in agriculture or in private sector	10.6	3.25	No career position in business	4.3	-0.52
Career position in business	5.8	0.70	Career position in the public sector	3.7	-0.53
No career position in the public sector	3.3	0.47	Father's occupation in public sector	1.9	-0.70
			Membership of board in state institutions	1.8	-0.72
			Mother in public sector or professions	1.6	-0.70

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V. The Danish elite network

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Abstract

This article presents the extensive Danish elite network. Collected during 2012 and 2013, the data comprises 62,841 positions within 5332 affiliations, and connects 37,750 individuals. The affiliations are between the largest Danish corporations, the most important state institutions, organisations recognised politically by the state and other potentially powerful or integrative networks such as social clubs or royal events. Data were gathered through an inclusion principle, adding all potentially interesting affiliations. Procedures of name-matching and quality control are presented. Finally, the data are introduced: made available through a package for *R,* which enables the creation of subnetworks and weights.

Introduction

Since C. W. Mills wrote his seminal work, *The Power Elite*, elite research has struggled to defining elites empirically. In 1956, Mills offered a compelling definition of the power elite as: '… those political, economic and military circles which as an intricate set of overlapping cliques share decisions having at least national consequences' (Mills 1956:18). Mills himself had to rely on the positional method (see Knoke, 1993) and could not map the overlapping circles directly. Later, social network analysis was used to identify power elite–like structures as social circles within policy discussion networks (Alba & Moore, 1978; Bovasso, 1992; Higley, Hoffmann-Lange, Kadushin, & Moore, 1991), but as topics change, these networks also change and may not give a clear picture of more lasting elite relations. Furthermore, policy networks require the cooperation of elite individuals, which is increasingly difficult to get.

By collecting a two-mode network of all nationally integrating publicly available and official affiliations in the small nation-state of Denmark, 'The Danish Elite Network' dataset permits the identification of the central individuals, affiliations and cross-cutting social circles that compose the power elite. (See Ellersgaard and Larsen 2014; 2015). The data can easily be split into parts according to sectors such as politics, business, organisations and state, allowing more detailed studies of sub-elites, but still with reference to the total structure. Because Denmark is a small society with strong traditions of transparency in decision-

making processes and widespread use of websites for both public and private organisations, it was possible to attempt a complete registration of all official elite affiliations. Collected during 2012 and 2013, the data contain 62,841 positions in 5,332 affiliations and connect 37,750 individuals. The attempt was made to include all nationally relevant official positions, such as company boards, committees, foundations, advisory boards. Data on the corporate and foundation boards are drawn from public registers. All other data were collected manually from affiliation websites.

In the following sections we present the data collection process with its strengths and weaknesses, we introduce the available data files and, finally, we present a table with the data details.

Data: The extensive elite network

The data were collected in four fairly discrete phases:

1. The generation of lists of affiliations
2. Affiliation collection
3. Name-matching and quality control
4. Tagging

The generation of lists of affiliations

First, we created large initial lists of organisations and groups. The included groups are not affiliations themselves but lists of names of organisations and groups, their type, their addresses and preferably their website. These initial lists provided the basis for a small snowball procedure for each organisation. Using self-reported organisational information, such as organisational diagrams, we identified all the relevant committees, boards, sub-committees, board of representatives, and other groups. The names of all members were collected, along with their affiliation, role (e.g. chairman, director), a long string with their description (if available) and the link to the website describing of the affiliation. The initial lists of organisations and groups were constructed according to the inclusion principle, which dictated that all possibly relevant organisations were included in the dataset. This was ensured by constructing the lists from exhaustive official databases.

In Table 1, the organisations in the initial lists are grouped according to their source. The excluded

organisations are those that were removed from the data because they did not form ties between organisations. The final number of affiliations from each source is the number remaining after removing those that formed no ties between organisations and adding the snowball samples. The list of state organisations was drawn from a large public database of governmental and non-governmental entities, the –Danish Public Administration Database (FOA, www.foa.dk). The FOA contains a hierarchical database placing each of the 'offices' in the Danish state organised in a nested structure, with names of leading personnel, addresses and sub-offices. All offices working at the regional level or above were made into an initial list. This excludes 'offices' working at the local level, such as public schools, individual churches, police and fire departments, but includes high schools and large hospitals. The state offices are often governed only by the office one step higher in the structure and as a result, many do not form boards or committees. This seems to be reserved for more autonomous entities higher in the structure.

TABLE 1: AFFILIATION NETWORKS INCLUDED IN THE DATA

	From original sources	Excluded*	Added in snowball sample†	Final number of affiliation networks	No. of relations
State[1]	2,328	1,780	327	875	10,230
Parliament[1]	153	101	31	83	970
NGO[1]	749	144	922	1,527	16,436
Corporations[2]	1,136	34	40	1,142	7,476
Foundations[2]	1,380	18	83	1,445	8,181
VL Networks[3]	117	3	0	114	3,845
Commissions[4]	116	44	0	72	1,121
Events[5]	74	0	0	74	14,582
Total	6,053	2,124	1,403	5,332	62,841

[1] Source: Danish Public Administration Database (www.foa.dk)
[2] Source: The list of largest corporations according to turnover, and the list of all foundations in the Danish Central Business Register (obtained through www.biq.dk)
[3] Source: Homepage of VL networks (www.vl.dk)
[4] Source: Registration of political commissions from 2005-2011, made by Danish weekly newsletter *A4*.
[5] Sources: Webpage of Danish Royal Family (www.kongehuset.dk) and private archive of journalist.
*Affiliation networks were excluded if: no board of extra-organisational members existed, no information on the board was available (either online or through personal contact), the board was included in other sources (i.e. data was not duplicated), or the board entirely overlapped with another board within the same organisation.
† Includes both sub-committees within the organisations on the original list and the 142 networks obtained by snowballing the affiliations of prominent agents.

The list of commissions was produced by the weekly newspaper *A4*. The list contains all commissions from 2005 until 2011, and was supplemented by the authors to 2013.

The list of parliamentary committees was taken from the official parliamentary website, along with other institutions tied to the parliament.

Affiliations were snowballed from the top 1,000 corporations according to turnover and their independent[1] subsidiaries. Structurally important corporations such as media and financial institutions were then added to the list. Both corporations and a complete list of boards of foundation originated from The Central Business Register (CVR). Advisory boards and sub-committees of the major foundations[2] were added to the list of foundation boards.

The list of NGOs was drawn from the FOA database and includes all organisations with the right, given by the state, to be consulted on legislation All unions, employers organisations, national sports associations, environmental groups, animal rights groups and many more are included in this list. To the NGO list were added various organisations that did not fit with other lists, such as publicly known elite networks. The largest of these, the VL groups, is split into a separate list. The list of events includes all publicly listed balls and official dinners, and royal hunting parties held by the royal family from 2009 to 2013. The collected events differ considerably in size from the rest of the affiliations. The state affiliations have on average 11 members, whereas the events have around 200. Any analysis that uses these events along with the other affiliations should consider using a multiplex network or weighting the data. Some of the events (e.g. royal hunting parties) are recurring and can therefore be merged into a single set of events.

The inclusion principle: Connecting organisations at a national level

Three rules of inclusion guided the many small snowball samples:

1. All affiliations should be able to connect individuals across organisations. This excludes affiliations that are reserved to employees of an organisation or that are purely internal. When looking at nested organisations (e.g. a holding company and its subsidiaries), this distinction can be difficult to maintain.
2. All affiliations must meet physically at least once a year and therefore create face-to-face interaction

[1] Independent subsidiaries have board members who are not employed by or on the board of the parent corporation and have a high enough turnover to be part of top 1,000 corporations.

[2] Major foundations were identified by the Danish consultancy, Kraft & Partners.

between their members[3].

3. All affiliations must operate at a regional or national level. They operate at a regional or national level if they integrate individuals at a regional or national level, thereby excluding local affiliations such as environmental groups working for the preservation of a particular forest or a local shelter for the homeless.

All three rules can be ambiguous in their application, but this is resolved by the general inclusion principle: if two data collectors disagree as to whether an affiliation should be included in the data, it is included.

Name-matching and quality control

Systematic and algorithm-guided quality control is paramount when working with this type of data. The affiliation network was checked for complete or almost complete overlap between groups. Affiliations where at least one affiliation has an overlap with another affiliation had their uniqueness tested. Some of these affiliations are nested into each other, like a general assembly and a board of directors.

All names were matched and duplicate names were coded as the same person only with confirmation from several sources. These sources would often be the collected descriptions from the affiliation websites, but could also be addresses and official registers. But this procedure slightly underestimates the ties, erring on the side of caution. The name-matching process was performed by sorting the list according to first name, last name and full name. In some instances an individual may not use the same name in all instances; most commonly, a middle name was not used. The sorting procedure captures this practice but is very vulnerable to people changing their first name, sometimes using a middle name as a first name. If this practice was suspected, a search for possible alternative first names was made; however, it is impossible to achieve perfect-name-matching quality and the data therefore underestimates the number of connections.

Tagging: Ordering data

All affiliations in the data were tagged with up to seven tags. The tags are thematic: culture, music, science, education, social politics, and foreign relations. Tagging is different from categorising, because tags are non-exclusive and the number of tags for each affiliation varies. The tags were based on affiliation

[3] Some groups, like the group of 49 lay judges in the labour courts, only meet a few individuals at a time, but considering the number of cases each year, all individuals are likely to meet.

descriptions from the web-pages. All tags were controlled for consistency by two coders and very specific tags were later merged or removed. The network can be split into sector by combining the relevant tags into subjects and then extracting all affiliations with a relevant tag. The affiliations related to the Danish state can, for instance, be extracted with this collection of tags: *'State administration'*, *'Ministry'*, *'State corporation'*, *'State'*, *'Military'*, *'Public leaders'* and *'Commission'*.

Data files and formats

Data is provided in the Danish_Elite_2013_Relations.csv file separated with "|" and encoded in UTF-8. It is organised as a case-affiliation edge list with a few attributes attached to each relation.

The relations matrix has the following variables:

NAME	The matched name of the individual. All names are unique.
AFFILIATION	The name of the affiliation with its function in parenthesis.
ROLE	The role of the individual within the affiliation. This information is not always included for the top 1,000 corporations.
GENDER	The gender of the individual. The gender is determined by the first name.
DESCRIPTION	The description of the individual taken from the affiliation website in relation to this position.
SOURCE	The source of each relation and affiliation.
BIQ_LINK	If available it is the link to the BIQ.dk database.
CVR	The CVR number for each corporation and foundation.
TAG1-7	More than 350 thematic tags for each affiliation.

The main datasets can be broken down into separate datasets with the use of the 'source' variable. This allows a partial analysis of, for instance, the corporate interlocks of Denmark or the Danish parliament.

The dataset is also made available via the *R* package soc.elite, currently available on Github: github.com/antongrau/soc.elite. The package includes functions for sub-setting by tags, descriptive functions, and functions for cleaning, coding and plotting. Furthermore, the package includes analytical functions that replicate the analysis made in Ellersgaard and Larsen (2014). By distributing the data along with relevant functions, the reproducibility of results based on 'The Danish Elite Network' is greatly enhanced.

In the package there are datasets that can be merged with 'The Danish Elite Network', such as biographical data on a core of 423 individuals. A dataset with biographical data on a core of 171 core business leaders and a dataset with data on size, turnover, number of employees and the like, on the top 1,042 corporations. The package also serves as a valuable tool in courses on social network analysis or elite sociology. Researchers who analyse the data available in soc.elite are encouraged to send their code to the package maintainer and it will be published in the package along with proper citations.

Data details

Response rate	N/A
Non-respondent bias	N/A
Theoretical grouping	No questionnaire was used
Publications using these data	Stahl and Henriksen (2014) Ellersgaard and Larsen (2013, 2014, 2015)
Data context	Database of a national elite
Respondents	
Longitudinal	No
Temporality	Most positions last several years, although individual careers end within days. Some data points are separated by up to 2 years, for events up to 4 years and commissions up to 8 years
Analytical or pedagogical utility	The data allow for analysis of inter- or cross-sectorial ties. As they are divided into many sectors, students can choose sectors that interest them.
Known issues	Underestimates the amount of connections due to the name-matching procedure.

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VI. Identifying power elites – a social network analytic approach

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Abstract

Specifying network boundaries and structure is of vital importance in the study of the social organisation of the most powerful: the power elite. However, traditional methods fail to offer clear criteria on either size or composition of the elite, and rely on numerous ad hoc decisions.

The authors constructed a large database comprising 5,332 affiliation networks with 62,841 positions shared by 37,750 individuals. Drawing on this, the article proposes a methodological framework that is both inductive, reproducible and suitable for comparative research.

A three-step procedure was used to identify the power elite. First, a comprehensive dataset was assembled of the affiliation networks of all potentially powerful sectors. These were supplemented by snowballing further affiliations in the data collection process and lists of participants from key social events.

Second, these heterogeneous affiliation networks were subjected to a weighting procedure to account for the potential level of social integration. This was based on the number of participants in the affiliation network, with an baseline of 14 or fewer participants.

Finally, the most cohesive subgroup of the network, a core power elite network of 423 individuals, was identified using a modified k-core approach focusing on social proximity rather than direct ties. From analysis of the composition of this core, we discuss the potential and stability of using this methodology for comparative analysis of power.

Introduction: Who are the elite?

Labelling a political opponent 'élite' is a powerful rhetoric. In the 2008 US presidential election, Barack Obama was shown to be an elitist for discussing the price of arugula in the Iowa primaries, while the Democrat campaign responded by pointing to the amazing wealth of John McCain's family. Both performed the anti-elite discourse of Keyser Süze elites (Du Gay 2008), trying to convince others that they themselves were not elites. But who are the elite? The political struggle for who forms part of the elite is a central, public debate, and yet, the social sciences have failed to deliver a credible methodological conception of this group. Without this framework, discussions about the men of power remain a playground for conspiracy theorists and demagogues. By narrowing the field of enquiry to *power* elite and by applying network analysis, we propose and apply a research design that is capable of identifying the core of the power elite in a vast array of key organisations in Denmark, including large corporations, government, state and public institutions, non-government organisations (NGOs), foundations, and social clubs and events.

The notion of elites is one of the most misused categories in the sociological vocabulary, referring to both powerful and distinguished groups (Scott 2003). The power elite, as described by C. Wright Mills (1956), comprises the key decision makers in society. In the US of the 1950 and 1960s, Mills found the power elite to comprise the management of large corporations, the military chiefs and the political directorate. However, the image of a society dominated from above was challenged both theoretically and empirically by pluralists (e.g. Dahl 1958), who preferred a vision of societal power as a stalemate between leadership groups representing a broad spectrum of interests. Because of the different methodological prescriptions of these positions, the primary battleground for this debate turned to theoretical definitions of power (Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Dahl 1957; Lukes 1974). Proponents of the elitist or ruling class perspective invigorated the empirical debate through the methodology of power structure research (Domhoff 1978; Freitag 1975; Mintz 1975). Scholars attempted to show the existence of a ruling class by documenting strong and multifaceted ties between politics and business (Burris 2005; Moran 2006), or the social club affiliations tying the elite together (Bond 2012; Domhoff 1974, 1975). However, the question of the composition of this ruling class or power elite remained theoretical. This study contributes to the discussion by using empirical strategies of power structure research to form a methodological framework capable of identifying the power elite across various countries.

The empirical challenge when identifying this core group, the boundary specification problem (Laumann, Marsden, and Prensky 1983), is a key concern within relational sociology (cf. Emirbayer

1997). What should be regarded as key institutional hierarchies? Traditionally, scholars have relied upon organisational position, reputation among other powerful individuals or decision-making processes (Hoffmann-Lange 2006; Scott 1991). However, all of these approaches rely on the researcher's theoretical presumptions about the size and the composition of the power elite. Does the power elite comprise a small circle of, say, 300 people or a larger group of up to 7,500 individuals? Is the size of the elite in some way correlated with the size of the country, as seems to be the assumption of most elite studies (Burton and Higley 2001:189)? At what stage are all relevant members included? Which sectors should be included and to what extent? These issues are of course most prevalent in the positional approach. However, the selection of decision-making processes or assessors of reputation is also implicitly tied to these questions. Furthermore, even after these theoretical assumptions about the size of the elite and its 'sectors' have been made, more ad hoc decisions await. What should be the inclusion criteria for CEOs? If corporation turnover, then commercial industries are over-sampled. And worse, how to identify key artists? The theoretical stalemate between pluralists and elitists carries over to technical decisions about who to include in the elite population. There is a lack of criteria for defining the size and composition of the power elite in an exhaustive, reproducible way while limiting more or less ad hoc decisions. In this context, ad hoc decisions are informed theoretically or empirically, but by theories that are not sufficiently specific. Although numerous brilliant studies on particular elites have been based on sound, theoretically informed ad hoc criteria, ad hoc decisions remain a barrier to comparative studies and reproducibility.

In the methodological design proposed and applied in this paper, we present a two-step procedure for bypassing the boundary specification problem. First, we applied an *inclusion principle* for the selection of affiliation network data. If a registered gathering of some sort (e.g. a corporation board, a social club or a royal ball) within the limits of our sociological imagination can be conceived as potentially either powerful in its own right or a vehicle for social integration between elite individuals, it was included in what we defined as the entire power network. However, because all networks were included as part of a deliberate search within all power spheres of Danish society, this vast network of 5,332 organisations and 62,841 positions is not quite 'big data', but 'data of the middle range'. Secondly, we used the structure of this network to *identify the cohesive core* of this network, the power elite. Because the affiliations included in the network were quite heterogeneous, we constructed a weighting system by identifying the level of social cohesion created by different ties. Inspired by Doreian and Woodard (1994), we identified the boundaries of the power elite by applying a k-core collapse sequence, although we also included ties the core form to their extended network, subject to the above-mentioned weight. By replacing ad hoc criteria of power elite positions with an inclusion principle and offering a socio-

metric criterion of power elite membership through network analysis of these inclusive data, we devised a reproducible method for identifying power elite size and composition. By applying this approach we identified a power elite of 423 individuals in Denmark.

Background: Identifying elites

Identification of power elites or leadership groups, whether local or national, has traditionally followed one of four distinct strategies: the positional, the decisional, the reputational and the relational (Knoke 1993). Much of the debate surrounding the superiority of any one of these methods is rooted in the theoretical stalemate between elitist and pluralist positions (Mintz et al. 1976). However, as Knoke (1993:29) notes, 'which actors belong to a national political domain cannot be specified a priori. They must ultimately be determined empirically'. As we shall see, despite their many proven strengths, none of these methods delivers criteria for exhaustively identifying the size and composition of a core group while at the same time avoiding the ad hoc decisions that fuel theoretical division and fail to advance theoretical understanding.

Of the four strategies outlined, the positional method is still the most widely used (Hoffmann-Lange 2006), hence we turn first to the issues with this approach. The main problem within the positional method is that it offers no clear criteria for sector-inclusion. Although religious leaders are undoubtedly important in Iran, the same criterion does not necessarily apply in secular societies. Likewise, the importance of unions is clearly dependent on varieties of capitalism (Hall and Soskice 2001). Whether based on Marxist or pluralist perspectives, inclusion is based on the researcher's presumption of who forms part of the ruling classes and its ideological apparatus, or who represents legitimate interests. The most important question, of who rules, is answered in the methodological design, not by the data. Secondly, the positional approach offers no empirical criteria for sampling each of these sectors. Should the ratio of artists from the cultural elite to CEOs of the economic elite be 1:5, and is this independent of population size and country? Often it is assumed that included members share roughly the same relative power, but without empirical criteria the size of each sector included, and thus the size of the power elite, is inaccurate at best. Thirdly; inclusion criteria within each sector are again based on preconceptions rather than reflexive criteria. Even among business leaders, where the size of each firm can be assessed by, for example, turnover, number of employees and assets (as done convincingly by Maclean, Harvey, and Press 2006), peculiar local arrangements of owners and management force researchers either to make ad hoc decisions or, worse, stick to rigid criteria (e.g. excluding or including management of all subsidiary firms from the analysis), despite the relative autonomy of the particular

subsidiary. This is especially the case when making comparisons across time, as shown in the recent debate between Carroll and Fennema (2002, 2004) versus Kentor and Jang (2004, 2006) about how to select top global corporations across decades. Even so, compared to politics or government, let alone NGOs or the cultural field, the economic elite has by far the most obvious criteria, economic strength and relatively clear hierarchies. Clearly, positional methods render no clear empirical criteria for either size or composition of the elite, and in addition require several ad hoc decisions based on theoretical assumptions that are not easy to replicate across different epochs or countries.

When identifying elites by decision-making criteria (see e.g. Polsby 1960), the problem of whom to include becomes which decision to focus upon. Although Mills was perhaps correctly criticised for looking at major historical decisions (Rovere 1968) when arguing for power elite dominance, this criticism can also be applied to Dahl's (1961) work on decision-making in New Haven. First, what is the criterion for inclusion of 'significant issues' (Bachrach and Baratz 1962)? Secondly, how does one rank the elite without very clear guidelines for preferences, relative importance and the expectations of chances of success for different groups (Domhoff 2007; Mintz et al. 1976)? Furthermore, as Domhoff's (1978) thorough and critical re-examination of Dahl's analysis of political processes shows, failure to include all institutions and actors in the entire process leading up to the decision can lead to severe flaws in the analysis. Finally, the power of a group to exclude issues from decision-taking, what Anthony Giddens (1972) refers to as decision-making, is not taken into account. If power is regarded as a relational entity of a process (cf. Emirbayer 1997), decisions are constantly made under the radar of the researcher, who is narrowing in on decisions taken. Identifying an elite group's ability to remove issues from the political agenda thus constitutes a serious problem for any decision-making criteria for investigating the position of various groups within the power structure.

The shortcomings of the positional approach affect the reputational approach as well. Originally developed by Hunter (1953), the reputational approach identifies the powerful group according to the level of power attributed to it by other key members of the community power structure. Ad hoc decisions occur in the selection of persons who evaluate the powerful. Although a number of perspectives can be secured by thorough sampling and snowballing, the informant, himself a key player, is at risk of increasing his or her own status. Furthermore, any missing responses from key agents can exclude important perspectives. In addition, the informants' preconceptions of power—and their inclination to hide or enhance their own privileges and importance—can lead to identification problems. In the identification of a core group rather than an analysis of power structure, these issues are most pressing. Pluralist critics such as Wolfinger (1960) emphasise the problems of ambiguity of

power definitions for both respondents and researcher, and ad hoc decisions on the inclusion of different powerful institutions. Ironically, the pluralist themselves faced the same issues when deciding organisational salience, in identifying key informants by key decisions.

The issues regarding identification of the size and composition of the power elite has been addressed by applying the relational approach using social network analysis. By combining the positional and reputational approaches, the relational approach draws on the Simmelian notion of social circles to find a central circle of policy makers within the elite (Kadushin 1968). The circle is identified by prominent members naming others as key policy discussion partners, thus allowing the inclusion of power brokers overlooked by the researcher. In this tradition, inclusion in the central circle of these power networks is viewed as an indicator of the power structure and membership of the elite social circle (Alba and Moore 1978; Higley et al. 1991; Moore 1979). Identifying social circles—informal groups without clear leadership (Kadushin 1968)—'not only identifies collectivities with an important type of internal structure, but also leaves open the possibility that they do not exist, and thus that a network is fragmented' (Moore 1979:680). Furthermore, the tendency for members of the core group to interact with each other rather than with their respective constituencies can be used as an indicator of social closure within the power elite (Bovasso 1992). Hence, the socio-metric approach can offer an empirical definition of the size and composition of one or more core groups, allowing identification of both pluralist and elitist power structures. Within this framework, elites are a social group tied through internal cohesion, where internal reputation plays a central role. This is similar to the inner circles of American and British business elites studied by Michael Useem (1984). However, when applied to national elite networks, as in the excellent study by Gwen Moore (1979) on data from the American Leadership Study, this method suffers from two challenges. First, it requires a very high response rate among the elite respondents to ensure the inclusion of all ties and to identify the social circles, because these are based on the extent to which cliques overlap, which is highly sensible to missing data (Knoke 1993). Secondly; the respondents name policy discussion partners within the field in which they deem themselves most influential. This leads to a focus on the issues subject to decision-taking, whereas decision-making, through consensus within the elite social circles, is more likely to be overlooked. A bias towards the field of politics is probable.

The use of inclusion in power networks as a vantage point should not be discarded because of the problems of the relational approach. These networks offer insights into the balance of power of societal institutions. When defining the concept of the power elite, Mills (1956) specifies a group simultaneously holding command positions in top institutional hierarchies and forming part of

overlapping social circles between them (Denord, Lagneau-Ymonet, and Thine 2011). To make a tie with another power broker is also to recognise the legitimacy and value of the other's power resources, resources which are primarily based on the institutions and organisations of the individual (Scott 2008). As the possibility of exchanging power resources is key to holding an elite position (Khan 2012), the level of inclusion in these networks is a strong indicator of which institutional hierarchies other elite members hold in high regard. Individuals outside of these elite networks may wield other power resources (e.g. capability to mobilise the masses, attract media attention or amass economic capital), but have not yet been invited into—or have refused to take part in—the everyday maintenance of the social order. The network of the power elite is the source of stability, not change. Denmark, along with the other Scandinavian welfare states, has evidenced extraordinary social stability (Campbell and Hall 2006).

Methodology: Elite networks in data of the middle range

To avoid the shortcomings associated with the above-mentioned traditional elite identification strategies we devised a two-step procedure for elite identification, applying social network analysis to an affiliation network. The first step was a data collection strategy governed by an inclusion principle. The inclusion principle was used to move beyond ad hoc decisions on which sectors, and who within them, to include. The second step addressed the boundary specification problem by applying a k-core clustering algorithm to a weighted affiliation network. This procedure for identifying the size and composition of a distinct national core elite is reproducible and is based primarily on empirical findings rather than theoretical concepts.

The ad hoc decisions regarding which networks to include risk the pitfalls of the pluralist–elitist debate. Using the inclusion principle, instead of assessing whether a particular group is important or not, all potentially powerful networks are included. Instead of asking theoretically defined elite informants who they regard as peers, observational data, data on who they and everyone else include in formal networks, are used. If sources show that a list of individuals has met, this can be included in the analysis as social ties between these individuals. The objective is to describe the social cohesion created through these ties, rather than the strategic network positions available. Thus, this approach expands the design used in the classical studies of corporate interlocks (Allen 1974; Mizruchi 1996), transnational capitalist classes (Carroll 2003), and interlocks between business, government, policy planning groups and the non-profit sector (Domhoff 2013; Moore et al. 2002), by including not only data on corporate boards and a few selected other organisations, but data from a vast array of formalised or semi-formalised networks.

With the growing number of publicly available sources of corporate boards, think-thank affiliations, government bodies and so on, it is possible for empirical sociologists to embrace the challenges of big data by including as many affiliation networks as possible (with certain technical modifications to be described later)—offers a way to embrace the challenges of 'big data' to empirical sociologists (cf. Savage and Burrows 2007). As the main aim of this study was to identify cohesive groups, the inclusion principle was not used with lists of individuals that merely indicated some sort of common denominator without implying actual interaction (e.g. Twitter-followers, co-citations and other sources used in analysis of big data). Rather, it was used when there existed the potential for the face-to-face interaction that is so crucial for the creation of internal group solidarity (cf. Collins 2004); this enables a move from big data to data of the middle range. Other types of networks, such as informal contacts, friendships, family and kinship ties, may also create cohesion and serve as vessels for communication. Data collected through this inclusion principle offer little value in a strict analysis of advantageous network positions (see Burt 2004; Granovetter 1973; Vedres and Stark 2010) and primarily offers insight on the levels of social cohesion between individuals, thus following the tradition of G. William Domhoff (1974, 1975, 2013).

Data: The extensive elite network

The data collection process that generated the two-mode elite network can be thought of as four relatively discrete phases:

1. Generating lists of networks
2. Network collection
3. Name-matching
4. Quality control

The first of these phases was the generation of large initial lists of organisations or groups that form the main corpus of networks. These initial lists are not networks themselves, but lists of names of organisations and groups, their type, their addresses and preferably their website. These lists formed the basis for Phase 2, network collection. The network collection consisted of finding the self-reported organisational information on the organisation's website, including all the relevant committees, boards, sub-committees, boards of representatives, and other groups. The names of the individuals, along with their affiliation, role (e.g. chairman, director), description and link to this affiliation were then added to the data. This amounted to a small snowball procedure for each organisation. During Phase 3, the name-matching process ensured that all instances of the same name referred to the same individual and

that each individual was represented in the data with only one name. This process was very time-consuming, as each of the tens of thousands of matches had to be validated, from the descriptions collected or individual investigation. In Phase 4, data quality was ensured by checking for duplicates, perfectly overlapping groups and matching errors.

Phase 1: Generating lists of networks

The initial lists of organisations and groups were constructed according to the inclusion principle, which dictates that all possibly relevant organisations are included in the dataset. This was ensured by constructing the lists from exhaustive official databases. Table 1 provides an overview of the total number of organisations considered, how many were excluded because they did not create forums for inter-organisational ties, and finally the new organisations that were included through the many small snowball procedures. The organisations were grouped according to their source. The parliament list comprised all political party sub-committees and other institutions tied to the parliament, taken from the official website. The state list was constructed from a large public database of government and non-government bodies and the FOA (The general public administration database. FOA is a database of the hierarchical structure of the state, and all its offices, with names, addresses and key employees). A list was created of all state offices working at the regional level, but excluding the local level. As a result, high schools were included, but not public schools. The state offices are often ordered strictly hierarchically, and as a result they do not form relatively independent boards or committees. The commissions list was drawn from a mapping of all commissions from 2001–2009 by the weekly newspaper A4, supplemented by our own research. The list of corporations included the top 1000 corporations according to turnover, as well as an extra sample of structurally important corporations, such as media and financial institutions. This approach resembles that of the positional method. The list of foundations was a complete list of all foundations and their boards, taken from the official Danish Corporate Register. These boards were supplemented with advisory panels of the major foundations. The list of NGOs was taken from the FOA database and includes all organisations officially recognised as having the right to be consulted on legislative issues, including all unions and their main organisations, employers' organisations, national sports associations, environmental organisations, and so on. This list was supplemented with networks of various character that did not fit with other lists, such as publicly known elite networks, like the groups in The Danish Management Society (VL-groups). The list of events included all publicly listed balls and official dinners held by the royal family from 2009 to 2013. Also included were the annual meetings of top state bureaucrats, royal

hunting parties and special events with royal attendance, and major royal events, dating back to 2009. Some of the older guest lists were kindly donated by journalists.

TABLE 1: AFFILIATION NETWORKS INCLUDED

	From original sources	Excluded*	Added in Snowball sample†	Final number of affiliation networks	No. of relations
State[1]	2,328	1,780	327	875	10,230
Parliament[1]	153	101	31	83	970
NGO[1]	749	144	922	1,527	16,436
Corporations[2]	1,136	34	40	1,142	7,476
Foundations[2]	1,380	18	83	1,445	8,181
VL-Networks[3]	117	3	0	114	3,845
Commissions[4]	116	44	0	72	1,121
Events[5]	74	0	0	74	14,582
Total	6,053	2,124	1403	5,332	62,841

[1] Source: Danish Public Administration Database (www.foa.dk)
[2] Source: The list of largest corporations according to turnover and list of all foundations in the Danish Central Business Register (obtained through www.biq.dk)
[3] Source: Homepage of VL-networks (www.vl.dk)
[4] Source: Registration of political commissions from 2005-11 made by Danish weekly newsletter A4.
[5] Sources: Webpage of Danish Royal Family (www.kongehuset.dk) and private archive of journalist.
*Affiliation networks were excluded if no board of extra-organizational members existed, no information was available on the board neither online or through personal contact, the board were included from other sources as well or the board was entirely overlapping with another board within the same organization.
†This includes both subcommittees within the organizations on the original list and the 142 networks obtained through snowballing the affiliations of prominent actors.

Phase 2: Network collection

The inclusion of groups in the networks by the many small snowball samples was guided by three rules. First, the groups must connect individuals across organisations. This excluded groups that were internal to organisations. When looking at nested organisations, such as a holding corporation and its subsidiaries, this distinction could be difficult to maintain, but if the group, such as the board of a subsidiary, had members whose primary occupation was in a different organisation or across several organisations, then the group creates interorganisational ties and was therefore included. The second rule of inclusion in snowball samples was that groups must have face-to-face interaction. All groups must meet physically at least once a year. The third rule of inclusion was that all groups must take decisions or integrate individuals at a national level. Making the distinction between the national and the regional level was the most difficult to do systematically. If two data collectors were in doubt as to the level of the group, it was included.

The events included in the dataset stand out from the rest of the groups collected by size and character. The mean number of individuals present at each event was 485, with a standard deviation of 608. Because they were events, they had attendees, not members. In the period 2009 until 2013, most of the 74 events were recurring royal events. Because they were recurring, such as hunting parties or dinners honouring foreign dignitaries, it was possible for smaller events to be aggregated into larger events. This aggregation also formed the basis for the weighting principle for events, which will be addressed below.

Phase 3: Name-matching

The quality of the data was controlled by name-matching and analysis of overlaps between groups. This required special attention as data quality is more important within social network analysis than in most quantitative methods. Missing or false ties have an impact on the most prominent centrality measures, but the analysis of cliques and group memberships is especially vulnerable. Each of the 62,841 positions in the data were checked to ensure recurring names referred to the same individual and which individuals shortened names referred to. This was a very time-consuming and conservative process, as it relied on the descriptions that were collected from the organisations' webpages, and on web searches. Duplicate names were treated as the same person only with confirmation from several sources. Checks were made for names with different spelling and additional middle names used only occasionally.

Phase 4: Quality control

Positions and groups were also checked for doublets, e.g. groups that have been collected twice under different names. This was essential as the method is vulnerable to this error. As a result, all groups with a 75 per cent overlap were checked for uniqueness.

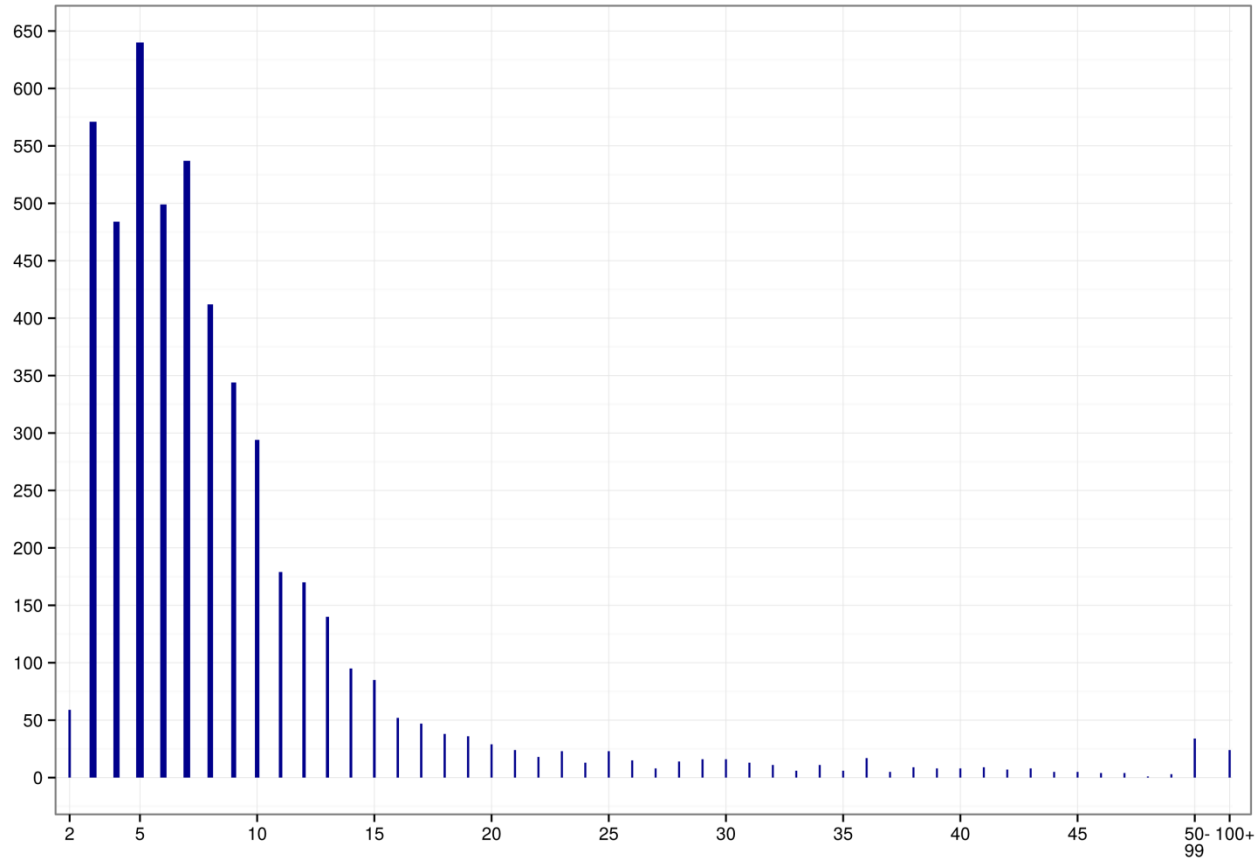
Many methods and principles for data collection set heavy restraints on what can be included in the data and these restraints often result in relatively arbitrary decisions on the inclusion of borderline or grey-area data. The inclusion principle used here is a viable principle for a collaborative project that uses several data collectors.

Methods: How to account for heterogeneity of the networks

With data from such diverse sources as those mentioned above, arises a problem of heterogeneity of affiliations. As seen in Figure 1, 4189 of the 5332 affiliations had 14 or fewer members. However, the larger groups, and particularly the events, had up to 2184 participants. The largest network, the

participants at the celebration of the 40-year reign of the Danish Queen, thus contained more than 24,000 times more edges than a board of 14 members. If not weighted in some way, these networks would be the primary sources of integration, especially as the number of ties created by each affiliation is the squared number of participants. If regarding the affiliation networks as 'focused gatherings' (cf. Goffman 1961), the vast differences in network size should be handled by taking into account the potential for production of solidarity through interaction (Marsden and Campbell 1984). We suggest two weighting procedures: first, a weight based on size of the affiliation; and second, a weight based on a reduction of the integration created between individuals with multiple ties. A simple weighting procedure to take into account the particular nature of events is proposed.

FIGURE 1: AFFILIATIONS BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS



The character differences of affiliation networks raise another problem associated particularly with events. Events are unique gatherings, happening only once, as opposed to, for example, the monthly meetings of corporate boards. Therefore, events were grouped according to their type and generated a full tie only between participants of all the events within the group. Guest who took part in only some of the events received a tie strength proportionate to the share of the events they took part in together.

To account for the heterogeneity in cohesive potential for each affiliation, each edge created by an affiliation was subject to a weight, ω_e, of decreasing tie strength:

$$\omega_e = \sqrt{\frac{\sigma}{n_a}}\ if\ \sigma < n_a \quad (1)$$

$$\omega_e = 1\ otherwise. \quad (2)$$

where n_a is the number of members of each affiliation and σ is a constant referring to the number of individuals that causes the network participation of each member to drop. We set $\sigma = 14$, as action-taking subgroups are usually formed around no more than 10 participants (James 1951). Adding to this, 14 is roughly equal to the maximal size of human 'sympathy groups', usually ranging from 10 to 15 (see Buys and Larson 1979; Zhou et al. 2005). Furthermore, by gathering data on the affiliation networks, we observed that the greater the number of participants, the less frequent were the meetings. This weighting therefore takes into account both level of participation and frequency of meetings. In this case, gatherings of 14 fewer members were seen as equally integrative, whereas a gradual decrease in tie strength (ω_e) or level of integration between participants, was seen to be created in affiliations with more than 14 participants.

Several individuals had multiple ties. Meeting in more than one setting of course creates potential for a stronger tie. Hence, after applying the weight based on affiliation size as mentioned above, we added another weight using the sum of all ties between all pairs of individuals, $\sum e_{i\,j}$.

$$\omega_{e_{i\,j}} = 1 + \ln\left(\sum e_{i\,j}\right) if\ \sum e_{i\,j} < 1 \quad (3)$$

$$\omega_{e_{i\,j}} = \sum e_{i\,j}\ otherwise. \quad (4)$$

However, this effect wanes when one is tied not just twice or trice, but seven or eight times. Therefore, a logarithmic decrease in the integrating effects of mutual affiliations was added for pairs of individuals closer than a tie strength of 1. A tie strength of 1 is therefore equal to that of two individuals sharing an affiliation on a board of 14 or fewer members, and any further ties are valued less than 1. By inverting $\omega_{e_{i\,j}}$, it is possible to calculate the *distance,* $d_{i\,j}$, between two connected individuals:

$$d_{i\,j} = \frac{1}{\omega_{e_{i\,j}}} \quad (5)$$

This conversion is important when calculating the shortest paths between individuals. A tie with a weight of 2 translates into a shortest path between the two individuals equal to two steps in an un-weighted network.

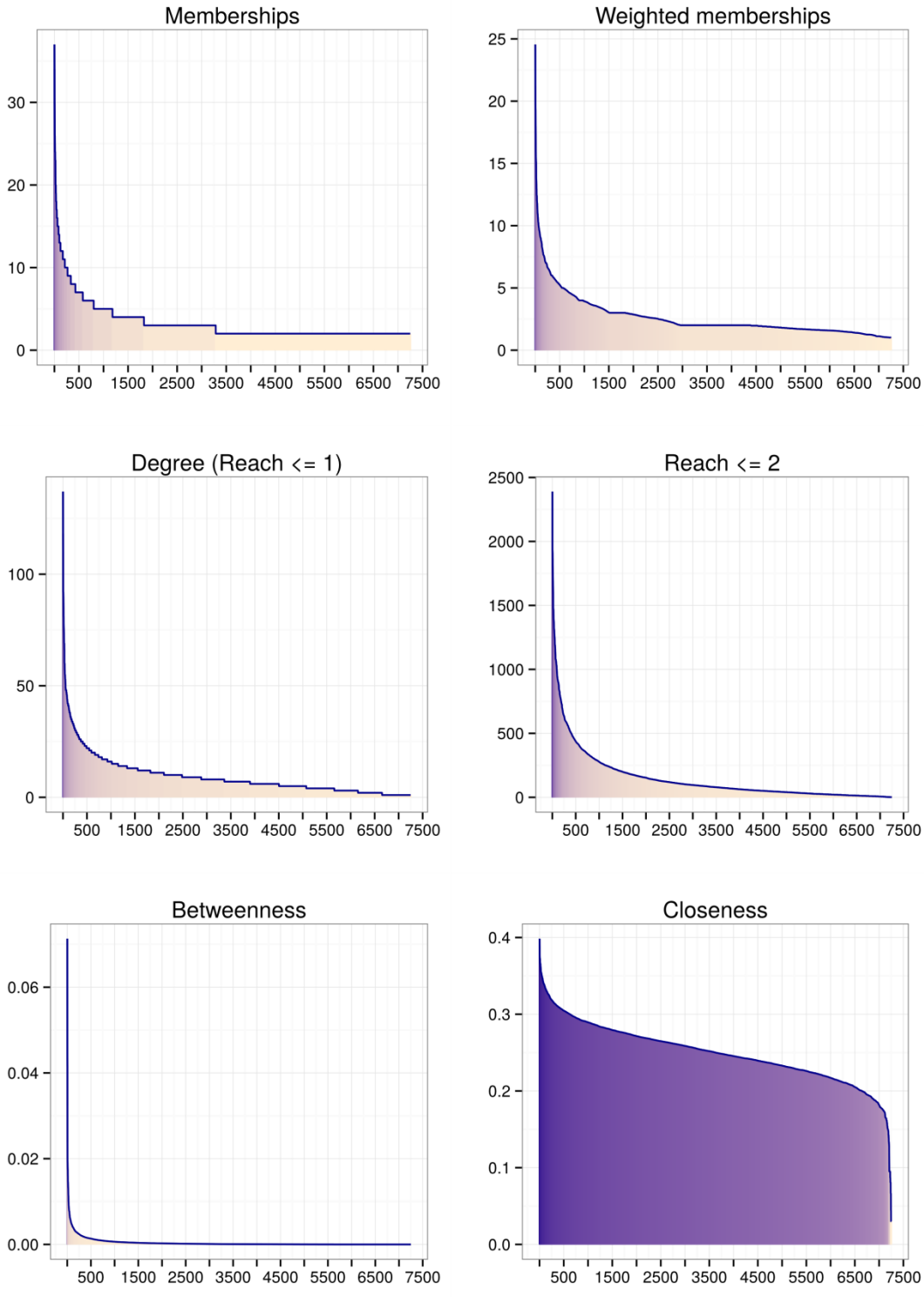
For computational purposes, the analysis of this affiliation network can be reduced to individuals who participated substantially in the social integration of the elite network. By excluding Individuals for whom the sum of all weighted affiliations $\sum \omega_{a_i}, \leq 1$, we are left with individuals with more than one affiliation *and* having a level of participation corresponding to more than one sub- σ members group. In this case, those individuals who were included were part of at least one affiliation with 14 or fewer members *and* some other affiliation and thereby had an amount of total weighted affiliations adding up to more than one. Following this procedure, we reduced the members of the elite network from 37,750 to 7,400. Furthermore, 151 of the 7,400 were not connected into the giant component, leaving us with 7,249 *linkers* in the elite network. Thus, the weights served a dual purpose: to handle the different levels of social integration created by affiliations with huge differences in member number; and to ease the computational process by reducing the number of individuals in the network in a simple way.

The accumulation of network resources by the elite

The linkers are interesting not only for technical purposes. The fact that only one in five of the members of the elite network were substantial participants stresses how network resources are accumulated by a small proportion of actors, even within a highly egalitarian society such as Denmark. With an adult population of 4,378,227, less than one per cent of Danes were among the 37,750 with any affiliations in the elite network, making even this group very exclusive. In the entire network, only 916 affiliations were not connected to each other in some way. The largest component comprised 33,035 individuals, more than 900 times larger than the second largest component with 36 members, underlining the clustering tendency within the power network.

Even within this large component, there were vast differences in the level of integration. As seen in Figure 2, all centrality measures (see Faust 1997; Freeman 1979) followed a power law distribution (Barabasi and Albert 1999), with a very small group at the top of the distribution. When looking at the reach (the number of individuals assembled within a distance of 2.1 or less) and closeness centrality, it appears that a rapid increase in centrality arises around the 400 most central individuals. Thus, it appears that only about one in 20 of the linkers composed a core of well-connected individuals.

FIGURE 2 CENTRALITY MEASURES IN THE DANISH ELITE NETWORK OF LINKERS



Distribution of centrality measures in the network of linkers (having a sum of all weighted ties: $\sum \omega_{e_i}, > 1$). Betweenness and closeness centrality have been normalized. Note that the 30,501 that are not linkers would lead to graphs with an even clearer power law distribution. Weighted memberships is calculated as $\sum \omega_{e_i}$.

Identifying the core elite group

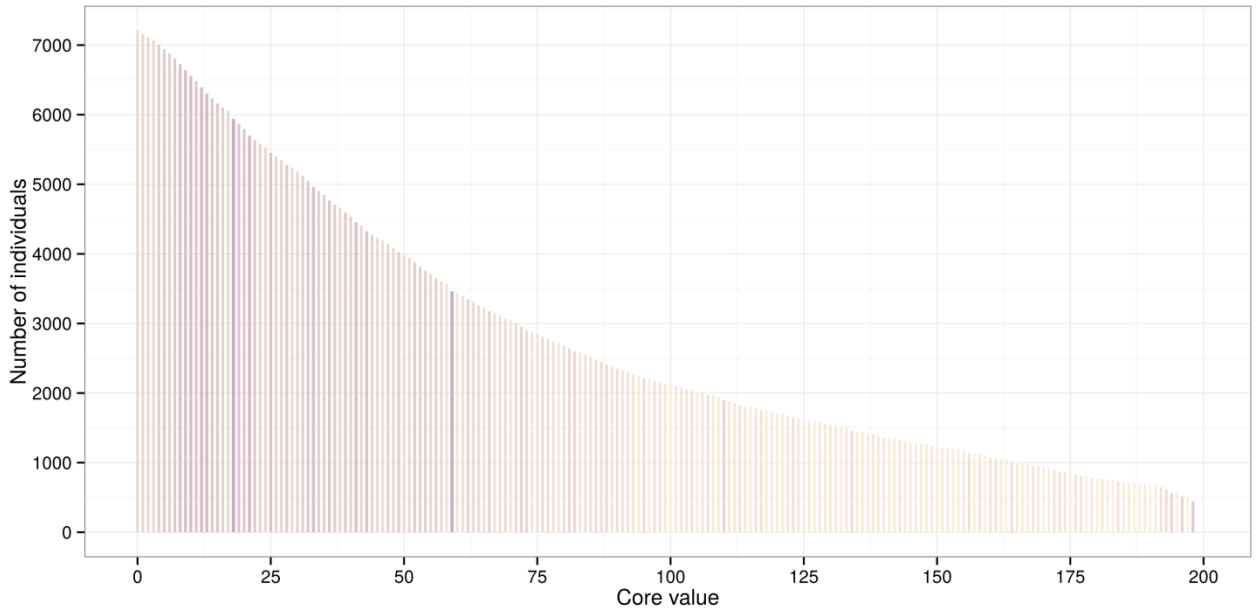
The elite network showed a clear core/periphery structure and a small group of individuals appeared to be part of a cohesive subgroup. However, it is difficult to go from continuous centrality measures to discrete groups in a reproducible way. Groups identified through other techniques, like those based on clique membership, such as social circles (Alba and Kadushin 1976; Alba and Moore 1978) or clique-percolation (Palla et al. 2005; Vedres and Stark 2010), are difficult to use in affiliation networks. Affiliation networks are inherently organised into large cliques, where each affiliation forms a clique. Block modelling (Boorman and White 1976; White, Boorman, and Breiger 1976) focuses mainly on identifying actors occupying similar roles rather than being part of cohesive subgroups (Burt 1978). Thus, the aim of identifying the core is to establish a cohesive, central group, rather than to identify a group of key actors who play an important role in the diffusion of information (Borgatti 2006; Moody and White 2003) or who share structurally advantageous positions bridging different sectors (Burt 2004; Vedres and Stark 2010).

Instead, we suggest using a modified version of k-cores developed by Seidman (1983). K-cores are a central subcomponent within which all individuals have the highest possible numbers of internal ties. Each individual is assigned a coreness score corresponding to the minimum degree of individuals they are connected to. By decomposing an entire component, or progressively removing individuals with the lowest degree until further removal of individuals from the component leads to a decrease in the minimum degree, we eventually arrive at the core group. The final group with the highest coreness score is the only group in the network in which every individual is connected to at least k other individuals. K-core decomposition also assigns a coreness value of all other individuals, corresponding to the minimum degree of individuals when removed from the core. Hence, the coreness score also describes how close an individual is to the core of the network.

This allows us to see all connected individuals as part of nested groups. By using weighted ties, Doreian and Woodard (1994) suggest a threshold, w, for identifying boundaries between levels of integration within networks. Whereas Doreian and Woodard used the threshold to include only individuals who are strongly directly connected with the core, Friedkin (1984) showed that shared social circle membership and the quantity of shared contacts increases the likelihood of consensus, particularly among those not directly tied. Hence, we suggest a solution that allows cohesion to be made through indirect ties as well, by constructing an adjacency matrix based on weighted shortest paths of 2.1 or less. Pairs of individuals can have the same strength of relation, whether connected through one large

affiliation or through an intermediary. When identifying the core, we suggest using a threshold for the maximum reach, *r*, at which two individuals can still be seen as connected. If *r is* set at 2.0, individuals not directly tied can only be tied through an intermediary if at least one has several ties to the intermediary, or they are both tied to the intermediary in affiliations smaller than the value σ. To make the core a little less sensitive to the exact value of σ compared to individuals tied through larger affiliations or with strong ties to intermediaries, we suggest setting $r = 2.1$. However, the exact value of *r* should be assessed considering the total amount and character of all included affiliations.

FIGURE 3: CORE COLLAPSE SEQUENCE OF THE DANISH ELITE NETWORK

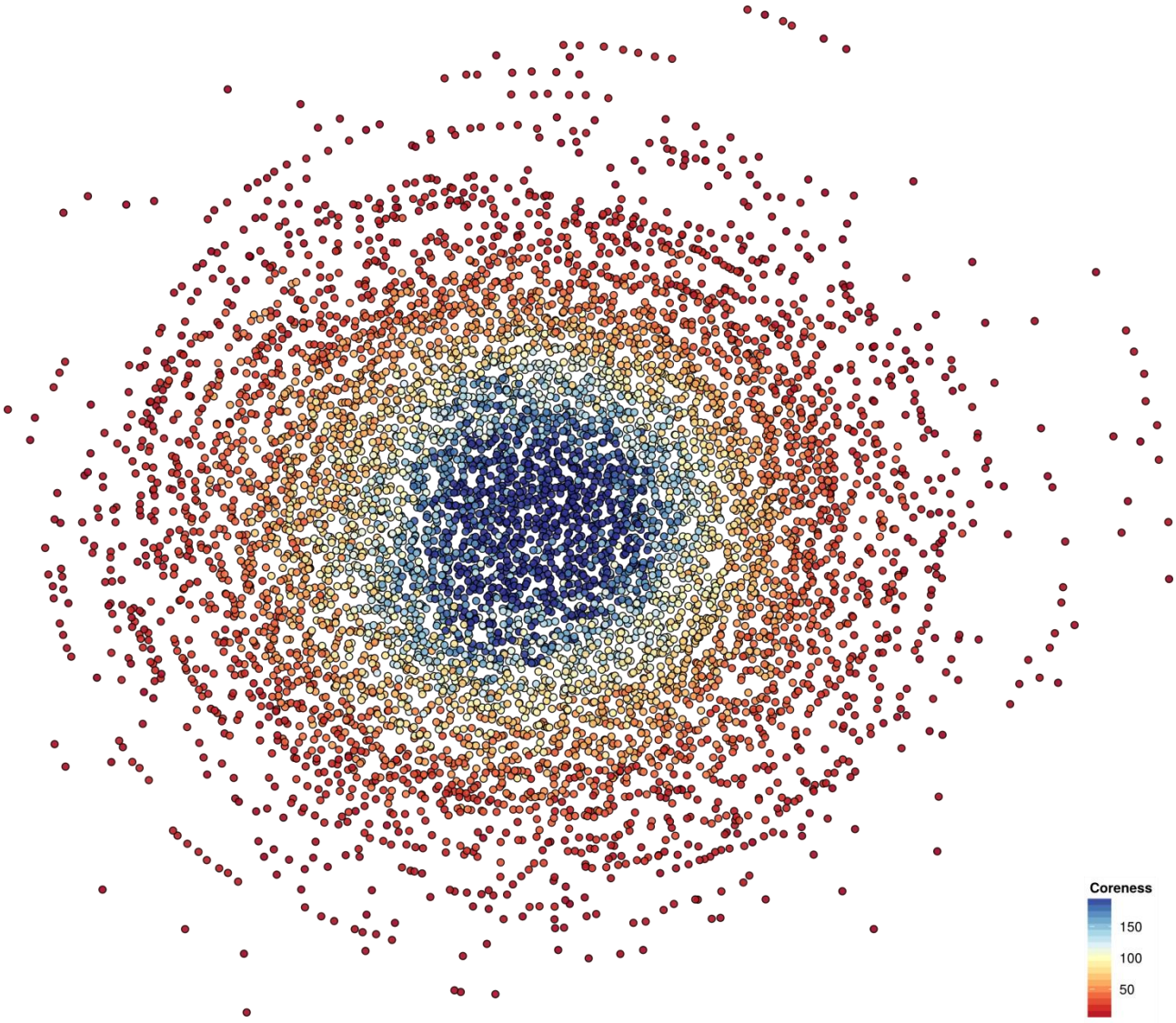


Core collapse sequence of the network of linkers where everyone within reach 2.1 is regarded as connected. Color denotes number of individuals removed in each sequence.

Analysing the entire network, a group of 443 individuals all have a coreness score of 199. This means that no individuals can be removed from this group without lowering the minimum degree of group members. Of the 443 in the core, 20 are secondary actors (cf. Faust 1997), only having affiliations that are a sub-sample of another individual's affiliations. Because of the weighting procedure outlined above, sharing ties to very central individuals could have the effect of having many ties only because of several shared memberships with central agents. This problem is worsened by differences in institutional organisation, for instance where a large organisation has many external subsidiaries with relatively independent boards, but the heads of the large organisations are present in all subsidiaries.

Because this could lead some actors to become very closely tied, we suggest that secondary actors are removed from the core. However, removing individuals should always be subject to investigation of the reason for their network overlap. In the Danish case, the affiliations of the Prince Consort Henry are completely embedded in that of Her Majesty Queen Margarethe II, even though alone he is part of 37 affiliations and events. Thus the Prince Consort is included as part of the core group, as he has four times the number of affiliation memberships than any other secondary actor.

FIGURE 4: THE NETWORK OF LINKERS IN THE DANISH ELITE NETWORK BY CORENESS SCORE



As seen in Figure 3, the core value increases as individuals are gradually removed. Individuals removed at a later stage can be regarded as embedded in a larger core with a lower core value (Seidman 1983). Therefore, the coreness score can also be used to separate the rest of the network according to proximity to the central core. By simply dividing the rest of the networks of linkers into thirds by their

coreness score, an approximate division of the linkers according to their proximity to the power elite is possible. Hence, as shown in Figure 4, we can identify four nested groups in the power network: 423 members of the power elite; 1,094 in higher middle levels of power, whose connections are close to bringing them into the power elite; a lower middle level of power containing 1,661 members and the group of 4,071 in the periphery of the power network. In addition, there are of course the 27,152 not included in the network of linkers and the rest of the population totally excluded from the Danish elite network. Note that no large subgroups were excluded at any point in the core collapse sequence. This suggests that the network has a single core, to which groups with lower coreness value are more or less connected, rather than several centres that collapse in blocks.

TABLE 2: KEY INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED THROUGH POSITIONAL METHOD IN THE CORE

Key Positions*	Not part of the core group	Included in the core	Percent included
Academia[1]	7	13	65.0%
Administration[2]	17	13	43.3%
Upper class (20 most wealthy)[3]	16	4	20.0%
Business leaders from top 50 corporations[4]	48	52	52.0%
Church (all Bishops)	10	0	0.0%
Culture[5]	4	3	42.9%
Media[6]	22	5	18.5%
Organisations[7]	8	24	74.2%
Politics[8]	19	13	40.6%
Royalty[9]	0	4	100.0%
All	151	131	46.5%

*Note that one individual, e.g. the Prime Minister, who is also leader of a political party, can hold more than one position.
[1] University principals and chairmen of university boards and leaders of the public research foundations and the scientific society.
[2] Permanent secretaries, Director and Chairman of National Bank, President of the Supreme Court, Chief of Police, Chief of Defense, director and elected chairman of regional and municipal organisations and Head of Economic Council
[3] List of 100 most wealthy individuals and families in Denmark. Source: http://www.business.dk/dkrigeste2013
[4] Chairman and CEO of the 50 largest Danish corporation (no subsidiaries included) according to turnover.
[5] Directors of the National Museum of Art and History, Director and Chairman of the Royal Theatre and largest publisher and chairman of the state art foundation.
[6] Director-general and chairman of the board of the two state-owned broadcasters, editor-in-chief, chairman of the board and CEO of all national newspapers with more than 20,000 daily copies.
[7] Presidents of all unions with more than 40,000 members, President and director of all major business associations, CEO and chairmen of pension funds controlled by these organizations.
[8] Cabinet, leaders of all political parties in the Parliament and Speaker of Parliament.
[9] Queen, Price Consort, Crown Prince and Crown Princess.

As seen in Table 2 and 3, the core group deviates quite significantly from a formalistic definition of powerful positions. Almost all individuals within the population defined by this positional approach are included in the affiliation network. While formal leaders in the royalty, trade unions, business associations, academia and the largest corporations to a large extent are members of the core, only little more than half (52) of the business leaders fund through the positional method are part of the core. Considering that 179 businessmen are part of the core, this highlights that economic size does not translate directly into social capital. The corporate positions excluded from the core, however, are from less prestigious, peripheral firms, from corporations controlled by cooperatives or representing foreign capital not symbolically integrated into the Danish power elite. This is underlined by the fact that very few of the extremely wealthy families are represented in the core. The very rich who are included are largely tied to the large corporations that their families own. From politics, only key cabinet ministers, such as the prime minister, secretary of state, treasure and minister of commerce are included. Leaders of political parties without government experience do not form part of the core and very few members of parliament are represented. Rather, the 24 politicians in the core are, if not key cabinet secretaries, key regional leaders, particularly mayors from the largest cities. Very few individuals in the core hold positions in cultural life and less than one-fifth of the people with key positions in the media are included in the core. The strength of business, business associations, unions and the scientific community—with economists in a central position—is indicated by many individuals from these groups forming part of the core without having a leading position in their sector.

TABLE 3: CORE INDIVIDUALS INCLUDED IN POSITIONAL METHOD

Sector affiliation of all core members*	No position in positional approach	Position in positional approach	Percent Included
Business: Investment and Pensions	15	4	21,1%
Business: Medium-small	29	7	19,4%
Business: Multiposition[1]	46	9	16,4%
Business: Top 200	37	37	50,0%
Culture and Law: Culture and charities	3	1	25,0%
Culture and Law: Law	8	0	0,0%
Interest groups: Consumers	3	0	0,0%
Interest groups: Employers and business	30	7	18,9%
Interest groups: Farming	10	1	9,1%
Interest groups: Unions	38	11	22,4%
Science and education: Economists and political scientists	14	1	6,7%
Science and education: Education	8	0	0,0%
Science and education: Other scientists	15	4	21,1%
Science and education: University leaders	3	7	70,0%
State and politics: Politics	24	10	29,4%
State and politics: Public Officials	19	11	36,7%
State and politics: Royal court	7	4	36,4%
All	309	114	27,0%

* Sector is defined according to full-time employment. Source: Either description in data or personal profile on the web.
[1] Multipositional denotes working chairmen that do not have a primary employer, but who have spent the bulk of the career in the corporate community.

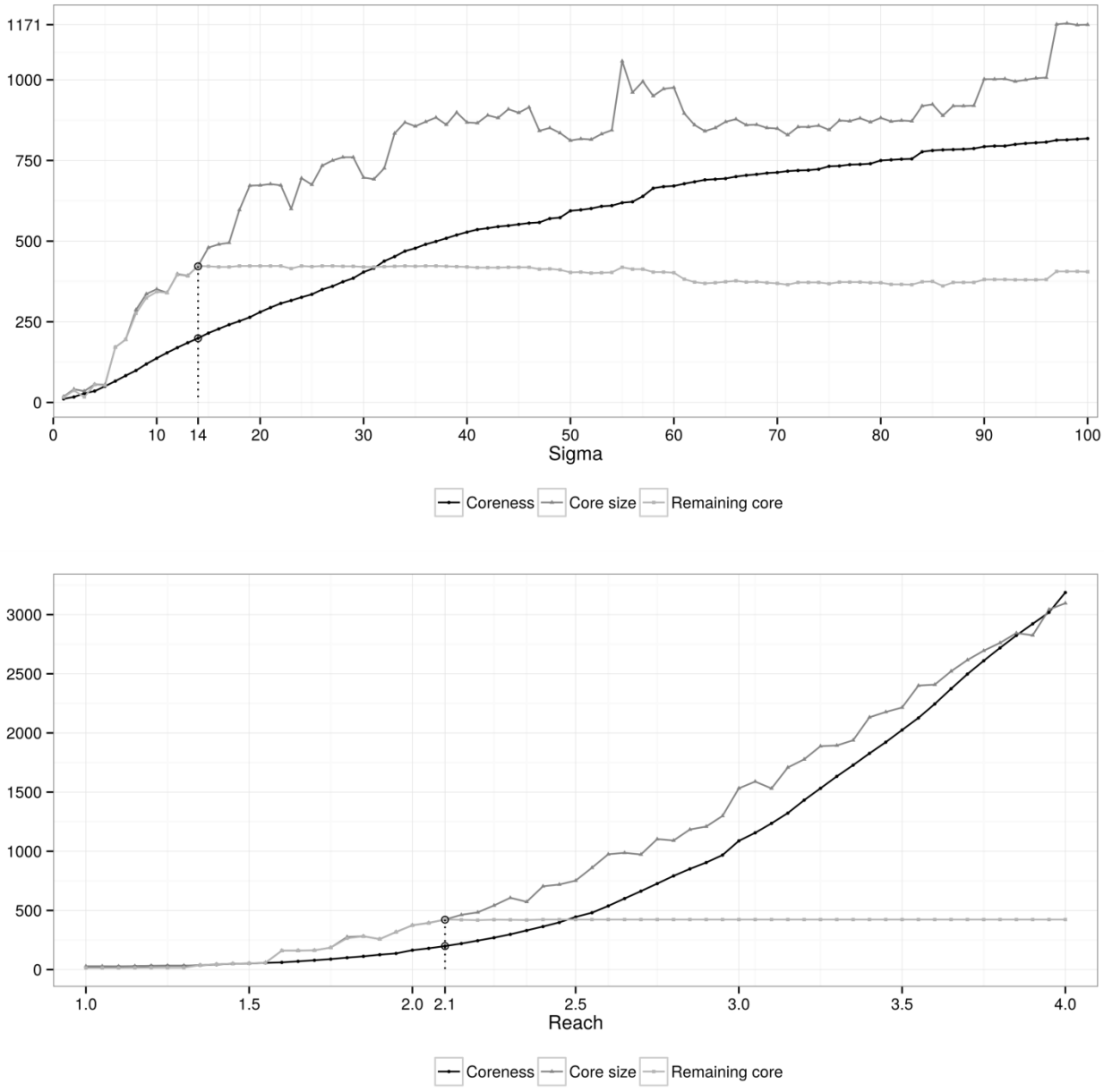
Discussion: A comparative methodology for power elite identification?

The methodology outlined above—gathering affiliations through the inclusion principle, weighting the ties according to affiliation size and identifying the largest *k*-core within a distance of *r* as the cohesive elite—circumvents the problem of determining boundaries of the power elite. By following this approach, both the size and composition of the power elite are defined through empirical analysis. Furthermore, the approach can be reproduced in different nations or over different periods of time. Ad hoc decisions are reduced to:

1. The baseline of members in a network, σ, to be treated as equally integrative
2. The value of the distance threshold, *r*, for a pair of individuals to be treated as tied together and the application of the weight on having multiple ties between pairs of individuals.

As we will discuss now, the results of the overall analysis are relatively robust even when networks are excluded or the parameters changed within reasonable limits. Furthermore, we will show the relative importance of the different sources in identifying affiliation networks.

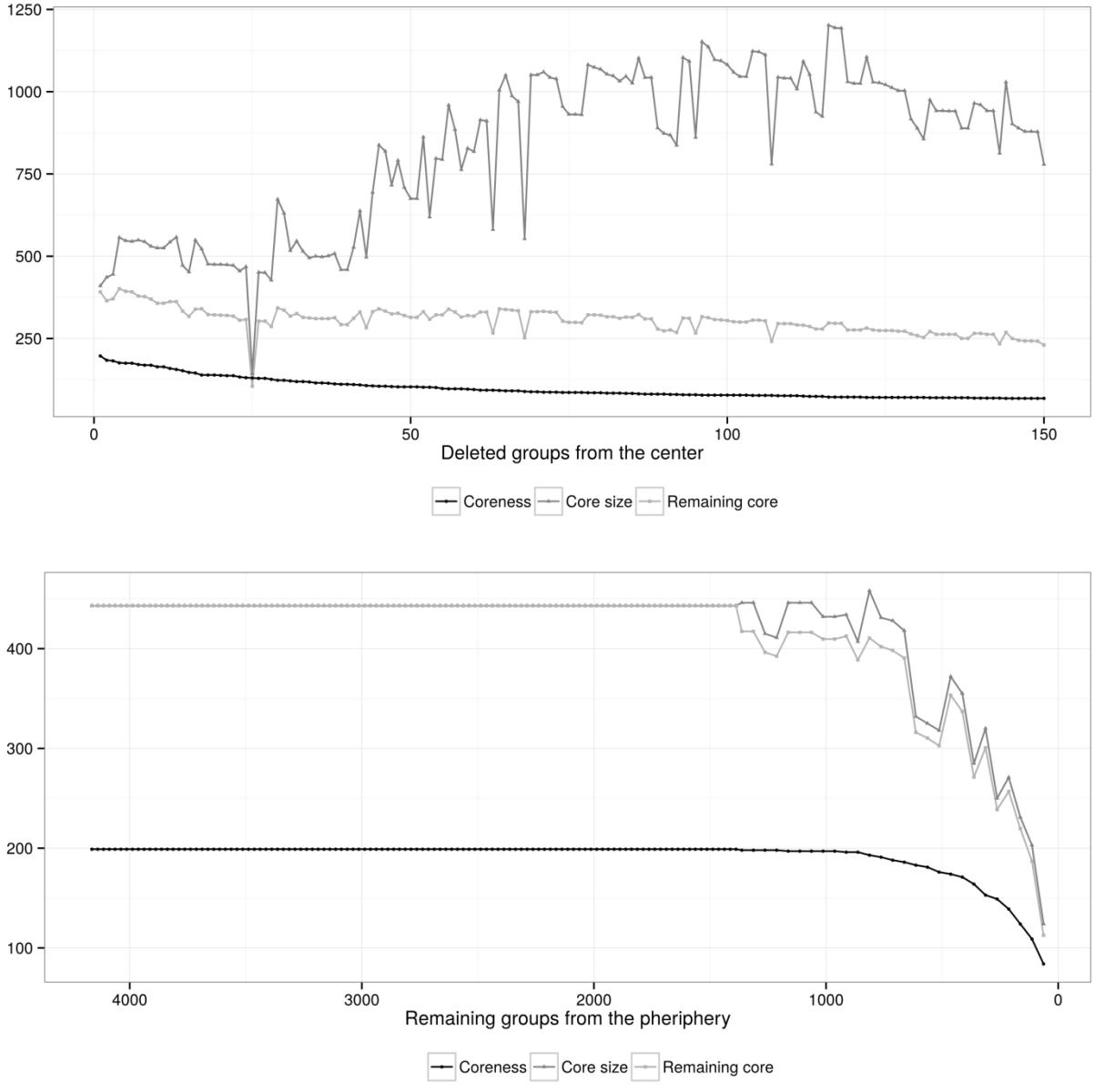
FIGURE 5: CONSEQUENCES OF CHANGES TO σ AND R



Changes to both σ and r determine the size of the identified elite quite simply, as seen in Figure 5. The larger the values at which both are set, the more individuals are included in the core, the coreness value rising accordingly. However, when σ and r are set below the value suggested in the present analysis and fewer individuals are included in the core the members of the smaller cores identified are also members

of the core identified at the thresholds from this analysis. When these constants are set low, the most cohesive organisation in the elite network, the government, composes almost the entire core. When changing these parameters it is necessary to consider the role of affiliation size, the probability of integration across more than one tie and evaluation of the types of affiliations included. Changes to these parameters affect which actors are included in or removed from the periphery of the core, while the central actors remain the same. Yet the question of the size of the power rests on the assumptions implied in the values of σ and r.

FIGURE 6: MEASURES OF CORE STABILITY WHEN DELETING THE MOST CENTRAL GROUPS AND WHEN DELETING GROUPS FROM THE PERIPHERY



The strength of using the inclusion principle as a way to address the boundary specification problem is seen in Figure 6. As the least central affiliations, according to their weighted in-degree, are removed from the analysis, the coreness score of the k-core, core size and number of individuals remaining in the core identified using all affiliations all remain roughly the same, until about 1,000 affiliations remain. When affiliations among the 1,000 most central groups are removed, the size of the core drops dramatically; however, those remaining in the core still belong to the core identified when analysing on the entire affiliation network. When deleting the central affiliations, the results are more troublesome. After removing about 60 of the most central group the size of the core group has doubled, leaving only about three-quarters of the original core group in this much larger core. The internal cohesion of the group, as shown by the coreness value, is also halved from 199 to about 100. Clearly, it is of paramount importance to include the majority of the most central affiliations. This requires the researcher to be thorough when snowballing affiliations from key actors and to focus their effort on gathering data from central affiliations.

If this proposed methodology is to be applied to other settings, the analysis needs to be somewhat robust to the removal of some the sources described in Table 1. If all affiliations from a source are removed, the approach offers roughly the same overall analytical results, as seen in Table 4. The weighting procedures ensure that even if removing two-thirds of all edges by taking out all events, 91% of the core—a core still composed of about 400 individuals—is made of the same individuals. However, removing all affiliations from the state and NGOs would lead to a much smaller core, of which nearly a quarter is not part of the power elite in the complete analysis. Removing corporate networks creates the smallest core of fewer than 300 individuals. Thus, affiliation networks from the state, organisations recognised by the state, and the large corporations are essential for reproducing this methodology, whereas limits to access to other sources are of less importance, at least in the Danish case. Removing sources usually led—with affiliations from corporations as the notable exception—to the identification of a numerically smaller core with a lower minimal degree per core size. However, removing the most exclusive network—the commission and snowball networks—actually expands the core, but lowers the coreness value drastically.

Removing key sources not only removes individuals from the core, but also has a profound impact on which sector representatives remain in it. Surprisingly, as seen in Figure 7, removing organisations affects individuals working in the corporate sector, showing how ties made in business associations and policy planning groups are key for business integration in the power elite. Removing state ties not only leads to fewer individuals working in the central administration and the scientific sector, but also has

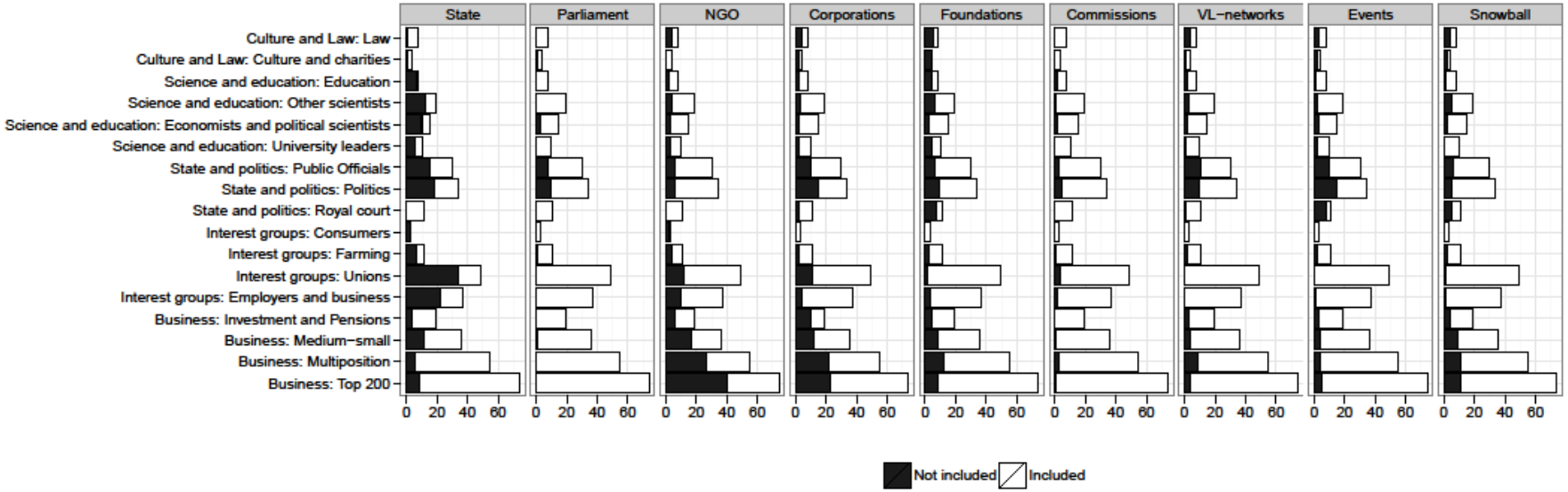
TABLE 4: NETWORK AND CORE CHARACTERISTICS IF ALL AFFILIATIONS FROM EACH SOURCE ARE REMOVED

Source* removed:	Size of component	Number of edges	Density	Core-ness value	Core size	Core value per core size	Excluded individuals from core	New indivi-duals	Share of Secon-dary actors	1. Power Elite	2. Higher levels of Power	3. Middle levels of Power	4. Lower levels of Power	Individuals in core holding a position from positional approach	Represented positions from positional approach in core
State	5385	238426	0.016	135	330	0.41	169 (40%)	76 (23%)	9%	358 (7%)	698 (13%)	1229 (23%)	3100 (58%)	81 (25%)	98 (39%)
Parliament	7127	302010	0.012	194	428	0.45	25 (6%)	30 (7%)	6%	453 (6%)	986 (14%)	1655 (23%)	4033 (57%)	94 (22%)	107 (43%)
NGO	4428	209786	0.021	115	350	0.33	154 (36%)	81 (23%)	14%	398 (9%)	925 (21%)	1256 (28%)	1849 (42%)	107 (31%)	121 (48%)
Corporations	6124	290390	0.015	167	295	0.57	129 (30%)	1 (0%)	5%	308 (5%)	969 (16%)	1603 (26%)	3244 (53%)	87 (29%)	103 (41%)
Foundations	6125	273052	0.015	170	381	0.45	89 (21%)	47 (12%)	7%	409 (7%)	936 (15%)	1584 (26%)	3196 (52%)	100 (26%)	117 (47%)
VL-Networks	6661	305290	0.014	190	393	0.48	65 (15%)	35 (9%)	8%	425 (6%)	1069 (16%)	1625 (24%)	3542 (53%)	91 (23%)	106 (42%)
Commissions	7057	315013	0.013	183	475	0.39	27 (6%)	79 (17%)	7%	508 (7%)	897 (13%)	1698 (24%)	3954 (56%)	120 (25%)	138 (55%)
Events	6885	102270	0.004	187	393	0.48	65 (15%)	35 (9%)	6%	418 (6%)	1014 (15%)	1700 (25%)	3753 (55%)	92 (23%)	105 (42%)
Snowball†	6842	299878	0.013	157	448	0.35	69 (16%)	94 (21%)	7%	448 (7%)	1122 (16%)	1811 (26%)	3461 (51%)	102 (23%)	120 (48%)
All sources included	7225	326746	0.012	199	423	0.47	-	-	5%	423 (6%)	1094 (15%)	1661 (23%)	4071 (56%)	107 (25%)	124 (50%)

*See table 1 for description of each source.

† These include only the 142 affilations added trough following networks of key actors.

FIGURE 7: SECTOR AFFILIATION OF INDIVIDUALS NO LONGER INCLUDED IN CORE AFTER REMOVING SOURCES



profound consequences for the involvement of unions and business associations in elite networks. Although removing events, as mentioned above, does not cause the core to alter much, members from the royal court and also politicians would not be part of the core if events data had not been included. The importance of the social integration created by the neutral spaces of common public recognition should lead researchers to focus on networks created by symbolic events.

Extensions: Organisations, dominance, informal and former ties

As a two-mode network, the ties that integrate the affiliations can be subject to the organisational weight in Equations (1) and (2). Ties between affiliations can then be viewed as directed ties; small affiliations receive considerable information and integration by being tied to larger affiliations because the smaller forum can discuss and listen to perspectives from each member more thoroughly. Thus, the power of organisations can be assessed as well (see Mizruchi and Galaskiewicz 1993).

Although the inclusion principle assures that a great variety of affiliation networks is included in the analysis, several types of relations have been overlooked in our approach. Two types of relations that create stronger cohesion would be particularly important to include:

1. Informal relations, such as friendship or kin
2. Relationships created in the past.

Friendship relations could be investigated through surveys, but would probably lead to a massive boost of centrality among respondents compared to non-respondents. Data on family and kinship could be obtained through biographical databases, newspaper archives or public registers, but would be limited to the most publicly covered part of the population, skewing ties towards prominent individuals. Furthermore, ties of politicians and members of the press could tend to be more informal, as institutional ties to other powerful institutions could lead to claims of conflict of interests. Inclusion of ties made through co-authorships, co-appearances in the media and at events could shed more light on the cohesion between politics, media and the rest of the power elite; however, the demands of checks and balances could still lead to some separation in the power elite.

Former ties should be included in the analysis of elite social integration if reliable and comprehensive data are available. If a database such as the one used in this analysis is updated yearly, former ties could be included fairly easily; however, the relative loss of integration as years go by should be accounted for, perhaps by subjecting each weighted tie to a half-life, $t_{1/2}$, each year. This would be especially important for those with elite careers spanning different sectors. This would enable the researcher to

better assess the level of integration within the power elite. Former ties would prove especially valuable for understanding the connection from politics and central administration to other spectral institutional hierarchies; politicians, for example, often affiliate themselves with other sectors after their political career—a sort of cohesion created by elite circulation through individual career paths, described in France as 'pantouflage' (Bourdieu 1996:266).

The perspective on elite cohesion created through formal ties is in no way an exhaustive account of how the observed affiliation network works. As Urry (2004) points out, the actual content of the ties remains very much in the dark. Whereas the ties can probably serve as vehicles for information exchange (cf. Granovetter 1973), symbolic integration through co-membership, and perhaps cohesion created through the solidarity of interaction ritual chains (cf. Collins 2004), actual control and prominence, cannot be assessed by the analysis of undirected ties (Knoke and Burt 1983). To understand how the diverse affiliations aggregated in this analysis work in actual power struggles, it is necessary to obtain much more empirical detail of the actual interaction patterns of each affiliation. Furthermore, cohesion cannot be assessed only through socio-metric proximity or role equivalence. Integration in the elite, as discussed in elite theory (Bourdieu 1996; Giddens 1972; Miliband 1969; Mills 1956), is also tied to common social background, ties made in elite schools or universities, and the social homogeneity created through shared career and life experiences.

As data on networks from key social institutions in different national settings become accessible through the digital revolution (Savage and Burrows 2007), the approach outlined here becomes viable for comparative analysis of elite configurations across societies. Finding core groups in different nations was an ambition of the policy discussion network studies of American, German and Australian elite circles (Higley et al. 1991). Although Denmark is perhaps a paradigmatic case for the level of institutionalisation and publicly available data, as we have shown, the inner core of institutionalised power networks can also be approximated through data of a much lower granularity. Thus, historical comparisons should also be feasible. However, if power structure in formal networks has not crystallised, the inner core of the network is less likely to coincide with the power elite. This is especially the case if several groups openly fight for power—what Jeffrey Winters (2011) has called 'warring oligarchies', when power relations are based solely on symbolic relationships, such as kings and their subjects or the dominance exercised by clerics under theocracy. The proposed approach is therefore likely to apply only to modern democratic societies.

Conclusion: The power law of elites

Using the tendency of powerful individuals to cluster in certain affiliations, the question 'Who are the elite?' can be answered by identifying the core of an extensive elite network. This inductive approach lets the actual formal interaction between all holders of potentially powerful positions determine the boundary and composition of the elite. This approach requires data for a vast number of affiliations that connect individuals and organisations across sectors. The collection of these affiliations should be guided by an inclusion principle that prescribes the inclusion of all potentially powerful affiliations.

However, the integrative effect of these affiliations—ranging from the comfort of the boardroom to the splendour of the royal ball—wears down as the number of participants increases. By applying a weight, σ, the integrative effect of very heterogeneous affiliations can be compared. Furthermore, σ can be adjusted according to the assumptions of the researcher. In this case, affiliations of 14 or fewer participants are deemed to be equally integrative, whereas the integrative effect of affiliations above 14 members gradually deteriorates.

The power elite can be identified as the core group in a two-step procedure. First, including everyone within a certain sociometric reach, r, is deemed to be tied to each other. Once again, this parameter is adjustable to the assumptions of the researcher. In the present analysis, r is set at 2.1, thereby connecting individuals tied either directly through larger affiliations or indirectly through smaller affiliations. By finding the largest k-core in this network, the group in which most people are tied to the highest number of individuals within this group forms part of a cohesive elite. By using data gathered through the inclusion principle, following the weighting procedure of ties outlined above and finding k-cores of a certain reach, the number of ad hoc decisions for the boundary specification of the elite group can be reduced substantially. The assumptions used for σ and r are transparent, reproducible and easily changed.

Thus, power elites can be identified from the intersection of institutions' hierarchies across time and space. The identification of elites through social network analysis thus offers a truly comparative methodology for investigating and understanding differences in elite composition for elite scholars in different settings.

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VII. The power elite in the welfare state – key institutional orders of the power networks in Denmark

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Abstract

In Denmark, within a vast power network of 5,322 potentially powerful affiliations containing 37,750 individuals, a core group of 423 individuals was identified using social network analysis. The position of the core as the main broker between overlapping sectoral networks fits the definition of *the power elite* proposed by C. Wright Mills in 1956. The power elite sit where the circles of the key institutional orders within society overlap. The composition and size of this core group reflect the relative importance of different institutional orders and the concentration of power within the limits of the nation-state.

The key institutional orders in Denmark were identified by looking at the main employer of each power elite member. A small majority (52%) of the elite members were employed in the world of business as CEOs, chairmen of large corporations, or leaders in employers' and business organisations. Three other institutional orders – state and politics, science and unions – showed a strong presence, each constituting between 12% and 18% of the power elite. All of the institutions are central to the negotiation and regulation of the economy.

While spanning very different organisations, the power elite were integrated by factors other than their shared connections. They fit the bill of middle-aged white men with prestigious backgrounds. Only 19% were women. The offspring of a very exclusive upper class outnumbered elite individuals with a known background in the working classes by more than four to one. Almost half of the power elite (47%) had attended just eight university programs and were educated predominantly in economics, law, engineering, political science and business administration from a select set of Danish universities. The elite shared lifestyles, as seen by their geographic concentration in the most exclusive neighborhoods in Copenhagen.

Power elites in the 21st century Scandinavian welfare state reflected the historical process of integrating challengers to the networks of established elite without compromising the position of the incumbents.

Who are the members of the power elite in an egalitarian welfare state?

> For each epoch and for every social structure, we must work out an answer to the question of the power of the elite.
>
> C. Wright Mills (1956:23)

Who holds power and which major institutions, such as business or the state, do they work for? What are the governing interests in society? Are the elite unified or are there fundamental divides? What is the relative strength of labour versus employers? What is the role of the cultural and scientific elite? These question are difficult to answer, but by mapping the institutional networks of affiliations between elite members we may get closer to answering these important questions. The case of Denmark, one of the most egalitarian, wealthy and stable nation-states in the world, is in many aspects the extreme.

When Charles Wright Mills (1956) famously dissected *The Power Elite* in America in the 1950s, three pillars of society were represented at the apex: the corporations, the president's cabinet and the military. But why were these institutions central to Mills' analysis? Through revolving doors, shared upper-class background, ties made in elite boarding schools and Ivy-league universities and, most importantly, the overlapping cliques of these three institutional orders, the potential elite were able to forge bonds to promote their shared interests in a way that was not open to members of institutions at lower levels of power, or the mass society. However, Mills (1956:269) was very much aware that this particular configuration of power was a result of historical struggles of 'institutional shifts' rather than the immanent distribution of power in modern societies. Raymond Aron (1950:9) attributed the differences between sub-elites performing different functions to 'the degree of separation between the groups and their relative strength'. Without assuming the dominance of business, generals and cabinet secretaries, the Millsian notion of the power elite can be used as a metaphor in identifying the key institutional orders, by asking: Which institutions are involved in the everyday decisions made across a nation-state? Denmark provides an extreme case for the application of the notion of power elites, as it is a political economy in a small state with a coordinated market economy and a redistributive Scandinavian welfare system known for collective bargaining and lack of military power.

The use of an approach based on identifying the core group in a vast network of all institutionalised power networks (see Ellersgaard and Larsen 2014) allows the identification of the institutional orders active in the core to remain an empirical question. The lure of the power resources generated by different institutional orders is indicated by the centrality of institutional representatives in the power network. This was identified by looking at the formal shared affiliations of the most central individuals.

The power network was generated from 2012 and 2013 data on the affiliation memberships of a broad range of institutions that potentially could be part of the key institutional orders in Denmark. The primary sources were the governing bodies of state institutions, organisations recognised officially by the state, and the large corporations, as well as participation in symbolic events or semi-formal leadership forums. This approach was thus inspired by the tradition of power-structure research (Domhoff 1975, 2013) and identification of elite social circles (Alba and Moore 1978; Higley et al. 1991; Moore 1979). However, the use of more than 5,332 affiliations, including more than 62,481 positions, allowed hitherto-neglected institutional orders to be identified as part of the overlapping cliques in the core of the power elite.

Because the power elite are based on the overlap of different institutional orders, their ability to achieve cohesion is hampered by the different interests vested in each domain and the characteristic differences of the organisational hierarchies through which elite members ascend. Although cohesion is generated through their social interaction across affiliations, it is also strengthened by shared social conditions, such as similarities in social background and education, but most importantly, their current lifestyle. This similarity highlights their distance from the general population.

To explore the composition of the power elite in the Danish society, we first show how central networks positions are concentrated among a very small minority; next, we show that this minority represents key institutional orders; and finally we show that in spite of functional differences between these institutional orders, there are social similarities that support the formation of the power elite. First, we turn to the particular Danish case. A power elite in a corporatist state with high levels of equality – a least likely case (cf. Flyvbjerg 2006) – does not only tell a story about elites in welfare state; it also shows how power elites, through the process of elite settlements, handle pressure from below in the form of strong social movements.

Elite circulation in the welfare state

Any stable elite must have the ability to incorporate new powerful groups, otherwise the incumbent elite are condemned to the historical 'graveyard of aristocracies', as Vilfredo Pareto (1991) famously put it. However, Pareto's notion of virile challenging elites replacing incumbents through violent revolutions, according to another classical elite theorist, Roberto Michels (1949), does not account for

the fact that parts of the ancient elites still maintain privileged positions[1]. When a contending faction of the elite successfully accumulates substantial power, in any form, they are commonly incorporated within the elite in a fashion that does not entail the complete removal of former elites, but rather a reconfiguration of the balance of power in a process of amalgamation. In tracing the origins of the three-headed American power elite, Mills (1956:269–78) showed how the relative strength of institutional orders – shown by their involvement with one another – has developed over time. Institutional orders enter the power elite in what Burton and Higley (1987) calls 'elite settlements'.

Such an elite settlement gradually took place in Denmark (Higley and Burton 2006) with the establishment of genuine parliamentary democracy at the beginning of the twentieth century. The incumbent political elite, based on the landed aristocracy, industrialists, higher civil servants and military officers, was challenged by groups based first in rural and then in urban areas (Pedersen 1976). These political challengers – since tied to the most popular political parties – originated by and large in social movements. The rural challengers were an organised liberal movement among farmers gathered around co-ops, folk high schools and farmers' associations. The urban challengers, on the other hand, were tied to the labour movement. Later, other social movements were successful in obtaining political influence or change. The pressure from suffragists and other social movements helped Denmark to be the first country in the world to grant universal suffrage in 1915. After the Second World War, consumer groups and environmental activists also achieved significant political influence. Furthermore, the above-mentioned social movements, in particular the farmers' associations and labour unions, not only gained political influence but also became part of other elite spheres through state committees, corporations and a wide range of civil society organisations. For others, the experience and prestige from working in these movements and the social ties made through these movements aided a career trajectory ascending to elite positions.

The unions in particular engaged power resources in the class-related distributive conflict and partisan politics, which Walter Korpi (2006) attributed to welfare state development. The strength of organised labour led to a cross-class alliance between unions and business, resulting in a highly institutionalised system of collective bargaining – starting with the September settlement between unions and employers in 1899 – while also ensuring the representation of both organised labour and employer organisations towards the state (Due et al. 1994; Jensen 2012). In 1933 the alliance was broadened to include the

[1] The persistence of privileged groups at the apex of society has also been shown though the reoccurrence of surnames in prestigious academic institutions (Clark 2014) and through the importance of multigenerational ties (Mare 2011).

farmers, helping the latter through the Depression while introducing a social reform granting welfare rights to the population at large. With welfare states being challenged for several decades by the politics of retrenchment (Korpi and Palme 2003), the political ties of unions have weakened. The position and relative strength of these new institutional orders, which are based around social movements, remain unclear.

The institutionalisation of class conflict and a strong civic society have famously been used by Francis Fukuyama (2011) to describe 'getting to Denmark' as the best practice of many parameters in state-building. As a consensually united elite (cf. Higley and Burton 1989), challengers to elite power are amalgamated into the incumbent elite through a 'negotiated economy' (Pedersen 2006). Thus, violent overthrows of government arise neither from rural challengers, nor urban challengers based in labour unions, nor suffragists, even if the threats of uprising aided the willingness to integrate new elites by the incumbent elite. Still, the royal family has officially proceeded as heads of state almost without interruption for the millennium. The elite consensus is further strengthened by the fact that no political party – nor rarely even an ideologically united block – has held majority in parliament alone during the last century. Rather, in a system of high political stability politics is generally made through compromise between left and right.

In spite of the integration of new elites and high levels of general equality (Campbell and Hall 2006), there is a strong concentration of wealth and material power resources in Denmark (Winters 2011:278–80). Although the income of the one per cent has not risen as dramatically as in the US or UK since the 1970s (Alvaredo et al. 2013), studies (Davies et al. 2009) of somewhat problematic wealth data suggest that wealth is increasingly distributed quite unevenly, despite welfare state politics. Furthermore, large proportions of the largest Danish corporations remain under family or foundation control. Adding to the power of individual corporation owners, Danish business associations remain well-organised – particularly the Confederation of Danish Industry, which holds the majority vote within the Confederation of Danish Employers – and are highly active politically (Binderkrantz, Christiansen, and Pedersen 2014, 2015). Thus, corporate interests are promoted by both super-rich owners and efficient organisations rather than through the dispersed ownership of individual investors. However, the relative strength of corporate interest compared to union, political and state leaders within the Danish power elite has not been clarified.

Along with being consensually united and open to new elite groups, the elite in Denmark have also shown a higher propensity to include the offspring of non-elite families. Compared to other countries, access to the elite is more open than in other countries and has become even more so during the

twentieth century, thereby making it a potentially less exclusive, elite group (Christiansen and Togeby 2007). Furthermore, the elite are characterised by separate career paths to each elite sector, with little apparent importance given to an exclusive elite program of higher education. According to Michael Hartmann (2010), this has led to a weakened internal integration, and thus lesser concentration of power, in the elite circle. However, these findings explore the Danish elite according to potentially powerful groups defined a priori thorough the positional method (cf. Knoke 1993) rather than by analysing which groups are actually part of an elite group. This means that the historical specificities of the making of the Danish power elite described above are neglected in favour of an elite definition based upon the usual suspects: powerful societal sectors such as business, politics, state administration, organisations, law, science, culture and media. Rather than exploring the Danish power elite, previous studies have described groups that are regarded as powerful according to academic tradition. The power elite of the welfare state has escaped attention. But before we try to identify the Danish power elite, we consider the important theoretical discussion of the concept of the power elite and its relationship to the broader sociological framework.

Division and cohesion in the power elite

The notion of the power elite was vigorously contested in the 1950s (see e.g. Bell 1958; Dahl 1958), particularly the extent of power concentration within the elite group. The discussion between elitists and pluralists soon turned towards the theoretical definition of power (Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Dahl 1957; Lukes 1974). The elitists, joined by a new generation of Marxist scholars, turned their attention to the disproportionate influence and internal organisation of business (Domhoff 1978; Mintz and Schwartz 1985; Useem 1984; Zeitlin 1974). Neo-pluralists conceded that in some periods, business has a more privileged position to influence politics (Domhoff 2007). As such, the disagreement between elitists and pluralists has turned to question the very notion of power rather than whether or not some groups hold more power than others. In this context, the Millsian notion of the power elite becomes open to establishing the empirical boundary of the group that holds disproportionate power.

When describing the power elite, Mills (1956:385–6) focused on four aspects. First, the elite head the top institutional hierarchies. Second, the interlock of these 'circles' forms an 'intricate set of overlapping cliques' (Mills 1956:18). Third, the integration in these circles in turn creates a set of common values in these circles by 'co-optation of social types' (Mills 1956:281). Fourth, the common experience of heading up central institutions, everyday interaction and the shared values leads to a common moral view that in turn leads to some degree of coordination.

The power elite are thus composed of individuals leading large organisations that frequently interact with one another. This led Mills (1956:288–90) to picture the power elite consisting of:

> 1. 'The inner core […] who interchange commanding roles at [the] top of one institutional order with those in another'
>
> 2. 'Men […] not necessarily familiar with every major arena of power… who moves in and between perhaps two circles'
>
> 3. 'The outermost fringes of the power elite – which change more than the core – consist of "those who count" even though they may not be "in" on given decisions of consequence nor in their career move between hierarchies.'

'Each member…' of the group does not 'personally decide every decision that is to be ascribed to the power elite. Each member, in the decision that he does make, takes the others seriously into account'. This marks the difference from the 'middle levels of power' located outside the core of the elite circles, who may have influence on matters within their sector, but are not taken generally into account. Finally, the fragmented and passive 'mass society' are those entirely removed from the circles of power (Mills 1956:324).

As mentioned above, Mills identified the power elite primarily as leaders of large institutions. However, Mills is less clear on exactly how to determine which institutions to include. Instead we suggest that the power elite of different epochs and social structures can be analysed with the overlapping circles as a point of departure. This allows us to analyse power elites as a group and thereby draw the broader sociological framework. When seen through the structuralism and group theory of Georg Simmel, the power elite becomes a group that, when it includes new members one by one, maintains its overall group characteristics (cf. Vedres and Stark 2010). In turn, the social integration of these Simmelian cross-cutting social circles can be enhanced by secrecy (Mills 1956:294; Simmel 1950:361). Adding to this, Randall Collins' (Collins 2004:53ff) theory of interaction ritual chains emphasised how interaction – particularly physical co-presence – produces both solidarity and cohesion within the group, while also defining group boundaries. The group must interact continuously to uphold cohesion, values and moral (Collins 2004:32–49). Thus, the cohesive core group of the power elite can be traced through patterns of interaction.

These patterns of interaction also function to uphold power relations and status differences through chains of interdependence, according to Nobert Elias. In his study, described in his book, *Court Society*, Elias (1983) showed how courtiers must achieve or maintain sufficient status to be considered an insider. The successful courtier learns to navigate the social games of the court in part by sensing the status and interests of the other courtiers, a status defined primarily by proximity to the king, Louis XIV, in both a physical and a social sense. Likewise, Erving Goffman (1951:299) proposed that

membership in prestigious networks with connections to powerful people becomes a status resource, as a result of the scarcity of personal connections.

As in the court banquets described by Elias, power was defined relationally by Pierre Bourdieu. Through the notion of the field of power, Bourdieu (1996:265) showed that struggles between elite groups consist of determining the 'exchange rate' between forms of capital and establishing the 'dominant principle of domination'. Following Bourdieu (1996:263, our emphasis) these struggles take place within:

> […] a complex universe of objective relations of interdependence (established in and through intersecting patterns of domination) among subfields that are both autonomous and bound together by the *organic solidarity* of a genuine division of the labor of domination.

In other words, the agents in the field of power have to take one another into account. While having an interest in promoting their own specific form of capital, the holders of dominant positions share common interests, needing other forms of capital in order to legitimise and reproduce dominant positions. As such, the field of power becomes both a source of power and a locus for the struggles over power.

> The field of power is a *field of forces* structurally determined by the state of the relations of power among forms of power, or different forms of capital. It is also, and inseparably, *a field of power struggles* among the holders of different forms of power.
>
> Bourdieu (1996:264, our emphasis)

When analysing the field of power, Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1996:270; see also Wacquant 2005:143) described subfields, each organised in homologous fashion to the general cleavages in the field of power. These subfields – the artistic, the scientific, the bureaucratic, the juridical and the economic fields – each have their own field-specific form of capital. Capital is 'accumulated labor' (Bourdieu 1986:241), but certain advantageous positions allow for the appropriation of the labour so that dominant positions may accumulate capital (Savage, Warde, and Devine 2005). The accumulation of different forms of capital, tied to specific subfields, follows the logic of accumulation of power within the major institutional hierarchies[2] described by Mills, but the field-analytic approach adds accumulation of power resources outside of the more bureaucratic organisations with formal leadership, such as science or the arts. Mills (1956:9) asserted that 'only within [institutions] and

[2] As is the case with the institutional orders of Mills, Bourdieu regarded the particular form and conversion rates of capital as a product of historical struggles within the field of power rather than an intrinsic feature of society (Wacquant 1993), even if 'strategies of reproduction' (Bourdieu 1996:272ff) maintain a relatively stable configuration.

through them can power be more or less continuous and important'. However, the field-analytic approach of Bourdieu shows how fields are organised in a highly hierarchical way, even without a formal chain of command. Although institutional orders are always highly likely to take the form of fields, fields are not necessarily institutional orders. Extending the notion of institutional orders to include less formal hierarchies through the notion of fields extends the criteria of sector-inclusion into the core of the power elite. Rather than looking only at formal leaders, the question of inclusion in elite circles turns to whether or not the form of capital assessable by participating in the struggles within the field has value in the field of power. However, the accumulation of capital may also take place in a field with a high degree of autonomy. With this autonomy comes the risk of the field-specific form of capital losing transferable value. The inclusion of a field in the field of power rests upon the fact that this form of capital holds some sort of exchange value in that field. Or, as put by Shamus Khan (2012:362), 'elites as those who have vastly disproportionate control over or access to a resource… [t]he resource must have transferable value'.

But how does this conversion of capital between fields or institutional orders take place? To answer this Mills (1956:11) turned to the relations between the elites. There is 'a qualitative split' based on 'a set of overlapping crowds and intricately connected "cliques"… [a] kind of mutual attraction among those who "sit on the same terrace"'. Mills (1956:19) added:

> If these hierarchies are scattered and disjointed, then their respective elites tend to be scattered and disjointed; if they have many interconnections and points of coinciding interests, then their elites tend to form a coherent kind of grouping.

Following the group sociology of Simmel and Collins, we may add that relations based on interaction add to the cohesion of the power elite but also create internal trust, or potential for organic solidarity among holders of different forms of capital or power resources.

Even if the holders of these forms of power are divided by their divergent interests as holders of different forms of capital, they are still related through their mutual interdependence, because they engage with – and thus show interest in and symbolic recognition of – the forms of capital held by one another. They integrate socially to form a consensually united elite (cf. Higley et al. 1991), accepting the overall legitimacy of the positions of the other elite sectors and their forms of capital, while still attempting to promote their specific base of power. If new forms of capital or institutional orders arise, these will be co-opted into the social spheres of the power elite, while continually struggling to determine the exchange value of their form of capital. Alternatively, they will remain outside the elite networks as counter-elites seeking to overthrow the current elite or be condemned to the middle levels of power, to be taken into account by the power elite only on specific occasions.

If the form of capital of an institution has transferable value, the individuals sitting at the top of these institutions will tend to interact with each other. If the transfer of forms of capital has stabilised, the interaction will tend to have been formalised. At the core of elite networks, we find representatives of the key institutional orders. In short, you are powerful if others with power think you are. You hold power if you know others who hold power. Although this may appear to be a mere tautology, using social network analysis, we may define the power elite as the core of the formalised elite network. This enables us to identify the institutional orders that are part of the core of the elite network. Of course, this does not mean that the network centrality associated with being part of the core is the only source of power. Network centrality is only one form of power, but one that is strongly correlated to other forms of power. Network centrality can be seen as a proxy for the social capital of an individual, which 'depends on the size of the network connections he can effectively mobilize and the volume of capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected' (Bourdieu 1986:246). However, if one is excluded from others in the network, the ability to use one's power resources across institutions is seriously hampered by either isolation or dependency on others to create alliances. Before we use the connections between institutional orders and their presence in the power elite to assess their prominence in Danish society, we look at the method used to identify the power elite in Denmark.

Identifying power elites through social network analysis

In order to define the key institutional orders in the power elite empirically, we use a method developed to solve the boundary specification problem (for a further elaboration of the method and data used, see Ellersgaard and Larsen 2014). This method is key to empirical studies based upon a relational framework (cf. Emirbayer 1997; Laumann, Marsden, and Prensky 1983). All potentially powerful or symbolically integrative affiliation networks within Denmark were recorded if a complete list of participants was available. The affiliation network was collected through various sources (see Table 1). The affiliations derived from inclusive lists of state offices, non-government organisations (NGOs) with a hearing right, the top 1,000 corporations listed by turnover, all registered foundations and guests lists from events, primarily hosted by the royal family. All affiliations, such as committees, boards and advisory boards, were collected from each of the original 6,053 organisations. In effect, each organisation formed the starting point of a small snowball collection of affiliations. This procedure was guided by an 'inclusion principle': if any affiliation could be considered to be nationally important in any sense, it was included. The majority of the included affiliations are the boards of large corporations, political organisations, foundations or state agencies.

In total, 5,332 affiliation networks were recorded for the year 2012, containing 62,481 positions held by 37,750 different individuals. Each recurring name was tested individually for the validity of the overlap. If there was doubt as to whether two with the same name referred to the same person, they were treated as two separate individuals. By using the inclusion principle we ensured that the data comprehensively covered the official networks of every possibly important institutional order, from clergy, media and culture, to business, law and sport, and their potential ties.

TABLE 1: AFFILIATION NETWORKS INCLUDED

	From original sources	Excluded*	Added in snowball sample†	Final number of affiliation networks	No. of relations
State[1]	2,328	1,780	327	875	10,230
Parliament[1]	153	101	31	83	970
NGO[1]	749	144	922	1,527	16,436
Corporations[2]	1,136	34	40	1,142	7,476
Foundations[2]	1,380	18	83	1,445	8,181
VL Networks[3]	117	3	0	114	3,845
Commissions[4]	116	44	0	72	1,121
Events[5]	74	0	0	74	14,582
Total	6,053	2,124	1,403	5,332	62,841

[1] Source: Danish Public Administration Database (www.foa.dk)
[2] Source: The list of largest corporations according to turnover and list of all foundations in the Danish Central Business Register (obtained through www.biq.dk)
[3] Source: Homepage of VL networks (www.vl.dk)
[4] Source: Registration of political commissions from 2005-11 made by Danish weekly newsletter A4.
[5] Sources: Webpage of Danish Royal Family (www.kongehuset.dk) and private archive of journalist.
*Affiliation networks were excluded if no board of extra-organisational members existed, no information was available on the board either online or through personal contact, the board members were included from other sources as well, or the board entirely overlapped with another board within the same organisation.
†This includes both subcommittees within the organisations on the original list and the 142 networks obtained through snowballing the affiliations of prominent actors.

The comprehensive nature of the data means that the affiliations vary considerably in size and nature. To account for this, the weighting of tie strength was gradually reduced after the number of affiliation members began to rise above 14[3] [4]. As the number of members increases, the potential for interaction

[3] The weighting of ties was applied as follows: Each affiliation is subject to a weight, ω_{σ} of decreasing tie strength:

$$\omega_{\sigma} = \sqrt{\frac{\sigma}{n_a}} \; if \; \sigma < n_a \qquad (1)$$

drops and the larger gatherings tend to meet less frequently. For gatherings of about 30 (typical for the more informal networks) participants' tie strength was two-thirds the strength of boards with 14 or fewer members, whereas for more ceremonial gatherings with around 100 participants, tie strength reduced to one-third. To further account for the heterogeneity of affiliations, affiliations with almost identical members were removed if they were in fact part of the same organisation. If two affiliations were embedded in each other, only the strongest tie between a pair of individuals was retained. Following the same logic, events (which, unlike boards meetings, only gather the same individuals once) with largely the same set of participants were merged into one affiliation. Individuals who had participated in only some of the events had their tie strength to other participants reduced according to the proportion of the merged events they participated in.

$$\omega_e = 1 \; otherwise. \quad (2)$$

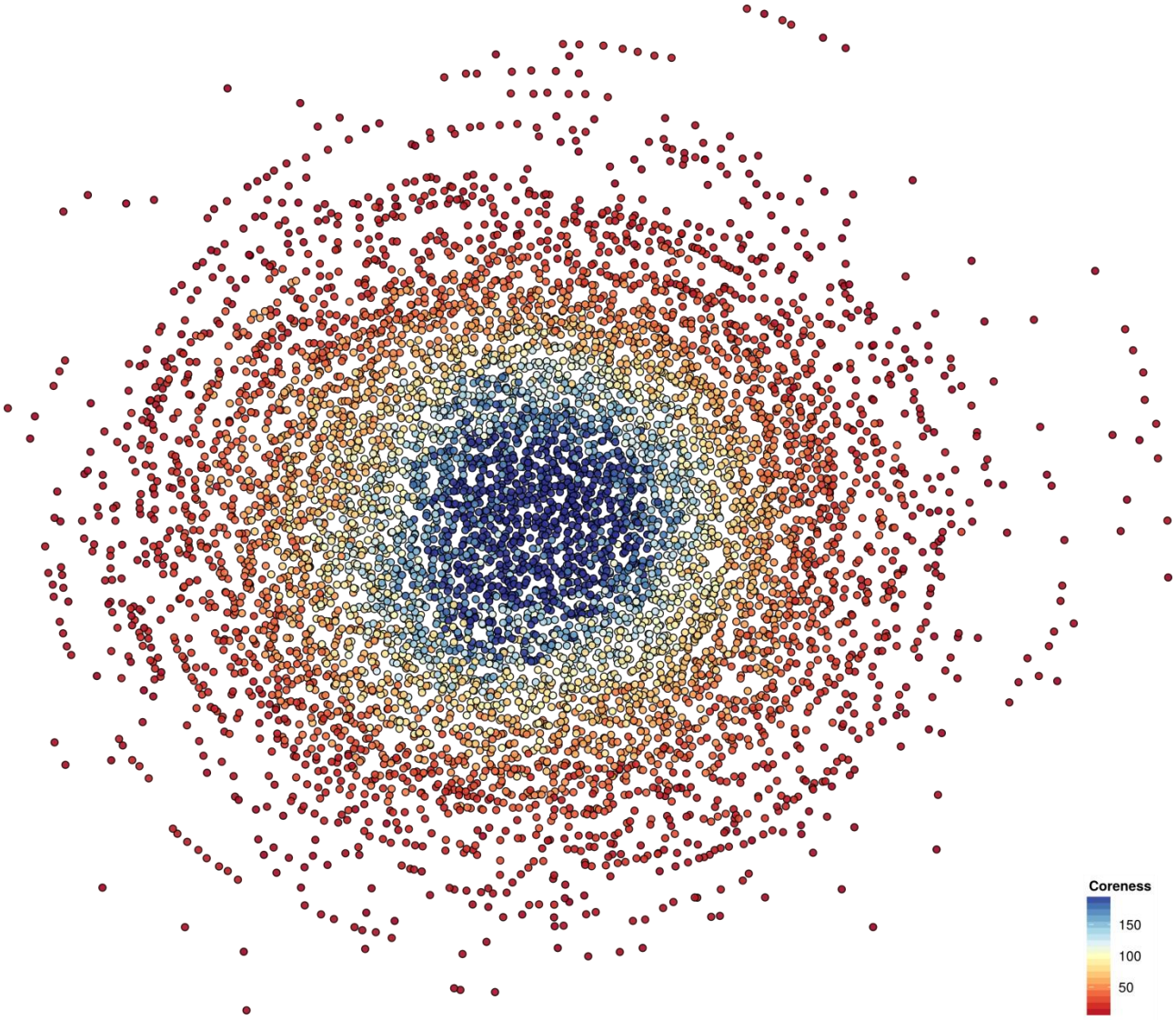
where n_a is the number of members of each affiliation and σ is a constant referring to the number of individuals that causes the network participation of each member to drop.

[4] Furthermore, several individuals have multiple ties. Meeting in more than one setting of course creates potential for a stronger tie, but as the number of meetings increase this each new tie adds less and less. Hence, after applying the weight based on affiliation size mentioned above, we added another weight using the sum of all ties between all pairs of individuals, $\sum e_{ij}$.

$$\omega_{e_{ij}} = 1 + \ln\left(\sum e_{ij}\right) if \; \sum e_{ij} < 1 \quad (3)$$

$$\omega_{e_{ij}} = \sum e_{ij} \; otherwise. \quad (4)$$

FIGURE 1: THE NETWORK OF THE 7,249 LINKERS IN THE DANISH ELITE NETWORK, BY CORENESS SCORE



The core group of the power elite was identified in a three-step procedure. First, all individuals without more than one weighted tie were removed, reducing the population to 7,400 individuals. Of these, 151 were not connected to the largest component of 7,249 *linkers*. In this network of linkers we identified a k-core (Seidman 1983) using a modification inspired by the *w*-threshold of magnitude of network ties developed by Doreian and Woodard (1994) to allow use of the extended network: everyone within a reach of 2.1. A reach of 2.1 roughly corresponds to a pair of individuals being tied either: through one intermediary, if both affiliations tying them to the intermediary have a size of 14 members or fewer; or

directly in an affiliation with 50 or fewer members[5]. A group of 423 individuals[6] form part of the most cohesive core, having a coreness score of 199. No individuals can be removed from this group without lowering the minimum number of 199 individuals within the reach of the least connected member of the core of the elite network.

We used biographical data to analyse the social character of the core. The biographical data on the 423 members were collected using a variety of sources, primarily *Kraks Blå Bog*, the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*, and information from websites of the organisations to which elite members were affiliated, LinkedIn profiles and the Danish Corporate Register (CVR.dk). Although data from these sources were mostly self-reported, the information – particularly on parental occupation – was not always entirely valid for the theoretical interest of identifying the class background of the elite. As well, the highest prevalence of missing data on public profile occurred among the least prestigious elite individuals. This may lead to an image of the elite slightly tilted towards the established elite.

The primary occupation of the 423 members of the power elite core was recorded and tied to eight different sectors: business, organisations, politics, state administration, law, science and education, media, culture. Some of these were divided further into subsectors based on characteristics of the included institutions; for example, splitting organisations into four groups: unions, business associations, interest groups related to farming and interest groups representing consumers (see Table 2). These constitute the empirical identification of the key institutional orders. Some members of the elite did not have one primary position but were instead employed as non-executive directors on several boards. They were *multipositionals*, moving from one institutional order to another. In this instance, they were coded according to their last full-time employer. After identifying and coding the institutional orders of the members of the power elite, all 5,332 affiliations were then tagged to record whether or not they belonged to any of these institutional orders, enabling an analysis of subnetworks such as state, corporations, unions or media (see Figure 2). This classification of networks was also used in the creation of network profiles of key individuals (see Figure 8), tracing the origin of the network ties of the most central individuals, other holders of key positions and notable absentees.

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[5] A third way to move within a reach of 2.1 of one another is if one or both of the individuals share several affiliation memberships with the intermediary between them, potentially reducing the sociometric between them and the intermediary below 1.

[6] Furthermore, 21 individuals have a coreness score of 199, but these are secondary actors (cf. Faust 1997), having only affiliations that are a subsample of another individual's affiliations. Of these, 20 were removed from the identified power elite and added to the second layer of elite integration, the 'upper levels of power', because they potentially act only as liaisons and do not add new ties to the network of the elite. However, the Prince Consort was retained in the core elite group as he alone is included of 37 affiliations and events, four times the number of affiliation memberships than any other secondary actor.

The group of *notable absentees* was identified from an elite population gathered through the positional method. This population is composed of holders of key political, organisational and state positions, as well as management in the largest corporations and a list of the richest Danes[7]. These lack the network centrality to be part of the core group, but hold positions usually associated with power or influence. Members of this group thus worked throughout the analysis as cases to help understand the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in the core of the elite network. Key individuals from each sector identified with the positional method, but not among those with the highest network centralities are also explored further.

In the following analysis we will first describe the overall character of the network and the particular role the power elite plays in the network. For this we compare odds ratios between memberships in different parts of the network. Then we look into the composition of the power elite and from that discuss the key institutional orders in Danish society. Next, we move on to individual cases and discuss notable absentees, after which we look at the social character of the elite.

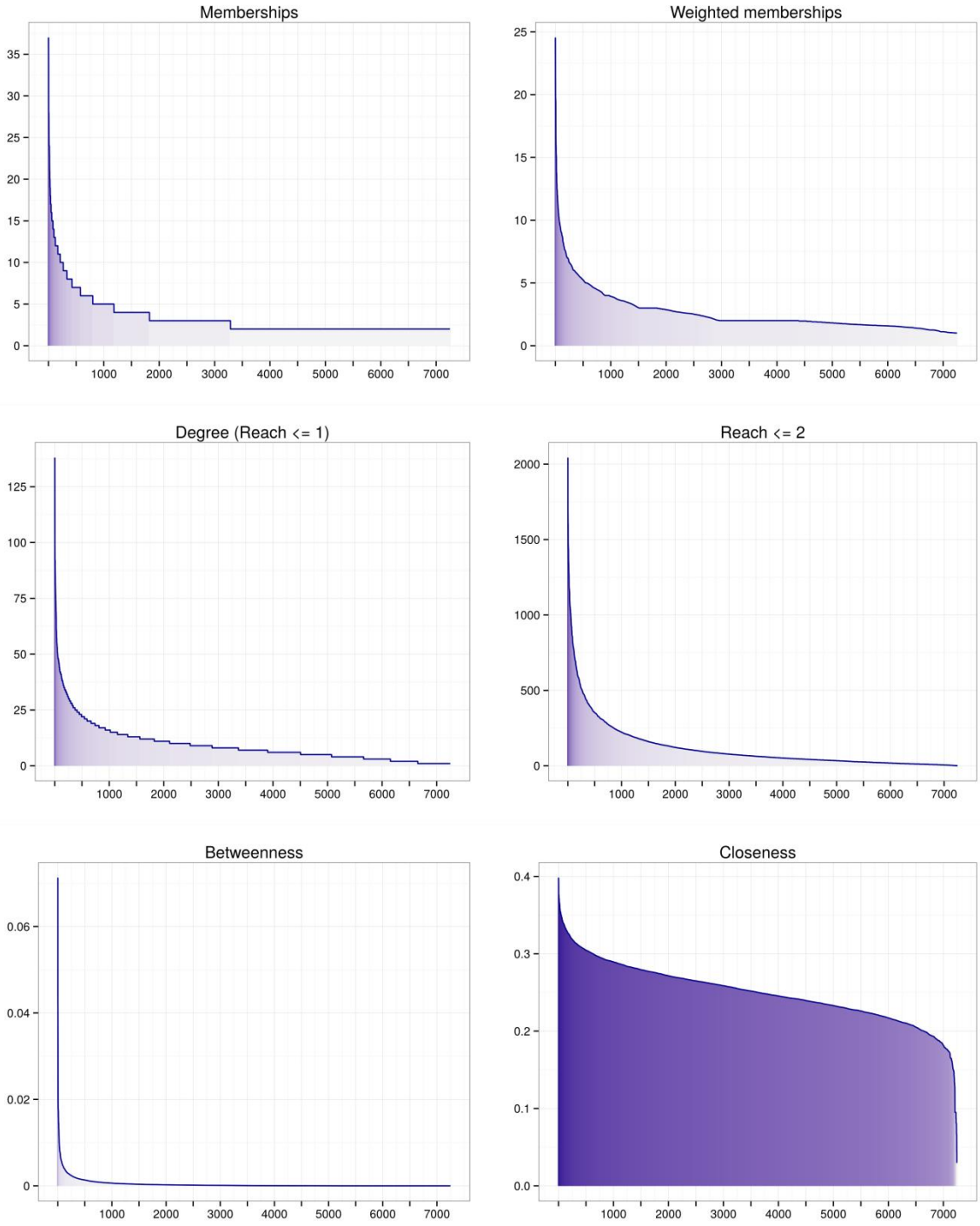
The network of the power elite

When looking at the elite network as a whole, the concentration of powerful positions in a perceived egalitarian country such as Denmark springs to mind. As mentioned above, there are 62,481 positions held by 37,750 different individuals in the dataset, meaning that the adult population has less than a 0.9% chance of being part of the elite network. In other words, members of the elite network constitute the network resource equivalent of the one per cent popularised by Thomas Piketty (2014). The general population have only a 0.016% chance of being among the linkers, those with two affiliations. Fewer than one in 10,000 are part of the core group, the power elite. However, even within this most central group there is an extremely unequal distribution of network resources, as seen in Figure 2. The number of affiliation memberships varies from eight to 37 for the 427 linkers with the most memberships, whereas the remaining 6,821 linkers have between two and seven affiliation memberships. Other measures of centrality confirm this trend of a very small group of around 500 individuals (even less when looking at the distribution of betweenness centrality) actually connecting the various parts of this network. The very small group characterized by high scores in betweenness

[7] The list of notable absentees was supplemented by a couple of interesting cases, the world-famous filmmaker Lars Von Trier and lawyer Knud Foldshack, who with 18 affiliation memberships ranked 8 with regard to weighted number of memberships in the entire network, and yet is not part of the power elite.

centrality suggests that position of brokers (cf. Burt 2004), or perhaps, rather, as trusted intermediaries, who is well integrated in both groups (cf. Vedres and Stark 2010), is very exclusive.

FIGURE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF CENTRALITY IN THE NETWORK OF LINKERS



Distribution of centrality measures in the network of 7,249 linkers. Note that the 30,501 who are not linkers would lead to graphs with an even clearer power law distribution.

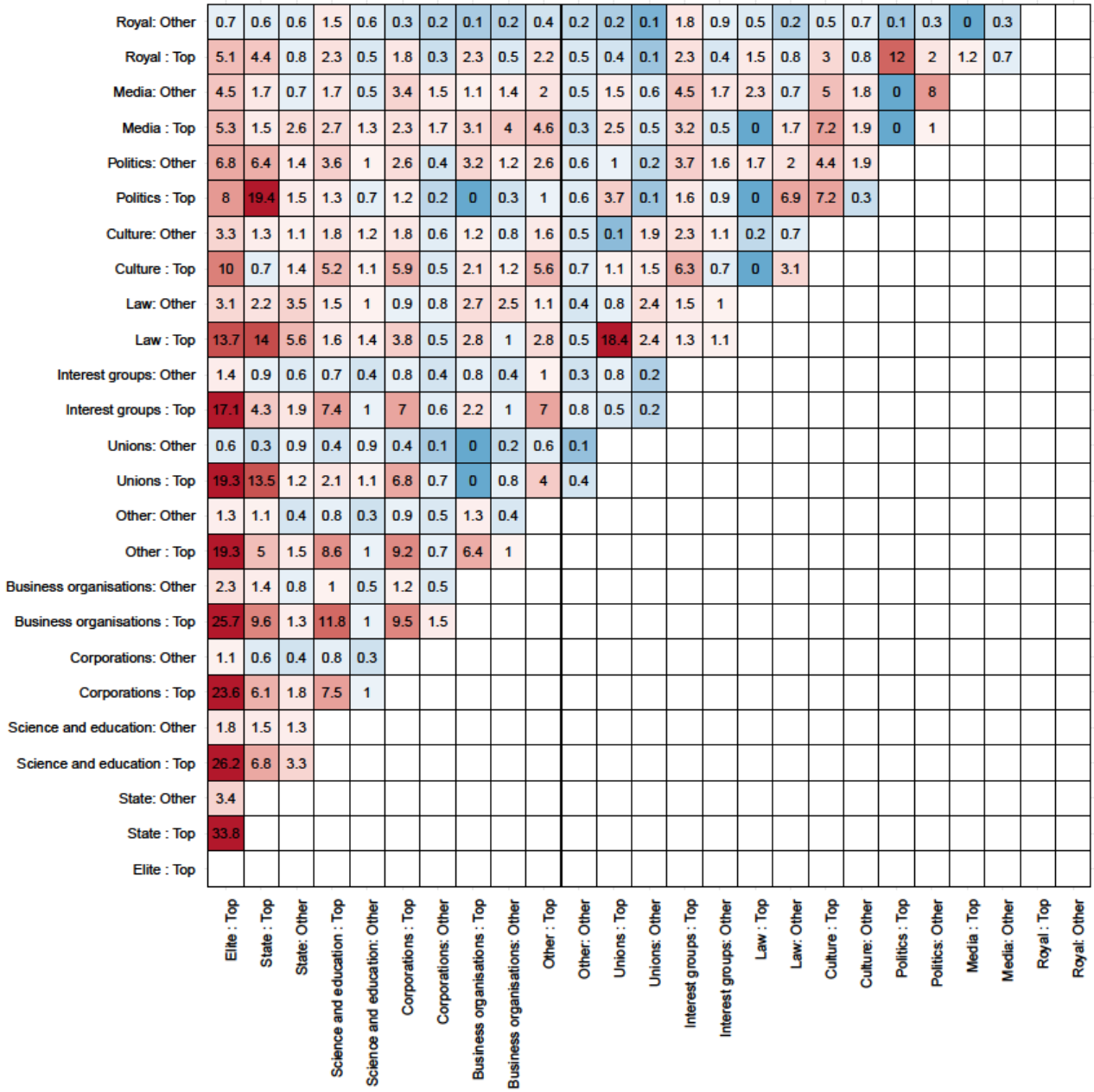
The concentration of network centrality is also found when looking at the networks of subsectors. When odds ratios of holding a central position in subsector networks are compared, individuals holding positions in the central affiliations within the network of each sector are much more likely to hold central positions in other networks as well (see Figure 3). In particular, holders of prominent positions in state, science and education, corporations, business organisations, interest groups and unions are much more likely to be members of the power elite, with odds ratios ranging from 17.1 to 33.8. The prominent participants of sector networks in law, culture, politics and media appear to have less, if still substantial, overlap with the power elite, with odds ratios between 5.3 and 13.7.

Not all holders of prominent positions in subsectors hold prominent positions in other subsectors because of the particular logics of some of these sectors, such as the exclusion of prominent union members holding positions in prominent business associations. Likewise, the networks of the political and juridical sectors are less open to other sectors. The associations between prominent positions in various sectors also reveal the overlap of prominence, particularly for three networks. All of the following have odds ratios above 5. First, the holders of prominent positions in corporations are much more likely to sit on prominent boards in networks of science and education, interest groups, culture and the state administration. Secondly, prominent members in the network of business associations are tied to science and education, state administration and perhaps not surprisingly, corporations. Thirdly, prominent positions in networks of unions are open for participation in other prominent networks, particularly law and state administration. Fourth, the association between the official power groups of Denmark is seen in the overlap between prominent royal and political positions with an odds ratio of 12. Note that these overlaps of prominence mean not only that prominent members meet on neutral ground in social clubs, which operate like networks, but also that prominent members from the other sectoral networks are invited into the most central boards within other sectors. In other words, if the dominant of one sector are invited to participate in another sector they are able to convert their capital in the most exclusive circles of another sector.

Figure 3 shows that the elite are massively overrepresented in all other sectors, with odds ratios up to 33. The elite as a group are strongly connected across all sectors and have a very strong preference for the most central affiliations within each sector. It seems the network has a structure with fairly unconnected sectors at a low level of centrality, with the vast majority of the affiliation members having only 1 position. But the most central affiliations in each sector are very likely to connect into the power elite and thereby connect with the rest of the network. The elite function as brokers between different

sectors or fields, but the brokers in the power elite are not recruited equally among the sectors in the network.

FIGURE 3: ODDS RATIOS OF SUBSECTOR CENTRALITY



The odds ratios of holding a position for the members of the top 20% most central affiliations in mutually exclusive subsector networks, compared to all other individuals in the power network. 'Other' denotes position in the less exclusive affiliations of the subsector networks.

TABLE 2: SECTOR AFFILIATION[1] OF THE 423 IN THE CORE OF THE NETWORK

Sector	Subsector	N		Percent	
Business		*184*		*44%*	
	Top 200[2]		74		18%
	Multiposition[3]		55		13%
	Investment and Pensions[4]		19		5%
	Medium-small[5]		36		9%
Interest groups		*100*		*24%*	
	Employers and Business Associations		37		9%
	Unions		49		13%
	Farming organisations[6]		11		3%
	Consumers		3		1%
State and Politics		*75*		*18%*	
	Politics		34		8%
	Public officials		30		7%
	Royal court[7]		11		3%
Science and Education		*52*		*12%*	
	University principals		10		2%
	Educational institution principals		8		2%
	Economists and political scientists[8]		15		4%
	Other scientists[8]		19		5%
Culture and Law		*12*		*3%*	
	Culture and charities[9]		4		1%
	Lawyers		8		2%
Entire core of the elite network		*423*	423	*100%*	100%

[1]: Sector affiliation is identified as the sector of the primary occupation, or latest former occupation of the each elite individual.
[2]: Chief executives in the 200 largest Danish corporations based on turnover. Of the 74, 46 are Chief Executive Officers.
[3]: Multiposition denotes businessmen now working as non-executive directors or board members in the corporate sector, but who may also have – and indeed usually do have – several board positions outside business in political committees, state institutions or charities.
[4]: Includes leaders of pension funds, hedge funds and investors of seed capital.
[5]: Chief Executive Officers of firms not in the top 200 according to turnover and not in Investment and Pensions. Several of these are also owners of their corporation and many have key elected non–full-time positions in Business Associations as well.
[6]: Includes farmers and landed aristocracy with only elected positions in the farming organisations.
[7]: Includes both the royal family and key employees of the court.
[8]: All are full professor or the equivalent on either a university or a key research institution.
[9]: Includes both leaders of cultural institutions, an art critic and two large philanthropists having inherited their fortune.

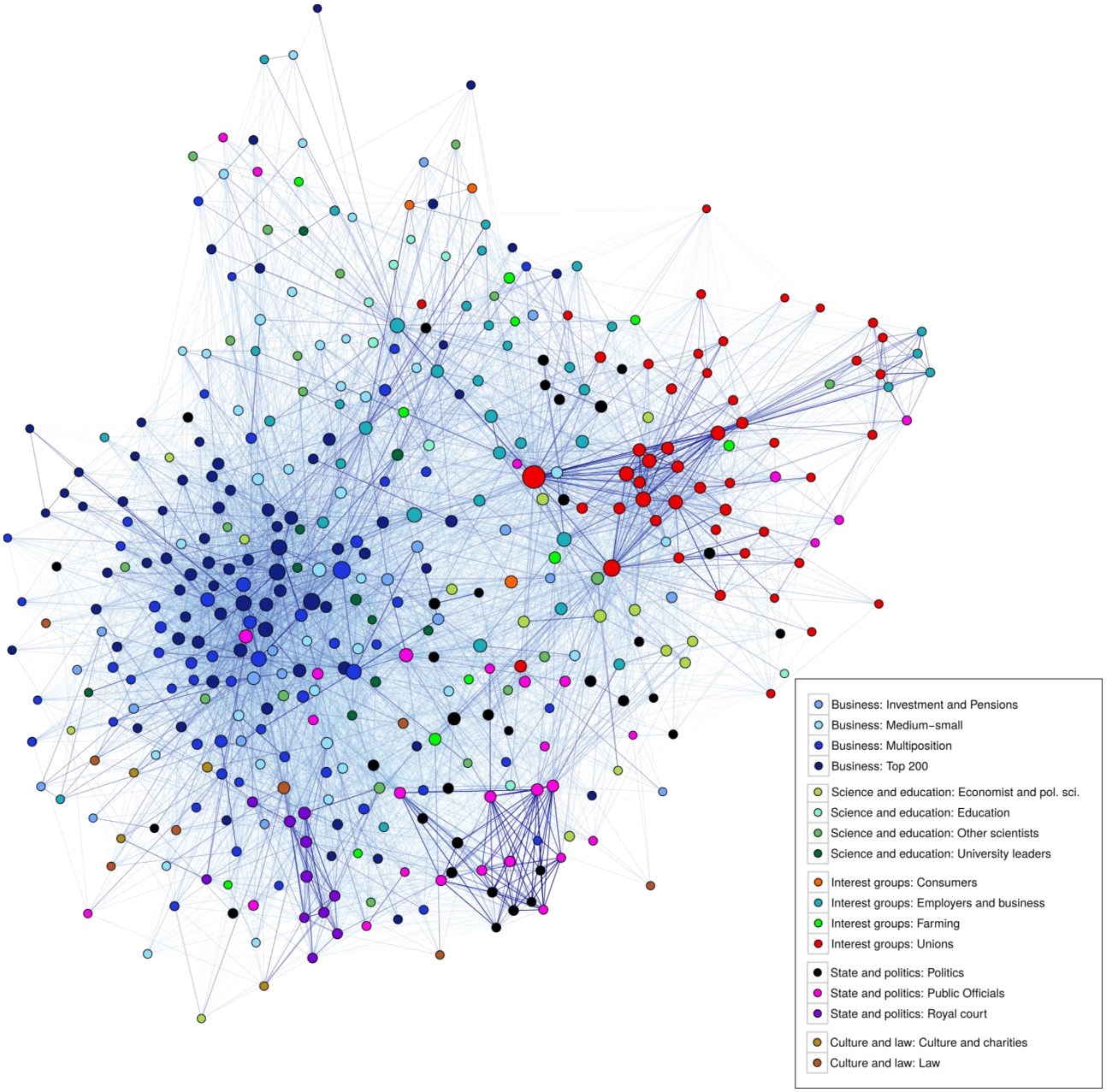
When looking at the composition of the power elite, one sector dominates (see Table 2). Of the members of the power elite, 44% have primary employment in the corporate sector. If the 9% 37 employed by business associations are added to the corporate sector they compose just over half of the power elite. But all actors of the collective bargaining agreements of the Danish labour market are present in the power elite, as 13% are union representatives. Furthermore, power elite members employed in state administration and politics, or in science and education, each compose between 18% and 12% of the power elite. Economists make up a substantial share of the scientist elite members. Economists are connected into the official organs that advise and regulate the labour market and the economy and therefore hold a strong position. On the other hand, leaders from social movements, such as the women's movement or the environmental movement, are absent, even though several had career trajectories through these movements. But the farmers' movement has a presence in the power elite. Culture and media are also sparingly represented. The elite are predominantly derived from the four core institutions that make up the Danish labour market system: the state, unions, employers' organisations and corporations. But even with this dominance they still have strong ties into the top level of the other sectors, as can be seen in Figure 3.

In spite of the overlap of networks between prominent members, some clustering tendencies of institutional orders in the network of the power elite can be seen in Figure 4. In particular, unions appear to be centred in the upper right hand corner, whereas business is located in the bottom left. Furthermore, the network of the royal family – all dark purple – form a clique near business in the bottom of Figure 4, whereas representatives of government and senior civil servants – in black and light purple – are located as another tightly knit clique at the right. If the positions of each institutional order are analysed separately, as shown in Figure 5, the role of business associations as intermediaries is generally located between business and unions. Other intermediaries appear to be scientists and politicians.

The clustering tendencies should not, however, be interpreted as cleavages within the network. When analysing the ties between overall institutional orders, and the number of internal ties, in a reduced graph (see Figure 6), it is clear that business in particular, of course because of its relative strength in size, has strong ties to all other institutional orders. Thus 14.5% of all ties that cross the institutional orders in the network go from business to science and education, 16.7% to state and politics, 11.9% to business associations, 3.9% to culture and law, but also 6.0% directly to union representatives. Relative to their size, unions also have strong ties to business associations while also being the institutional order

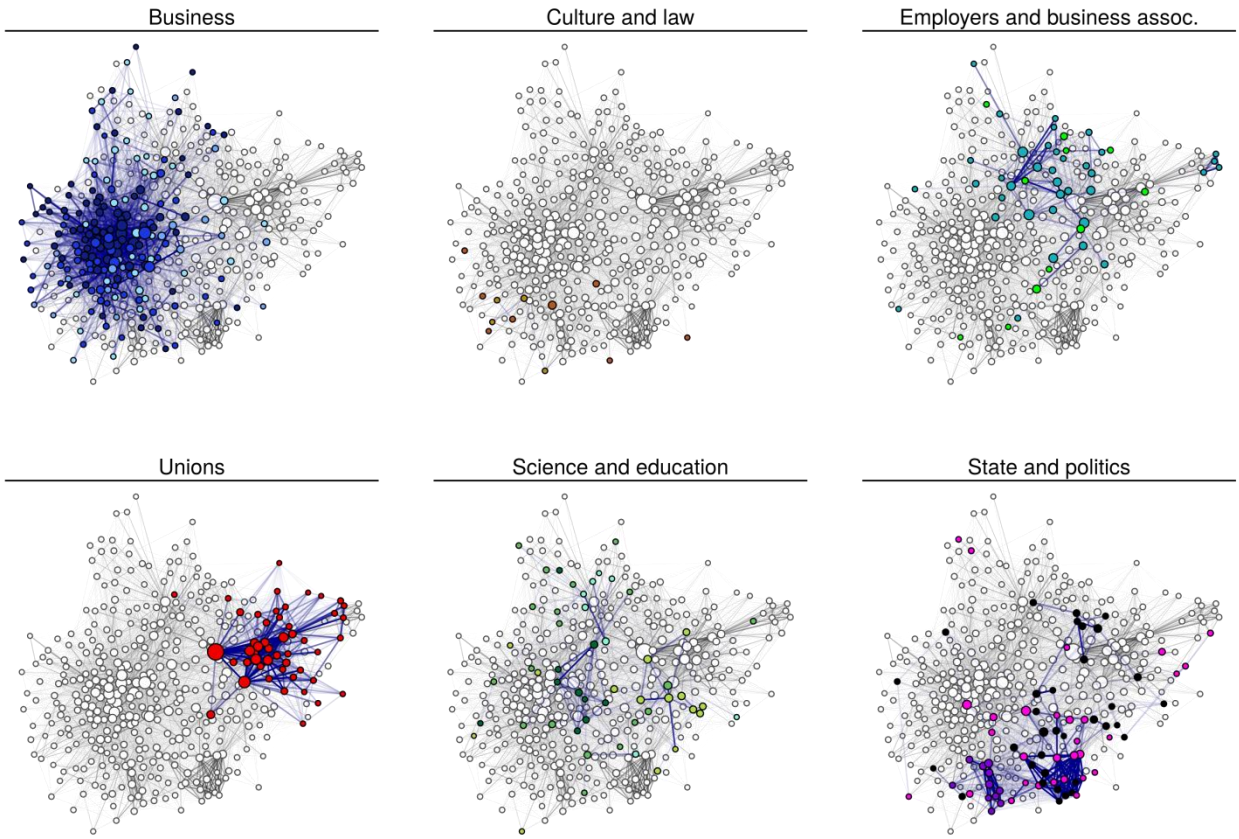
with the highest prevalence of internal ties. Rather than being a fragmented elite network, most institutional orders are strongly tied with the corporate sector at centre stage.

FIGURE 4: THE NETWORK IN THE POWER ELITE



Line intensity equals tie strength. Icon size equals their degree.

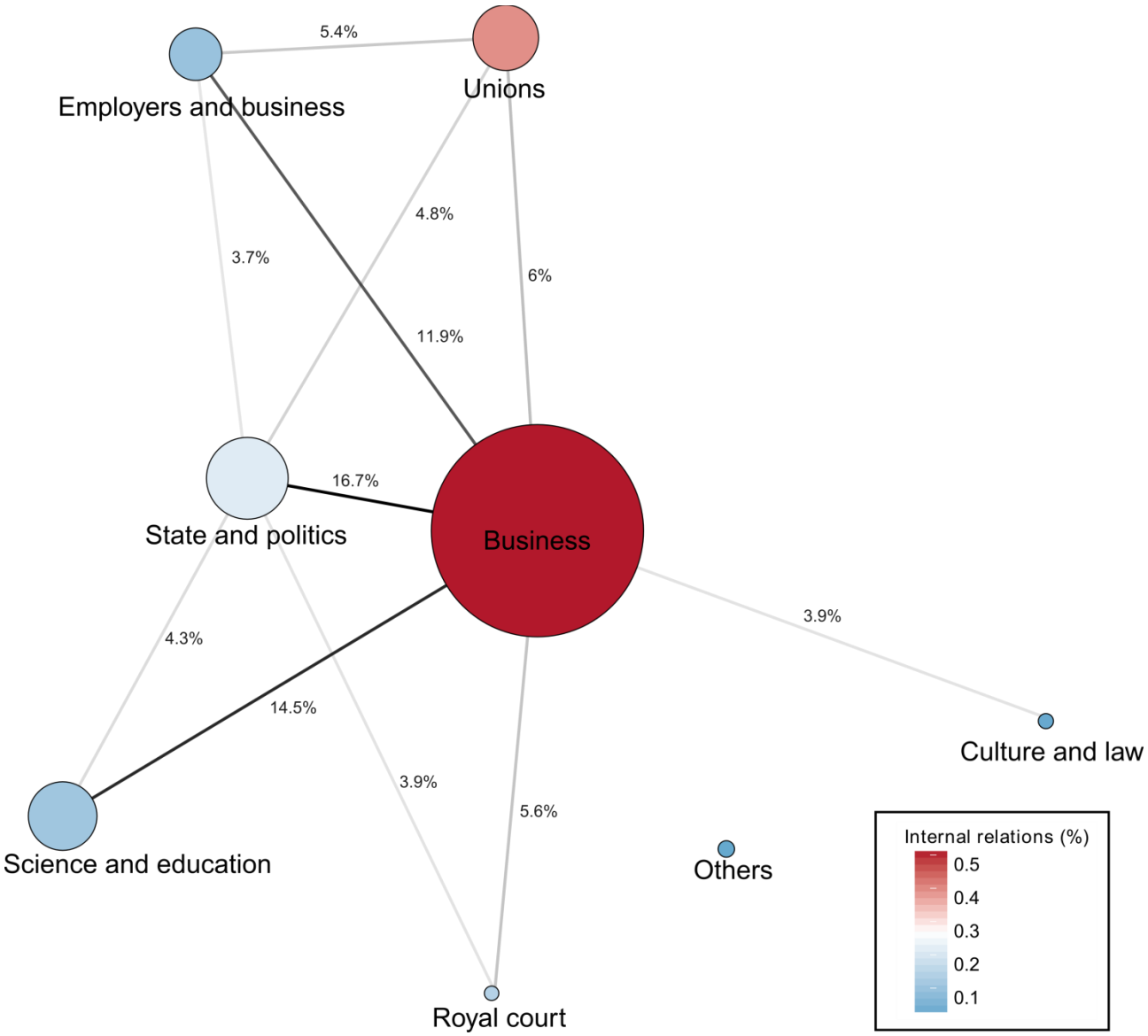
FIGURE 5: THE NETWORK OF SECTOR MEMBERS



Line intensity equals tie strength. Icon size equals their degree.

In the network of the power elite, it is clear that some institutional orders fraternise with others more frequently. However, unlike the results of the Swedish Power Study (Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1990), there are no clear sign of two rival groups competing for power, nor are there signs of the highly functionally differentiated pluralist elite described in the Danish Power Study (Christiansen and Togeby 2007). When looking at the members of the power elite, they include the majority of powerful individuals identified through a positional method, such as the Prime Minister, the Queen, top senior civil servants, leaders of the largest unions, management of the most important corporations, university principals and so on.

FIGURE 6: A REDUCED GRAPH OF NETWORK OF SECTOR EXCHANGES IN THE POWER ELITE



A reduced graph of the network of the power elite. Icon size denotes the number of individuals in each sector. Tie intensity and numbers are the share of the total amount of inter-sectoral ties in each tie. Ties containing below-average proportions have been removed. Color indicates the proportion of ties of sector members to members of the same sector. Note that calculations do not take sector size into account, as it is more informative to know the probability of, for example, businessman having ties to other businessmen, rather than that probability relative to the probability of other groups.

The key institutional orders and the division of labour of domination

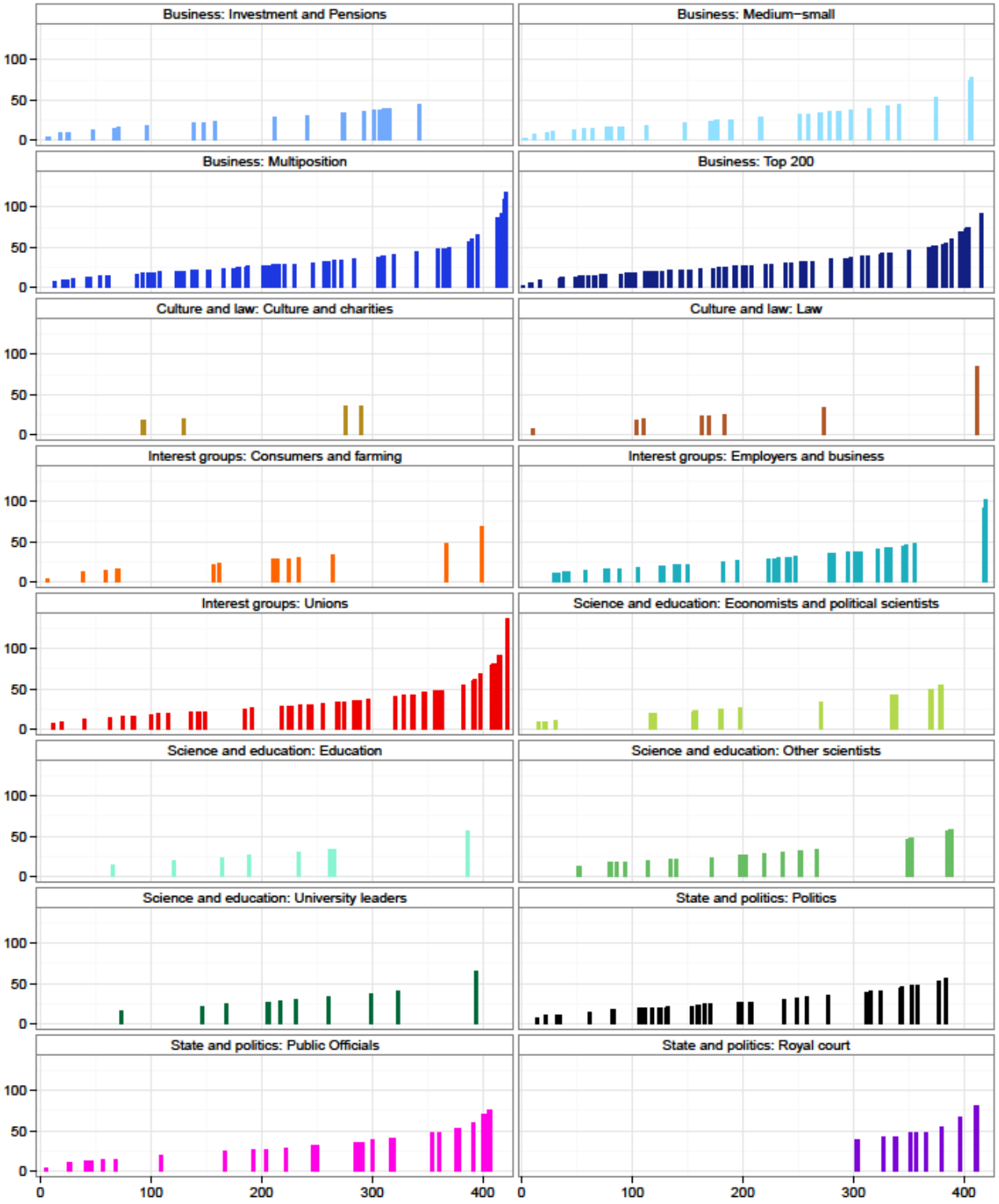
If we look at the organisations employing the elite members – the principal, but not the only, basis of the individuals' power according to Mills (1956:9) – we get a good grasp of the interests that are being

promoted in the networks of the power elite. Although some individuals may become part of the core of the elite network by virtue of their wealth, fame, family or friendship ties, the following analysis will show that most of these people are also leaders or play key roles in major organisations. But which organisations then have their leaders well-positioned with regard to network centrality?

Within the pillar of business, the largest organisations dominate. Of the elite individuals in the 200 largest Danish corporations (by turnover), 74 are executives, 39 of the 55 multipositionals have a board membership, and a further four have formerly held a management or board position. Adding to this, the multipositionals and top 200 executives are more often among the most central in the network of the power elite as measured by reach (see Figure 7). If executives from smaller businesses are part of the elite, they almost always also hold secondary positions in business associations. Smaller businesses have difficulty getting enough contacts and positions for their directors on their own and have to rely on the business associations. The three most central members from the business associations all represent the Confederation of Danish Industry. It is important to note that the votes of the member corporations in the two major business associations are proportionate to their total wages. The political strategy of these organisations are therefore often in line with the interests of the largest corporations. It appears that big business represent the corporate sector politically, as described by Michael Useem (1984), and dominate challengers politically, as suggested by Niel Fligstein (1996).

However, it is not just the size of the corporation that matters in terms of network centrality. Whereas owners, board members and CEOs of the largest Danish corporations are placed at the very top of the network as shown in Table 3 (e.g. Jørgen Mads Clausen, chairman, former CEO and owner of industrial firm Danfoss; CEO Thoman Hofmann-Bang of NKT, board member of security firm Falck, insurance company Codan, state-controlled DONG energy; industrial producers William Demant and Georg Jensen, Lars Nørby Johansen), others of equal fortune or firm size are excluded. Only 20% of the 20 wealthiest Danish families actually form part of the core. A major line of division with regard to network centrality appears to be the classic differences in status between the well-established bourgeoisie and the nouveau-riches (cf. Bourdieu 1996:181). This is seen in the case of notable absentee, the extremely rich owner of the commercial chain Jysk, Lars Kristinus Larsen, who holds a position only within his own corporation (see Figure 8 and Table 4). However, even among the families with old money, to achieve a sufficient amount of network centrality one must have taken part in the management of the corporation, as seen by the fact that Ane Uggla, the heir of and chairman of the foundation controlling by far the largest corporation in Denmark, A.P. Møller – Mærsk, is not part of the core of the elite. However, seven executive officers from Mærsk are among the 423 power elite

FIGURE 7: REACH BY INSTITUTIONAL ORDERS



Members of each sector according to their position in the distribution of reach within the network of the power elite.

members, along with a further three employed by Mærsk-owned or controlled corporation, ensuring that the interests of the corporation are heard across the power elite network. In short, the internal hierarchies of the economic field in Denmark favouring well-established owners and old industrial corporations (cf. Ellersgaard, Larsen, and Munk 2013; Larsen and Ellersgaard 2012) are also seen in the network dynamics of the corporate institutional order within the network of the power elite.

An interesting feature of the network is that several of the most central individuals – and in fact the most central individual in the network, President of the Union of Metalworkers, Thorkild E. Jensen – are union members (see Table 3). As seen in Figures 4, 5 and 6, union representatives in the network of the power elite are more tightly integrated than others. Furthermore, it appears that a few of these have a very high number of external contacts, with Thorkild E. Jensen (with the largest icon in Figures 4 and 5) spearheading the union block into the elite network. But why is Thorkild E. Jensen, then president of a union with around 115,000 members and thus only the fourth largest working class union, so central? Much of the answer probably lies in the position of the metalworkers in the collective bargaining system. As holder of the majority code in the confederation of industrial workers, and along with the Confederation of Danish Industry, the Union of Metalworkers, as the leaders of The Central Organisation of Industrial Employees in Denmark, negotiate the standard agreement, an agreement that all other collective bargaining agreements are not allowed to exceed (Ibsen 2013:113). In short, what corporate negotiators can make Thorkild E. Jensen agree upon, they can impose on the rest of the labour force.

By contrast, the leader of the third largest working class union (the Union of Public Sector Workers [FOA], representing approximately 190,000 unskilled and semi-skilled public sector manual workers), is notable absentee Dennis Kristensen, who is not even part of the power elite. Kristensen is infamous for his public popularity, media profile and tendency to report from closed meetings. However, Kristensen's charismatic challenge to power elite consensus coincides with a very different network profile than that of Thorkild E. Jensen (see Figure 8). Whereas Jensen's 28 memberships span prominent corporate boards, science and education, law, media, politics, and state administration, Kristensen's six memberships are in less prominent corporations, a single prominent state committee and unions. It is not enough to head up a powerful organisation and have strong potential for mobilisation to become member of the power elite. It is also necessary to accept the unwritten rules of negotiations and the legitimacy of the other power elite members. In short, one must participate in the division of labour of domination.

TABLE 3: DESCRIPTION AND CENTRALITY SCORE OF MOST CENTRAL INDIVIDUALS AND OTHER HOLDERS OF KEY POSITIONS

Name	Position	Gender	Member -ships	Degree	Closeness rank	Between-ness rank	Core -ness	Reach	Reach rank
		TOP 10 (REACH)							
Thorkild Engell Jensen	Leader, Union of Metalworkers	M	29	137	1	1	199	2042	1
Lars Nørby Johansen	Multipositional, Business	M	26	118	2	5	199	1885	2
Bente Sorgenfrey	Leader, Union of Public Sector Employees (FTF)	F	23	79	3	4	199	1699	3
Lars B. Goldschmidt	Director, Confederation of Danish Industry	M	24	102	4	3	199	1682	4
Jørgen Mads Clausen	Owner, Top 100 Corporation (Danfoss)	M	24	92	7	13	199	1606	5
Sten Scheibye	Multipositional, Business	M	24	110	6	6	199	1601	6
Thomas Hofman-Bang	CEO, Top 100 corporation (NKT)	M	16	74	5	20	199	1537	7
Peter Schütze	Multipositional, Business	M	22	87	8	9	199	1528	8
Kim Simonsen	Leader, Union of White Collar Workers (HK)	M	20	90	10	34	199	1475	9
Harald Børsting	Leader, Confederation of Danish Unions (LO)	M	17	81	11	125	199	1452	10
		OTHER HOLDERS OF KEY POSITIONS IN THE POWER ELITE							
Jens Oddershede	Principal, University (SDU)	M	16	66	15	11	199	1338	16
Henrik Wedell-Wedellsborg	Lawyer	M	23	85	33	8	199	1160	29
Peter Gæmelke	Former Chairman of Danish Agriculture & Food Council	M	15	48	71	21	199	949	62
Dronning Margrethe	Queen	F	34	47	95	87	199	808	93
David Hellemann	Permanent Secretary, Treasury	M	15	53	104	176	199	786	103
Merete Helene Eldrup	CEO, TV2 Media	F	10	34	213	286	199	590	188
Helle Thorning-Schmidt	Prime Minister	F	20	45	192	175	199	575	207
Poul Erik Tøjner	Director, Louisiana Art Museum	M	7	20	301	526	199	509	254

TABLE 4: DESCRIPTION AND CENTRALITY SCORE OF NOTABLE ABSENTEES

Name	Position	Gender	Member -ships	Degree	Closeness rank	Between-ness rank	Core -ness	Reach	Reach rank
	NOTABLE ABSENTEES								
Peter Skov-Jakobsen	Bishop	M	16	38	437	73	193	467	305
Morten Bødskov	Secretary of Justice	M	13	40	376	2303	198	446	327
Ingrid Stage	Leader, Union of Academics in Humanities (DM)	F	13	30	312	83	198	394	410
Knud Foldschack	Lawyer	M	18	31	557	148	168	393	414
Dennis D. Kristensen	Leader, Union of Public Sector Workers (FOA)	M	6	30	547	399	198	390	421
Børge Dahl	President of the Supreme Court	M	13	15	745	422	173	233	938
Maria Rørbye Rønn	CEO, DR Media	F	5	5	805	2104	179	211	1066
Ane Mærsk Mc-Kinney Uggla	Heir to Corporation (A.P. Møller – Mærsk)	F	6	10	1107	3526	179	171	1400
Eelco van Heel	CEO, Top 100 Corporation (Rockwool)	M	3	7	1470	6585	158	175	1366
Pia Merete Kjærsgaard	Chairman, Danish Peoples Party	F	9	14	2476	3470	99	105	2308
Jesper Lien	CEO, Top 100 Corporation (Coop)	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lars Kristinus Larsen	Owner, Top 100 Corporation (Jysk)	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ole Wæver	Professor, Political Science	M	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lars Von Trier	Film Director	M	0	-	-	-	-	-	-

Among politicians there is a clear divide between members of parliament and those politicians with current or former positions in government or local administrations. The most central politician is actually capital Mayor Frank Jensen of the Social Democrats. In fact, 13 out of 34 politicians are from local or regional administration. Not all government secretaries are part of the power elite. However, the ministries responsible for the economy, labour market, education and foreign relations are all included, as are the permanent secretaries of these ministries. The Prime Minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, who spends much of her time outside the networks of the power elite in Denmark working on foreign relations, is tellingly ranked only 207 for reach in the network of linkers. She is still part of the elite, but is placed at the periphery along with the rest of the government (see Figure 4). Again, the lower network centrality of the Prime Minister does not necessarily mean that she is less powerful than the mayor of Copenhagen, but her political power appears to be tied less formally to other forms of power than that of the mayor, limiting her venues. Another member of Cabinet, Morten Bødskov, the Secretary of Justice – historically a prestigious position, but located outside the regulation of the labour market due to the strength of the collective bargaining system – is one of those who just misses out on being part of the power elite. The boundaries of the outermost fringes of the power elite, following Mills (1956:290) are less stable than the core, meaning Bødskov could just as easily have been at the periphery of the power elite network as outside it. However, several members of government (e.g. the Secretary of Health, Astrid Kragh, ranked 703 according to reach) are quite far from joining the circles of the power elite.

The most telling case of the difficulties of transferring political capital in network centrality in the power elite is seen in the peripheral position of the leader of the third largest political party, the populist Danish People's Party, Pia Kjærsgaard. Kjærsgaard is ranked only 2,307 for reach in the network of linkers and only holds positions in parliament and at official royal events. This also shows that the restraint of certain fields (e.g. the political field), where the risk of being regarded as guilty by association is bigger, may change the willingness to participate in the more formalised parts of elite network studied here. The relative weakness of the institutional hierarchy of politics could be explained by politicians refraining from participating because it would put them at risk within their own field. However, upon leaving politics, several members of government have not been able to use the revolving door into the top of other institutional hierarchies but have had to settle for positions as lower level lobbyists. The value of political capital in Denmark should not be overestimated.

FIGURE 8: NETWORK PROFILES OF MOST CENTRAL AND NOTABLE ABSENTEES

Network profiles of the most central individuals, other holders of key positions and notable absentees (see Table 3). 'Top affiliations' denotes holding positions in the top 20% most central affiliations in mutually exclusive subsector networks. 'Other affiliations' denotes position in the less exclusive affiliations of the subsector networks.

As with political capital, the power to mobilise civic society behind the climate or environmental cause, on social policy or gender equality, is not enough be become part of the power elite. Of the interest groups not tied to organised labour or corporate interests, only 14 are part of the elite. Of these, 11 are closely tied to the interests of the agricultural industry and the original rural challengers to the incumbent elite. However, since the rural challenge, farmers have joined forces with the landed

aristocracy, so that three of the 11 representatives of interests groups of farmers are also part of the Danish nobility. The only other interest group that has gained access to the power elite is the state-subsidised Council of Consumers, which has three directors in the network of the power elite. Other social movements remain at the middle levels. They may be taken into account in matters regarding their specific area of interests but are not allowed to impose their concerns on other issues that may have indirect consequences on their issue of concern. The key actors of the social reforms and institutionalised bargaining system from the start of the twentieth century are still the only representatives of civil society with network centrality high enough to enter the circles of the power elite.

Three other institutional orders traditionally regarded as central in liberal democracies – law and culture – also have marginal positions in the network of the power elite. Tellingly, the president of the Supreme Court, Børge Dahl, is ranked only 938 for reach in the network of linkers. Of the eight lawyers in the power elite, the most central, Henrik Wedell-Wedellsborg, ranked 29 and lawyer for Her Majesty the Queen, is part of the Danish nobility and has many ties to the haute bourgeoisie. The representatives of the cultural field who have sufficient network centrality to enter the power elite mostly head up large institutions. One such is Poul Erik Tøjner, ranked 254 and Director of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art while also holding positions in the foundations of the royal family and in the largest publisher, Gyldendal. No artists or architects are part of the power elite. Internationally renowned filmmaker Lars von Trier has no position in the network. This shows how holders of very high amounts of field-specific cultural capital are not necessarily able to convert their capital in the networks of the power elite. If anyone within the realm of culture is allowed into the circles of the power elite, it is the administrators and leaders of well-established bourgeois culture.

The position of media resembles that of culture. Only two members of the power elite hold media positions: the CEO of the state-owned commercial broadcaster TV2 and former civil servant Merete Eldrup, ranked 188; and the CEO of the media house responsible for publishing three of the highest circulated Danish newspapers, Lars Henrik Munch, ranked 137; hence, they belong to the large group of chief executives of the top 200 corporations. Both hold other corporate board positions, for example in the financial sector. No journalists or editors-in-chief manage to enter the core of the elite network, although several editors are quite close. Even the newly appointed Secretary-General of the national broadcaster DR – Maria Rørbye Rønn, ranked 1066 - is not part of the power elite. Like the political field, this lack of formal integration could be the product of a negative inclination within the journalistic field towards socialising with the powerful. However, it could also imply that the media are

of less importance – something to be handled by subordinates – to the core members of the power elite.

Unlike culture, law and media, the institutional order of academia seems to play a significant role in the Danish power elite. All principals of the eight Danish universities are members of the elite, along with several principals of university colleges and technical colleges. But 34 scientists are also part of the elite, with 44% coming from the field of economics. As formal counsellors of government, these economists are tied to leaders from unions and the corporate sector, which underlines that when it comes to political influence of the social sciences, the economic profession has taken centre stage (cf. Chwieroth 2007; Fourcade, Ollion, and Algan 2015; Lebaron 2003, 2008). However, the number of natural scientists tied to the power elite through foundations, and also tied by smaller entrepreneurial firms, indicates that collaborations within academic capitalism (cf. Slaughter and Leslie 1997) could tie the academic and the corporate order closer together (see Figure 6). This also means that the parts of academia that are most relevant for the corporate sector– economists, natural and particularly technical scientists – can exchange their specific form of academic capital in the field of power, whereas faculties of arts or humanities remain excluded from the circles of power as artists or journalists. One example of this could be the highly renowned political scientist Ole Wæver, one of the key architects behind the Copenhagen School of International Relations, who only holds one position in the entire power network. Academic prestige alone does not lead to network centrality. To become part of the power elite, one must have relevance for the establishment of the economic order.

The elevated elite – cohesion of the organised minority

When looking at the members of the power elite, one thing comes to mind – they look very much alike. Dressed in suits – no matter which institutional order they adhere to, with the scientists as the most likely exception – the core of the elite network are very often middle-aged white men. As seen in Table 5, fewer than one in five of the power elite members are women and only a fourth are under 50 years of age, with only nine individuals under 40. Furthermore, only a single member of the power elite – 37-year-old Soulaima Gourani, of mixed Moroccan and Danish descent – is not white, and only 10 were born outside Denmark, half of these to Danish parents. As Zweigenhaft and Domhoff (1998) argue, the cohesion of the power elite is thus further strengthened by their homogeneity. Even though 10 members of the power elite live abroad, active participation and presence in Danish society appears to be a prerequisite to enter the core of the power network. Although some sectors are more open towards women, particularly unions (46% women) and science and education (27% women), men

remain the majority in all sectors. In spite of a universal welfare system, government-provided child and health care access to education and the efforts of suffragist and feminists that has existed for many decades, the contemporary Danish power elite bear a striking resemblance to power elites of the past.

TABLE 5: DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE POWER ELITE

	N	PERCENT
Gender		
Female	82	19.4%
Male	341	80.6%
Age		
Less than 40 years	9	2.1%
40-49 years	87	20.6%
50-59 years	144	34.0%
60-69 years	129	30.5%
At least 70 years	16	3.8%
Unknown	38	9.0%
Place of birth		
Copenhagen	94	22.2%
Upper class Copenhagen suburbs	26	6.1%
Other Copenhagen suburbs	25	5.9%
Major provincial cities (+100,000 inhabitants)	51	12.1%
Medium provincial cities (25-100,000 inhabitants)	58	13.7%
Minor provincial cities (10-25,000 inhabitants)	33	7.8%
Tiny provincial cities (3-10,000 inhabitants)	25	5.9%
Rural (less than 3,000 inhabitants)	39	9.2%
Abroad	10	2.4%
Unknown	72	17.0%
Area of living		
Central Copenhagen	89	21.0%
Copenhagen upper class suburbs	132	31.0%
Copenhagen middle class suburbs	48	11.0%
Copenhagen working class suburbs	21	5.0%
Major provincial city (+100,000 inhabitants)	29	7.0%
Medium provincial city (25-100,000 inhabitants)	29	7.0%
Minor provincial city (10-25,000 inhabitants)	11	3.0%
Tiny provincial city (3-10,000 inhabitants)	17	4.0%
Rural (less than 3,000 inhabitants	22	5.0%
Abroad	10	2.0%
Unknown	15	4.0%
Total	423	100%

The homogeneity of the power elite is further strengthened by shared educational backgrounds. As seen in Table 6, almost seven out of ten power elite members have a university degree. However, only 24 have attended the less prestigious Universities of Southern Denmark, Aalborg and Roskilde, whereas

249 out of the 296 with at least a higher degree have attended the two oldest universities in Denmark - the universities of Copenhagen and Aarhus – or the Technical University of Denmark or the Copenhagen Business School. Not only does it seem that access to the power elite is eased by enrolling in a high status university, but a few select programs of these universities dominate, with almost half of the members of the power elite (196 of the 423) having followed just eight programs. These are: economics (56 and 18); the law (38 and 10) or political science programs (13 and 22) of the University of Copenhagen or Aarhus University, business from Copenhagen Business School (32), or engineering at Technical University of Denmark (29). This highlights that few epistemic communities (cf. Haas 1992) tied to the professions (Abbott 2005) and international fields of expertise tied to economy and law (cf. Dezalay and Garth 2002; Lebaron 2003) are able to hold a central position in the power elite. However, since the late 1970s when admission criteria were first introduced in Danish higher education, only the political science programs have been among the top 25 programs according to the grade-point average required for entry. These institutions do not exist solely for those with the highest grades, even if most of them primarily recruit students from the dominant part of the social space (Thomsen 2012). Furthermore, the programs in law, engineering and business in particular enroll thousands of students each year. Although a background in these programs most certainly appear to be an import prerequisite, it is certainly not in itself enough to enter the circles of the power elite.

As seen in Table 7, almost a third of the power elite members come from a very privileged background in the upper classes. Furthermore, more than one in seven have parents who are mentioned among the 8,000 in *Kraks Blå Bog*, the Danish equivalent of *Who's Who*. Not only are a substantive majority from the absolute top of society, but only 6% have a known background in the working classes, which at the time of birth of most power elite members composed at least four-fifths of society. Becoming a member of the power elite is difficult for the children of the working class. If we make an imprecise odds ratio calculation we see that children of parents mentioned in *Who's Who* are more than 1,000 times more likely to become members of the power elite than working class children. Even in one of the most egalitarian welfare states in the world, a head start is paramount.

Some parts of the elite, however, are less closed than others. Unions – with the highest proportion coming from the working class in spite of almost two-thirds of their background unknown, and the only sector with no upper class recruits – are opposed to business and state and politics in particular, where 38% and 32% of known social background are from the upper class. Furthermore, at least 18 of the 38 businessmen or charity chairmen with parents in a managerial position were also part of the family controlling the corporation, most having inherited their current role. Adding to this, the five

members of the royal family also owe much of their position to the privileges of their family or in-laws, as do four of the eight children of landowners who, in addition to their positions in the farming organisation, still control the family estate.

TABLE 6: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE POWER ELITE

	N	PERCENT
Highest Qualification		
Doctorate	57	13.5%
Higher degree	239	56.5%
First degree	54	12.8%
Professional only	56	13.2%
None	5	1.2%
Unknown	12	2.8%
Education Type		
Economy	81	19.1%
Business	57	13.5%
Law	50	11.8%
Engineering	47	11.1%
Natural Science	37	8.7%
Political Science	36	8.5%
Humanities[1]	25	5.9%
Teachers, Nurses	15	3.5%
Trainee	16	3.8%
Vocational	32	7.6%
None	5	1.2%
Unknown	12	2.8%
Educational Institution		
University of Copenhagen	137	32.4%
Aarhus University	70	16.5%
Technical University of Denmark	29	6.9%
Copenhagen Business School	34	8.0%
Other Danish University	24	5.7%
Foreign University	7	1.7%
Other, None or Unknown	122	28.8%
Total	423	100%

[1]: Includes Arts and soft Social Sciences

Although the upper class appears to be well represented, there are only weak indications that elite boarding schools or high schools are important institutions for elite reproduction. The three most-attended high schools are all public and in the same northern upper-class Copenhagen suburbs. Øregaard Gymnasium has nine, Holte Gymnasium has seven and Rungsted Statsskole has six alumni,

TABLE 7: SOCIAL ORIGIN OF THE POWER ELITE[1]

	N	PERCENT	OR[2]
Upper Class	*99*	*23%*	*46.9*
Manager	46	11%	
Politician[3]	13	3%	
Principals, professors and leading doctors	13	3%	
Senior civil servant[4]	12	3%	
Landowner	9	2%	
Royalty	3	1%	
Supreme Court lawyer	3	1%	
Upper Middle Class	*97*	*23%*	*8.7*
Junior Manager	44	10%	
Professions	19	5%	
Engineer	16	4%	
Academics	14	3%	
Military officer	4	1%	
Lower Middle Class	*90*	*21%*	*2.7*
Small businessman or self-employed[5]	43	10%	
Farmers[5]	19	5%	
White collar or clerks	10	2%	
Teacher	8	2%	
Small farmers	4	1%	
Salesmen	4	1%	
Foreman	2	0%	
Working Class	*24*	*6%*	*0.1*
Skilled worker	12	3%	
Unskilled worker	12	3%	
Unknown	*113*	*27%*	-
Total	*423*	*100%*	-
Indication of Parent in Who's Who	*63*	*15%*	*80.2*

[1]: Class of origin is defined through self-reported description either in *Who's Who* or biographical articles. Since these are often just mentioned by title, their categorisation is somewhat inaccurate. To estimate odds ratios of entering the elite from different classes, social background has been coded in three classes with known occurrence in the parental generation of the power elite, c. 1955 (see Hansen 1964) – Upper Middle Class (5%), Lower Middle Class (14%) and Skilled and Unskilled Workers (81%). Furthermore, indicators of top positions, e.g. as Corporation Owner or Manager, Member of Parliament, or University Professors – position elevating one at least to the most resourceful 1% of society – have been distinguished in the 'Upper Class'.

[2]: Odds ratios are calculated using only the proportion of known social backgrounds against the proportions of the entire population mentioned above. There are approximately 8,000 biographies in *Who's Who*. As these span at least two generations, probably no more than 4,000 individuals in each generation have parents mentioned in *Who's Who*. If the power elite are seen as belonging to a single generation – or one-third of the population of 5,500,000 inhabitants – the probability within this generation of having parents mentioned in *Who's Who* is around 0.0022. Because of the reliability of sources and estimations in the calculations, the odds ratios should be interpreted cautiously.

[3]: Includes one union leader of the National Teachers Associations

[4]: Includes one bishop and one high-ranking military officer.

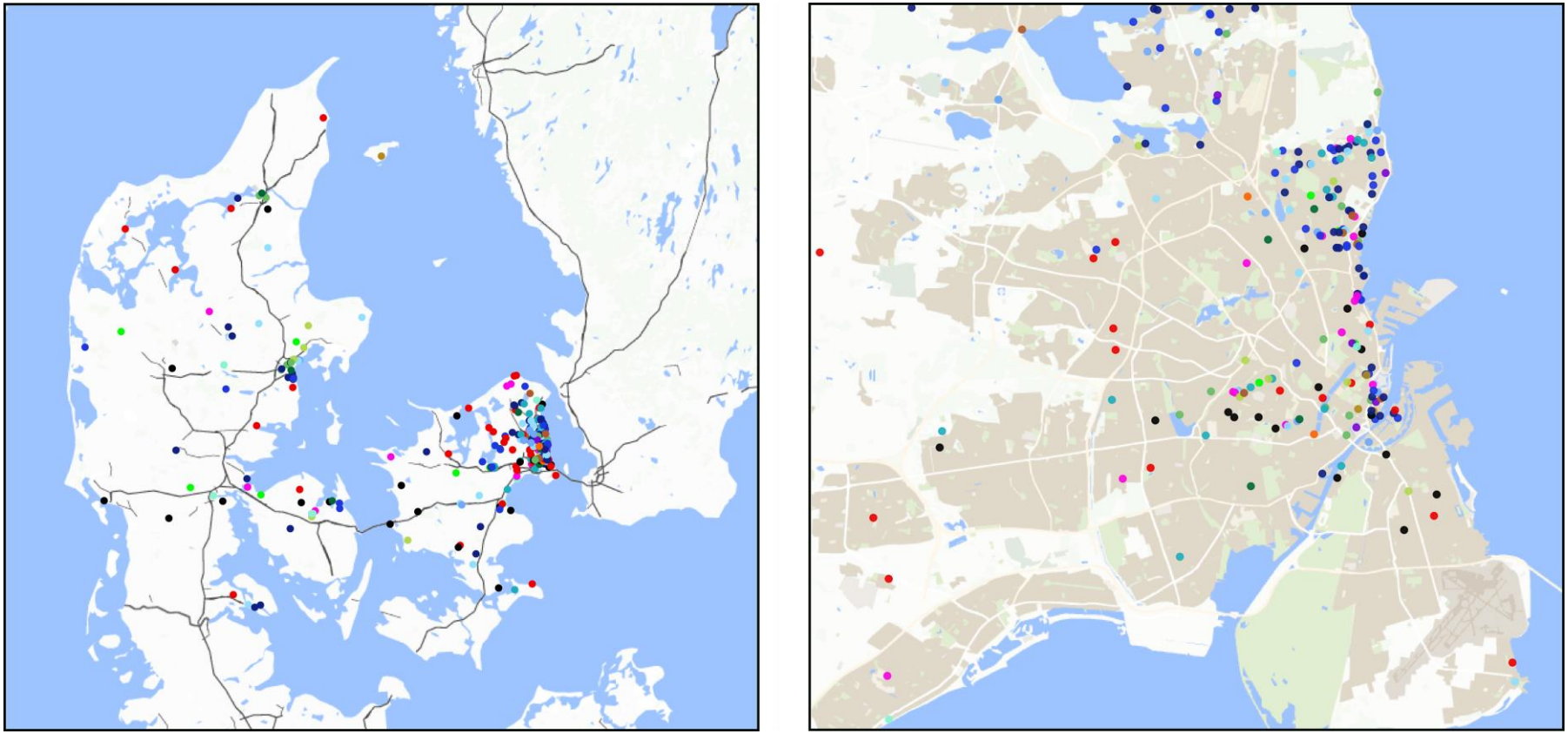
[5]: Many farmers and small businessmen may actually, depending on their number om employees, be part of the upper middle class.

or just over five per cent of all members of the power elite. This is because the majority of the elite are not born in Copenhagen. With around one-fourth of the population living in the Copenhagen area in 1960 and 41% of the power elite born here, the power elite are certainly more often raised in the capital but in no way to the same extent as in the upper classes.

Although the birthplace of the elite may be somewhat dispersed, the living patterns are not. Two-thirds (66%) live in Copenhagen or Copenhagen suburbs, with almost half of these concentrated in the up-scale northern Copenhagen area. As seen in Figure 9, not only are the elite concentrated in certain areas, but other areas of Copenhagen, particularly the working-class western and south-western suburbs, are almost completely no-go, especially for the business elite. Furthermore, rural areas are also avoided by members of the power elite, especially those far from the three major provincial cities, notably the southern islands and the south, west and north of the Jutland peninsula. By zooming even further in we see that the power elite cluster around certain streets. Even within the same posh area we find clear patterns. It seems important to live on the 'right side of the tracks'. This is seen by the divide across the major highway north of Copenhagen with the elite clustered along the coastline.

The Danish power elite thus conform to the image of middle-aged white men. Furthermore, their homogeneity is strengthened by shared educational credentials and social background. Adding to this, a majority of the elite share very distinct housing patterns. Although there are differences in the social profile of the elite members, especially between unions and business, as a group they are quite homogeneous.

FIGURE 9: RESIDENCES OF THE POWER ELITE



Known Danish residences in the entire country and the Copenhagen area for 398 of the 423 power elite members. Colors denote sector affiliation (see Figure 4).

The limits of the power elite

The power elite are the by far the most well-connected group of people in Denmark, but this does not mean it includes only powerful individuals and organisations. More importantly, the network dominance of the power elite tells little about the efficiency of its influence. The Danish elite and Danish society are embedded in global structures, of which Denmark is a very small part. Even within Denmark there are forms of power that differ from those present in the elite networks, which may challenge and limit the influence of the power elite. These can be social movements, media and extreme wealth.

With the growing importance of the European Union, a great number of 'the decisions having major consequences' (cf. Mills 1956:4) on issues such as monetary politics or environmental and import regulation are taken outside the power networks of Denmark. Top Danish politicians and bureaucrats may be heard, but also constitute a tiny minority of the interests that must be taken into account. Furthermore, within the post-Fordist workfare states (Jessop 1993), the politics of corporate taxation and working conditions are restricted by a competition between states that take part in a race to the bottom. Cross-national comparisons by international organisations such as the OECD on both primary and higher education have countries changing policies to perform better in these rankings. These and many other factors reduce the influence of national elites, and as a result, some elite members look to the international scene for influence.

This internationalisation could lead to a disruption in the national power networks. Recent studies have shown both the fracturing of national corporate networks, either from the growing influence of foreign capital as in Switzerland (Bühlmann, David, and Mach 2013) or The Netherlands (Heemskerk and Fennema 2009), or as product of the lack of need for class action in the US (Mizruchi 2013). At the same time, a rise in both trans-European (Heemskerk 2013) and global interlocks (Carroll 2003, 2009; Carroll and Sapinski 2010) underlines that new transnational alliances are being forged. Only a few Danes take part in the major, informal transnational network and most of the participants here are also present or past members of the Danish power elite.

Not all forms of power need to be connected, though. As argued by Jeffery Winters (2011), holders of extreme wealth may simply use intermediaries to exercise their influence or wealth defence. Thus, the members of the power elite do not need to be the actual holders of power resources, but their representatives. However, they are likely to be tied to the same sector as the oligarchs they represent. Others may not be interested in converting their capital, simply because they have a greater *illusio* (cf.

Bourdieu 1996:3) for their particular field than to achieve dominance within society at large. This could be the case for artists such as Lars von Trier or scientists like Ole Wæver, both internationally renowned within their field. Some may have a potential for converting their capital, but lack any interest in doing so. Often this could also be explained by the fact that the low conversion rate would lead to being seen as a sell-out or as corrupted, without gaining a much more central position in the network of the power elite. The fact that no former or current artists are part of the core of the power elite suggests that either all artists are disinterested in participating in power networks or that the possibilities of conversion are in fact minimal.

Although interaction and network relations are of great importance, much insight can be gained by analysing the structural oppositions that can be identified within a Bourdieusian framework through multiple correspondence analysis (cf. De Nooy 2003). By using social background, educational profiles and career trajectories as indicators of the forms of capital structuring the field of power, the 'objective' relations can be identified, but this requires an even more elaborate prosopographical database on the members of power elite to yield valid results. Furthermore, in studying the integration of the power elite, it should be kept in mind that the elite network is also tied through former connections, informal ties, links through marriage and family, and career movements between sectors. Although this simply means that the level of integration is underestimated, it can also lead to an underestimation of the level of integration into the core of the power elite by groups tied primarily through these less formal connections.

It may be argued that the implications of being integrated into this group are theoretically debatable. For instance, the proposed correlation between network centrality and the power of an individual could be deemed controversial. It could be argued that an individual could have vast influence without being central or even integrated into the elite network. Even with this reservation in mind, the empirically identified core of 423 individuals still constitute a highly integrated social group involving a large proportion of positions in Danish society. The composition of this group is interesting to cross-national comparisons, even if it one argues that it does not contain all theoretically relevant elite individuals. Will the further developments of welfare-state retrenchment and neoliberal reforms in, for example, the UK or the US, be reflected in a different composition of the core of the elite? Will the role of the state differ in highly centralised countries such as France? And how about countries where oligarchs dominate, such as Italy under Berlusconi, Russia under Putin or Ukraine under Yanukovych (for more the last case, see Kostiuchenko 2011, 2012). These questions can be illuminated by cross-national comparison of elite network cores.

Concluding remarks: The cohesive power elite in the welfare state

Even in Denmark, one of the exemplary cases of an egalitarian society, there is a vast difference in centrality, even within the 1% of Danes holding a position in the power network. Furthermore, central positions in one sector of this network also lead to central positions in the networks of other sectors. However, the primary brokers between these sectoral networks are a small, exclusive group. This power elite of 423 individuals can be identified in the core of the elite network. Judging by the occupation of core members, the strong position of business and business associations –52% of the power elite – implies that controllers of economic power are the dominant institutional order, even in a Scandinavian welfare state. Even if labour unions still hold a place, they are outnumbered and their most central representatives have adopted a corporate-friendly political line. The other key institutional orders present in the power elite are state and politics, joined by the leaders of the academic world. Thus, Mills' notion of the power elite proves relevant in understanding the composition and integration of various elites in Denmark. Even in the egalitarian welfare state, the leaders from a select few organisations are interlocked into a tightly knit network.

These institutional orders are connected through the governing bodies, advisory boards or official events that constitute the power network. The power elite are thus not just acquaintances. They are identified as the core of primary decision-making affiliations. By sharing decision-making responsibilities on boards, elite members are obligated to reach a common ground, and not just informally. In spite of the conflicts of interest in the institutional orders, they are tied not only through their shared memberships, but also by shared social background and demographics, lifestyle, and professional outlook from the same university programs. However, this power elite is far from omnipotent. Global developments limit both the reach and framing of the decisions made by this nationally based elite. Adding to this, internal challenges to the legitimacy of the power elite are made by social movements or the media. But these challenges face a cohesive group of interlocked institutional orders. The sectors represented in the power elite show the relative strength of the key institutional orders that got us to the Denmark of today.

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