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The Political Class and Its Self-Interested Theory of Democracy: Historical Developments and Institutional Consequences

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Introduction

Theories of democracy – whether normatively or empirically oriented – are mostly considered a purely academic affair. Political theorists and philosophers think about how democracy ought to work while comparativists try to figure out real-life differences between existing types of democracies. What is lost in this academic division of labor is the fact that political actors themselves, indeed every citizen, has a conception of how democracy should work and how it does work, even while he or she participates in the democratic process. In this sense we are all theorists of democracy.

Nor is this observation – which is in my understanding the starting-point for our workshop – in any sense trivial. Our theories of democracy, which are, of course, shaped by our experiences with democracy, themselves are perfectly capable of altering the practice of politics. This is even more true of political actors whose conceptions of democracy feed into the political process much more directly than those of the average voter. How they conceptualize their actions, what they think they actually are doing is of immediate importance for the reality of democratic politics.

More specifically, political actors’ conception

- of themselves (who are ‘we’?, what sets ‘us’ apart from ‘them’?),
- of their political opponents (who are ‘they’? what is it that divides us? what is the nature of our relationship?),
- of the structure of political competition (in what kind of game are we involved? what would it mean if we lost?), and
- of citizens and voters (what is our relationship to them?, what leverage do they have on us? what power do we have over them?) –

structure the practical workings of democracy to a large degree. Yet this has hardly been at the center of attention among political scientists.

These practical theories of democracy are part of individual ideologies, that is, relatively stable belief-systems of what is, what should be, and what is feasible (cf. Therborn 1980). The normative components of these ideologies can be traced back to interests (whether self-interests or represented social interests) and ideas, the more empirical ones to knowledge and imagination.

If we think about the distribution of conceptions of democracy among political actors, we may distinguish two possible situations: a consensus around one ‘hegemonic’ understanding or a competition between several models. The latter might take place either between the theories held by members of competing political organizations (parties most probably), or between conceptions linked to the position individuals hold within po-
political organizations, or between models favored by groups that cut through party allegiance and status. We would expect status-based positions to be most clearly interest-driven, ‘chaotic’ distributions of preferences to be idea-driven, and party-based preferences to be either of the two (or a mixture of them).

The argument I wish to make in this paper is threefold. The first component is rather ambitious and concerns a secular change in the conceptions of democracy among political actors. That is, I suggest that today there is for the most part a hegemonic consensus about the appropriate model of democracy among politicians that is only rarely challenged from within. This consensus has a national frame of reference, yet is surprisingly similar in advanced industrial democracies. However this consensus has not always been there, is not simply given or inherently linked to representative democracy as such. Rather, it has emerged historically with the professionalization of politics and the ensuing formation of a political class developing a common interest and becoming a collective actor in its own right. In the process – which can be divided in four phases – the political class has developed its own theory of democracy which has had a strong and persistent impact on the practice of democracy as we know it. Thus, political professionalization and the prevailing conceptions of democracy are closely linked.

Second, although there is a secular trend towards professionalization and a common conception of democracy, important national differences remain, especially with regard to the historical trajectories that have led to the current patterns of professionalization. These different trajectories have also had a deep and lasting impact on the current practice of democracy. Thus, while a consensus around the conception of democracy is typical of advanced democracies, the precise contents of that consensus differs markedly.

Third, although I argue that patterns of professionalization and conceptions of democracy are rather stable once a political class has been established, there is still a potential for changes in the historical pathways. I therefore have chosen as case-studies two cases where a significant change in the professionalization patterns and the theories of democracy indeed did take place. The opportunity for major changes is usually opened up from the outside. In my two examples this occurs through external pressure after a (lost) war – in Germany – and through changes on the lower levels of the political system that then affected the center – in the U.S. –, respectively.

This paper only provides a rather rough sketch of my argument and is to be taken as rather tentative. The way I will approach the issues mentioned above is as follows: First I will outline the process of political professionalization and the emergence of a political class. Secondly, I will sketch the changes in conceptions of democracy involved. Then I will look at two empirical examples where in a certain critical juncture an older pattern of
professionalization and democracy were overturned and the roots for the current model of professionalization and understanding of democracy were laid. These examples are the United States during the Progressive Era and West Germany after World War II. More specifically, I will look at how in the U.S. the hitherto dominant model of democracy could be overturned and replaced in the beginning of the 20th century and how in Germany party democracy as a major departure from former patterns of politics was established in the years preceding the foundation of the Federal Republic (1945-49). In a brief summary I will then connect my more theoretical considerations and my historical observations in order to account for the change in the hegemonic conception of democracy that took place in both cases and to draw some conclusions for further research.

1. Political Professionalization and the Emergence of the Political Class

Max Weber was the first to point out the grave consequences of political professionalization. In his famous Munich lecture on "Politics as a Vocation" in 1919 he laid out this argument. Yet in current social science that lecture is either received as an expression of Weber’s political thought (to be distinguished from his sociology; cf. Beetham 1985) or cited for its normative, ethical demands on politicians which figure prominently in the second part (cf. Breiner 1996, 121-67). However, the two parts of the lecture are only loosely connected – tackling the questions “what politics as a vocation means and what it can mean,” respectively (Weber 1958, 77) – with the first part providing a concise historical-sociological argument about the rise of professionalism in politics and its likely consequences.

Weber describes the transition from political institutions dominated by notables being economically independent of politics to institutions being peopled by professional politicians who live off politics (Weber 1958, 84-7). This highly significant shift he saw as being closely related to democratization. A "plutocratic" recruitment of the leading political strata was no longer feasible because under universal suffrage there was necessarily a broadening of the social base of politics. A less elitist recruitment pattern, however, then required the development of political professionalism: "A non-plutocratic recruitment of interested politicians, of leadership and following, is geared to the self-understood precondition that regular and reliable income will accrue to those who manage politics"

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1 All English-speaking readers should be aware that the most widely-spread English translation by Gerth and Mills is faulty and in some instances outright wrong. The distinction between vocation and avocation, for example, Gerth and Mills make (1958, 83) is absent from the original, where Weber instead distinguishes three types of politicians: occasional, part-time, professional (Weber 1994, 41). Weber’s "part-time politicians" ("nebenberufliche Politiker") thus is translated as "politics as an avocation is today practiced by all those ...". Hence Weber’s down-to-earth sociological categories are distorted into nebulous essentialisms devoid of analytical use. A similar thing happens when Weber cross-tabulates the distinctions between living for and off politics and between an ideal and a material level (Weber 1994, 42-3). The latter is translated as the difference between "in thought" and "in practice" (Weber 1958, 84).
Weber distinguishes two kinds of income a professional politician might receive: "fees and perquisites" or "a money salary" (or a mixture of both). It is this income that for Weber defines the professional politician: "He who strives to make politics a permanent source of income lives 'off' politics as a vocation, whereas he who does not do this lives 'for' politics" (Weber 1958, 84).

In the remainder of the first part of his lecture, Weber tries then to delineate the emergence of political professionalism, develop a historical typology of older and newer types of politicians and relate their preeminence or minor importance to the trajectories of various countries. What becomes clear in the course of that argument is that political professionalization is a product of the increasing social division of labor. Professional politicians and bureaucrats have the same ancestry. To quote Weber on the subject: "They arose first in the service of a prince. They have been men who, unlike the charismatic leader, have not wished to be lords themselves, but who have entered the service of political lords" during the development of the modern state (Weber 1958, 82-3). The emergence of politicians and bureaucrats alike then is part of the large-scale historical process during the course of which the political sphere separated from society at large. What Offerlé in referring to Polanyi’s work calls "le processus de désencastrement du politique par rapport au social" leads to an autonomous political sphere with its own rules, roles, and practices (Offerlé 1999a, 10).

In all Western countries we find a creeping devaluation of social and economic status as a determinator of political power. As was discussed at length in the debate on the theory of the capitalist state during the 1970s, politics have always remained systematically biased, but the ‘ruling class’ ceased to rule. Rather, politics became a mediating sphere. What was usually called ‘the political-administrative system’ in the 70s really came to consist of two largely separate parts: one bureaucratic organized according to the inherent logic of administration, and the other political following above all the logic of mass democracy. That the historical sequence in which bureaucracy and democracy emerged had a most fundamental impact on the organization of politics – and hence on the available patterns of political professionalization – was already seen by Weber (1958, 89-90; the impact on professionalization is stressed by Mastropaolo 1984). Early parliamentarization of government and extension of the suffrage tended to create a supremacy of electoral politics over bureaucratic politics. Usually then, parliament as the center of political autonomy became the natural focus of aspiring political professionals (as in Britain or Scandinavia). If, on the contrary, democratization occurred against the backdrop of a preexisting strong bureaucracy (as in Germany), "the interest of the prince were joined with those of officialdom against parliament and its claims for power" (Weber 1958, 89). Parliamentarization was retarded and the politically ambitious had to look for other venues in order to "live off politics." (for the different impact on the bureaucracy cf. Silberman 1993, 10-15).
As to the prevailing types of professional politicians, Weber foresaw a sort of rapprochement between bureaucrats and politicians, in that his belief in the decisive force of rationalization led him to emphasize the “party official” as the coming model of the political professional. He would largely replace, in Weber’s opinion, the parliamentarian: “‘Professional’ politicians outside the parliaments take the organization in hand” (1958, 102). According to Weber (1958, 102-114), there are two basic forms of these officials personified in the American party boss and the German party functionary, with the latter providing the more ‘modern’ alternative. This prognosis of Weber’s which has proven neither completely right nor completely wrong certainly was wrong in one important respect: It underestimated the enduring importance of the legislatures for professional politicians – a point to which we shall return.

At the time of Weber’s lecture the importance of his topic was beyond doubt to many of his contemporaries. The practice of politics clearly was undergoing serious changes as a result of the dual processes of democratization and professionalization. Universal suffrage opened up the sphere of politics to new social strata. These people, however, could only afford to enter that sphere if there was some sort of financial compensation or remuneration involved. Unlike the old notables who had provided the political personnel before, these were neither rentiers nor could they easily combine their civil profession with their political activities. ‘Dispensability’ was a major issue as Weber himself stated (1958, 85).

The other major pressure for professionalization was provided by increasing state interventionism which took its toll on the time-budget of politicians. The workload to be handled increased tremendously for most members of parliament as did the length of legislative sessions. Both democracy and the modern state required full-time professional politicians. And indeed we can see at least the beginnings of political professionalization in all Western democracies precisely during that period between 1880 and 1920 which is usually linked to the extension of democratic rights and the growth of state interventionism.

The conditions and hence the structures of opportunity for professionalization, however, differed quite dramatically among different countries. In some countries legislative salaries had been introduced quite early in the process of parliamentarization and thus could now be raised without too many problems to a level where they provided a livelihood. In

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2 Weber here obviously was strongly influenced by Michels and Ostrogorski.
3 It also figures prominently in the works of other social scientists during his times. Cf. Michels 1987, Ostrogorski 1912, and Sombart 1907 among many others. More recently the topic has all but vanished from the agenda of political science. Cf., however, the important contribution by Alfio Mastropaolo (1984) and the authors in Offerlé (1999). Less useful is the most cited article on the subject by Eliassen and Pedersen (1978) as it equates professionalization with social changes in recruitment.
other countries legislative salaries were denied for a long time and thus early professionalization of politics was financed by parties or interest groups. If it was financed by parties, politicians often held a function as party journalists which could be combined nicely with their political work.

In some cases the pre-existence of a highly professionalized bureaucracy provided the point of reference against which politicians professionalized (Jansen 1999). Parties and interest groups, on the other hand, had to be highly organized and well financed in order to afford a professional staff. On the side of parties, usually only the social democratic parties were in the position to support their own personnel. This was not true, however, in countries where the unions were the undisputed center of the labor movement and therefore also maintained control over political jobs. Bourgeois parties generally remained wedded to the 'party of notables' model which did not imply professionalization of party staff. This is why in some cases interest groups stepped in and provided the organizational and financial backbone for a process of organizational modernization in which professionalization figured prominently.

The major exception to the rule on the bourgeois side can be seen in the American party machines. With a clearly defined local or state terrain, these machines controlled votes and provided patronage jobs in return. This mediating role required a large number of professional and semi-professional party workers (also see part 3). Indeed, as stated above, to Weber the American machine model provided the antidote to the bureaucratic organization of the SPD as the two future models of the professionalized party.

Overall, with the advent of parliamentary democracy, universal suffrage, and large-scale state interventionism the political personnel had to live not only "for politics" which they in many ways still do, but also "off politics", as Weber so concisely put it. To repeat Weber’s words still causes raised eyebrows even in these days, as many political scientists somehow think that this shifts the focus of analysis to a perspective where personal greed of politicians is unduly emphasized at the expense of what really constitutes politics. I would argue, however, that this position has a somewhat apologetic ring to it. Nobody would claim that politics is only or mostly about making money. Nor would I maintain that politicians enter politics for the money that’s in it. But whatever their motivation to become and remain a politician, how altruistic and idealistic their motivation may be – they all have to see to it that they can make a living and an enduring career out of it.

And it is precisely this seemingly banal consideration that has irreversibly changed the calculations and the behavior of politicians individually and as a group. Like any other occupational group, politicians have developed a self-interest. Above all, this is an interest in professional persistence. Whatever else you want, you have to remain in business
in order to achieve these other goals. The specific problem with which politicians have to deal is that if their income is derived from an elective position, any upcoming election might finish their career for good – and, depending upon the electoral system, even regardless of their own individual performance. This feature of representative democracy, the “institutionalization of uncertainty” (Przeworski 1991, 12-4), clashes head on with the typical pattern of a professionalization process, in which the practitioners of a new profession attempt to gain control over the definition of, regulation of, and access to their craft.

Thus, the fundamental dilemma of professional politicians has been the same since the inception of professional politics: While in one sense they have exceptional control over their own fate – they don’t have to capture the state, at least members of parliament are positioned right in the center of it –, in another sense they are as vulnerable as no other profession. You simply cannot vote out a lawyer or a physician from his or her profession, but you can do that with a politician holding elective office. Furthermore, this will be considered regular practice and an essential aspect of democracy. The whole notion of accountability – central to the theory of representative government – rests on the voters’ option to oust incumbents if they are considered a failure, if they pursue the ‘wrong’ policy options in the voters’ opinion – or indeed for no special reason. Thus, professionalization and electoral accountability inherently are in conflict.

For analytical purposes the self-interest of politicians may be divided into three aspects:

- a **reliable source of income** in politics (which could come from parliamentary service, party positions, interest groups, patronage jobs or any combination thereof). The income has to be high enough to make a living and to render a political career attractive in comparison with other options. Given that politics as a profession has certain specific attractions (closeness to power, opportunity to express ideological convictions, media presence, etc.), these may serve as a partial compensation for giving up the chance to get a higher income in other fields.

- a realistic chance of maintaining a job in politics or moving on to something more attractive (this could mean anything from little electoral opposition and hence a safe seat to a well established game of musical chairs). The danger of an abrupt end to the career has to be limited, either by a relatively safe reelection or by a security net of other attractive positions within politics (or in related areas) to fall back upon if one is not reelected or has to resign. The optimal choice of politicians, of course, is a combination of these two mechanisms of career maintenance.

- a chance of a career, i.e., of moving further up the ladder (an established career pathway). As ambition tends to be progressive, there should be **chances for career advancement**, either within the institution (leadership, committee chairs) or between institutions (from state legislature to the House, from the House to the Senate).
Again it is important to emphasize that these interests could be attributed to the members of any profession. Thus, they should not be construed in any way to imply a criticism of politicians’ attitude towards their job. To realize that these interests do exist and co-exist in a latent tension with the imperatives of electoral politics, however, is of central importance if one wishes to understand the trajectory of democratic politics in the 20th century.

Professionalization did only become real with the decision of a rising number of people to make politics their profession under the prevailing conditions, to remain in politics for longer periods of time, and to further adapt those prevailing conditions to their needs. At this point, it is important to note that there are four separate yet related levels at which political professionalization occurs and thus has to be analyzed: on the level of individual politicians, on that of particular political offices, on that of institutions, and finally on the level of the political system as a whole.

*Individually*, professionalization nowadays refers to the process whereby the cherished citizen is transformed into the pariah politician. The opportunity structure is defined by the availability, accessibility, and attractivity of a political career. On the way to professionalization, would-be politicians both choose a new profession and are ‘resocialized’ into its collective beliefs, its ethos. Only in the rarest instances does professionalization include the creation of a new profession. While individual professionalization necessarily is a recurring process, it generally takes place within a predefined setting. As long as newcomers to the trade adapt to the prevailing rules, the individual pursuit of politics as a vocation is a rather repetitious and hence uninteresting thing. However, those historical moments when professional politicians emerge for the first time in a given institutional setting are critical junctures that merit closer attention. Equally interesting are times of transition, when patterns of professionalization or even professional politics per se are being questioned.

The professionalization of political offices is a historical process whose results are passed on from one office-holder to the next. Even while the newcomer is still adapting to his new environment, he or she already holds a professionalized political office. This is typically indicated by the resources at hand: salary, staff, privileges, etc. These attributes of professionalization very seldom come as a total surprise to those who are newly elected or politically appointed. More often than not, this has at least been part of the reason to run for this particular office as opposed to one that is clearly non-professional. As very few incumbents work to dismantle the very office they are holding, the professionalization of political offices generally consists of one take-off point (the first instance of individual professionalization) and then a long period of consolidation and expansion.
Much the same is true for the professionalization of political institutions. Yet the two have to be distinguished. An office that is part of an institution may be professionalized either earlier or later than the institution at large. Thus, it is conceivable that some constituent parts of a legislature (certain state delegations or parliamentary parties) professionalize before that becomes common elsewhere. Also, it is at least theoretically possible that non-professional offices continue to exist within a professionalized environment. Had term-limits for members of Congress been approved by the American Supreme Court, we might very well have seen a development, where some state delegations consisted of amateurs. Yet Congress would still have been a professional legislature. In the extreme case, one might even imagine a Congress under term limits where all members are amateurs and so are their offices, but the institution remains professional due to the central role professional staff could play under such an arrangement.

Typically however, the disjuncture of office and institution in terms of their professionalism should be a period of transition, during which precisely those disjunctures provide the fuel for the institutional changes to come. Very important in this context is the pattern of institutional professionalization. This pattern can differ vastly between an institution that is a springboard for other office and one that tends to retain its members for longer periods of time.

Last, but by no means least is the professionalization of the political system as a whole – which is at the center of our attention here. This is above all a matter of degrees and patterns. The number of positions in a given political system which are professionalized varies greatly as does the accessibility of these positions. For example, in a federal system many offices may be professionalized but are simply not an option for somebody from another state. At the same time, however, federal systems tend to have more professionalized political positions. Different patterns of professionalization on the level of the political system can be detected according to the way different offices tend to be linked up and held by the same person concurrently or successively (cf. Borchert 1999b). The way political offices are accumulated or linked in a successive career pattern – vertically on different levels of government or horizontally between legislative, executive, party, and interest group positions – is the most important indicator for the prevailing pattern of systemic professionalization. On the other hand, it is precisely the absence of cumulation of offices that American political scientists mean when they are talking about ‘institutionalization’ (cf. Polsby 1968). Hence, the boundaries between offices and institutions are very important indeed, but they indicate different patterns of political development rather than different stages.

If we compare the professionalization patterns and histories of different political systems, we can distinguish different patterns (on this, also cf. Mastropaolo 1984, ???). In some countries the move towards professionalization was focused on the national legislature, hence encompassing all political forces being represented in parliament.Usu-
ally in these cases, parliamentarization of the governmental system had preceded professionalization of politics (the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands). Legislative salaries were raised and sessions prolonged gradually. In the process the underlying theory of democracy changed, too. But the change was gradual and largely consensual. Politicians no longer were notables but professionals and their task had become more complex and complicated. Yet political cleavages within parliament did not seem insurmountable, and political professionals conceived of themselves as the ones being responsible for achieving social cohesion and systemic integration even against the odds of societal fragmentation.

Thus, cultures of compromise developed, indeed were consciously formed as in the Dutch case. Arend Lijphart has described in his "The Politics of Accommodation" how – in the face of deep divisions among the three pillars of Dutch society and amidst political turmoil over the issues of suffrage extension and public aid to religious schools – elites formed a consensus that "the existing system ought to be maintained and not allowed to disintegrate" (Lijphart 1968, 103). In order to keep the voters out of the consensus-building process, the parties formed a cartel and had all incumbents reelected in the elections of 1917 (Lijphart 1968, 111).

In a second group of countries (France, Italy, Germany) the focus of the profession was not quite as clear. Belated or interrupted democratization increased repression of working-class parties which consequently adopted a more negative attitude towards the political system. Also other close-knit social groups, like Catholics in Germany, saw themselves as beleaguered by enemies (rather than in electoral competition with political opponents). Deeply entrenched social and identities were transferred into and expressed within the realm of party politics. With the weakness of parliament, it was no wonder then that a culture of compromise emphasizing commonalities rather than divisive traits could not as easily develop in these countries. Parliament just was one of a number of places where social conflict was stages. Still, even in these cases parliament had a resocializing and transformative potential, as it brought people of vastly different backgrounds together in daily contact. This could only happen, though, after professionalization led to a greatly enhanced parliamentary presence of legislators.

What Lijphart studies as the birth of Dutch consociationalism has happened – albeit at different times, in different forms, and with a much more limited agenda in all Western democracies. Politicians of all persuasions did come together – once they had realized that they had common interests as politicians and that they were in a unique position to regulate their own profession. Thus, in all advanced democracies we can find the emergence of professional politicians as a collective actor taking charge of their own business – that is their income, their working conditions, their job safety, and their career prospects. It is precisely this moment in which the respective political class is born.
The term – framed by Mosca as a synonym for ruling class or elite – is used here to grasp professional politicians in a given political system as actors on their own behalf\(^4\). The idea is that politicians not only come to live off politics, but indeed act as a "class for themselves" (Marx) – that is, have a clear understanding of their collective interests and act accordingly. Of course, this politics of interests does not affect all policy-making in the same way. It clearly encompasses politicians' wage and pension policies and a field one might call institutional policy-making – the organization of the political field and its institutional outlook (cf. Borchert and Golsch 1995). In these areas, typically partisan competition is suspended in favor of a consensus including all major parties. 'Normal' policy-making continues according to the established national routine, be it more adversarial or more compromise-oriented. It may be, however, that common legitimation needs even affect the contents of regular policies – if distributionary policies are adapted to the organization of electoral competition. That would mean geographically divisible benefits in political systems with individual district-level legitimation (cf. Ferejohn 1983 for the U.S.) and benefits handed out to socially defined clientele groups in systems with collective legitimation.

It is above all the role and power of the national legislature as an autonomous agency of professional self-regulation that has turned it into the core institution of the political class everywhere. One common denominator of career paths everywhere is that the national legislature is the prime goal of political pros and would-be pros. The way to get there differs greatly, but being there and remaining there – at least for some time – is for the most part the key to a successful professional career in politics. It offers prestige, contacts, a guaranteed income, further career opportunities, often generous pension plans, and the unique chance to regulate one’s own profession. This last property of national legislatures – its extensive control over the shape of the institutional environment in which politics, and not only legislative politics, is conducted – turns them into something like a ‘central committee’ of the political class. The political class clearly is much larger than the national legislature – it can be conceptualized as being organized in concentric circles around the national legislature; yet it is here that the fortunes of all members are most effectively influenced.

And a second specific feature of parliaments makes them equally important for an analysis of the political class in a given country: It is here that professional politicians of different parties come together on a day-to-day base, get their final professional socialization and learn to conceive of themselves as a group that is distinct from ‘those out there.’ Just an anecdote: During the times of Bonn as the West German capital, political correspondents have time and again referred to the city as ‘Space-ship Bonn’ thus noting the aloofness and self-refentiality of the political class. What was erroneously attrib-
uted to Bonn as a city is to a certain extent true of all capitals. The social distinction that once marked the parliaments peopled by “men of education and property” (Best 1990a) has thus effectively been replaced with a professional distinction that is no less characteristic of the politics of the times – although less accepted.

We have seen that political professionalization and the emergence of a political class are inextricably linked but not identical. The emergence of a political class is a second step that requires not only professionalism but also a minimum of cohesion and common consciousness (cf. Beyme 1993; Mayntz 1999). But how can the underlying changes be systematized and what is their relation to the underlying theories of democracy? It is to these issues that we turn now.

2. Political Professionalism and Theories of Democracy: A Developmental Model

Although the timing of critical junctures during which established patterns were changed differs greatly we may think of the prevailing patterns as a sequence that should occur everywhere. The sequence I propose follows roughly those that Bernard Manin (1997, 235) and Richard Katz and Peter Mair (1995, 18) have developed for other purposes. Manin divides the development of representative government in three phases: parliamentarism, party democracy, and audience democracy. I would largely adopt his model, only would I distinguish two quite different eras of party democracy (plus I do not like the term ‘audience democracy’). The four resulting phases correspond in terms of contents and timing quite nicely to those Katz and Mair employ in advancing their thesis of the cartel party. Indeed, although their emphasis is on parties and mine on professional politicians, there are many common traits in the analysis which I thus owe to them.

The first era – “parliamentarism” in Manin’s terms – was that of the notables. Suffrage was restricted and so was the pool of potential political candidates. The local social elite controlled politics as it controlled other aspects of societal life. This was still perceived to be the natural order of things. Democracy was seen as something inherently dangerous. Parliament on the other hand was a cozy club, a debating circle, in which people with similar social backgrounds met to discuss the issues of the day. The relation between represented and representatives was conceived as a rather loose one, with the representative serving as a trustee. Representation above all was as individual and local as voting.

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The role of parliament as a whole was to control the government – or to get the right to control the government if it did not have that right already. Even more important, however, was the role of parliament as an intermediary body rising above popular debates and enlightening politics. This then was the era of representative government proper and hence of liberal theories of democracy. The very idea of a caste of professional politicians, of course, was anathema to this line of thought (cf. Mastropaolo 1984, 146-7). Professionalism was correctly perceived to undercut the social exclusiveness of politics.

The innovation that gave a serious blow to liberal democracy and and its theory was the advent of mass democracy. As described above, the extension of the suffrage also opened the gates for the recruitment of new social strata into politics and for professionalization. At the same time the character and the conception of both representation and voting changed. Representation typically turned from a localized, individual affair into a national and collective one. Voting became an expression of one’s belonging to a social milieu, of ‘appartenenza’ – being part of a predefined group.

Thus, politicians in a second phase – which might be termed party democracy I – gradually changed from members of a social elite into (semi-)professionalized delegates of social groups. The tension inherent in that model was one between professional autonomy and mutual dependence between social base and political spokesmen. Public deliberation moved from parliament into the parties (Manin 1997, 217). That implied that there was hardly any forum for debates between rather than within political organizations. Politics became a mere extension of social and cultural cleavages and conflicts. That meant that the boundaries between political camps were very clear-cut and were deeply embedded in society. Consequently, everybody had a clear conception of where he or she belonged.

Political competition then could not be about convincing people to change their mind and their electoral choice. It could only be about mobilizing one’s supporters against ‘them.’ Depending upon the prevailing pattern of professionalization, the career interests of professionalizing politicians were more or less closely linked to the electoral fortunes of their parties. Elections and their results did not matter as much if politicians were on the payroll of their party or an interest group. They were much more important if political careers depended on a seat in parliament.

Thus, what we have in this era – roughly from 1900 to 1945 – is a preeminence of party, a reduction in the centrality of parliamentary politics for politics as a whole, and the beginnings of a professional self-interest of politicians that set them apart from the organization as well as the voters they represented. Yet the commonality of professional interests was still for the most part overshadowed by the clash of the social interests they represented. To be sure, there were various ways to deal with this tension, the Dutch
way being the successful one in terms of democratic perseverance, the German one bringing desaster.

The period after 1945 is characterized by the effects of political professionalization and social change. Traditional social affiliations loosened while at the same time professionalization was completed. Hence politicians were at the same time relieved of their connection to a predefined social base and became more dependent than ever on their professional career. Ambition – at least static ambition, to keep their job, in Schlesinger’s words (1966) – became a necessity rather than a personal trait for professional politicians.

Citizens and voters in this picture became more of an unknown entity, consumers one needed and yet never could be fully sure of. The ‘catch-all’ party became the appropriate device to secure at least some catch. Likewise, the political enemies of old became colleagues from a competing company, so to speak. Electoral competition and personal contacts became the norm rather than the exception. Correspondingly, the goal of competition could be defined as a mixture of electoral strength and provisions for the case that the own party lost. Thus, at the same time that a real competition developed for the first time and there could have been an attempt to secure votes on the merits of policy positions, the consequences of the voters' choice is perceived as a common threat to the fortunes of all professional politicians alike. It is at this time that we find both the strange erosion of substantial alternatives Kirchheimer (1981, 58-91) decried and successful attempts to isolate the community of incumbents from the threat of ‘sudden career death’ at the hands of the voters.

Hence Schumpeter and Downs provided the theory of post-WW II democracy, yet they missed the tendencies towards cartelization. Overall, the post-war period is one in which a number of tendencies and theories co-existed. The older theories of parliamentarism and liberal democracy were as present as theories of democratic class struggle and and competed with newer theories of rational choice. This was also the time of the formation of the political class, however, and it is this development that in the end has proven the strongest tendency.

From the late 60s and 70s on we can speak of the era proper of the political class. The understanding that politicians have common interests became more and more constitutive for politicians' identity. That implied unity within and a certain suspicion of all those outside who could terminate careers. The major axis of political conflict finally moved from between political camps and parties supported by different groups of citizens to one between politicians and citizens. This conflict was fueled from both sides (cf. Mény 1998). From the 60s and 70s on popular participation demands grew tremendously with increasing education levels, while political accountability decreased. Under all electoral
systems, the conditions for incumbents were improved to a point where many of them simply can not be voted out of office anymore (cf. Somit et al. 1994) – be it because they have a safe place on a closed party list or because under single-member plurality they have secured resources so superior as to discourage potential challengers.

At the same time all-out competition among parties over issues is also avoided. The "waning of opposition" Kirchheimer (1957) saw in the 1950s dwarfs in comparison to what we see today. Parties no longer stand for certain long-term solutions to long-term problems, but rather try not to stray too far from the positions of their opponents. They prefer valence issues on which there is only one correct stand – which they predictably take. The rare instances of risk-taking have come from the right. If electorally successful, they have redefined the policy terrain quite effectively, as in Britain and the U.S. but not lastingly changed the pattern of (a moving) policy consensus.

Thus, political competition is partly suspended and electoral accountability undermined both in the individual and in the collective sense of the term. Voters cannot hold individual politicians accountable and send them into the political desert. Neither can they hold a party collectively accountable for its policies and opt for an alternative, as there isn't one left. Both tendencies violate essential normative demands of democracy: voters must have the right to deselect and they must have the right to a substantive choice (on the latter cf. Offe 1998, 365).

Citizens on the other hand have not yet made their peace with political professionalism (cf. Borchert 2000). The recurrent debates on legislative salaries, the deploring of the lack of politicians’ experience in ‘real life,’ and the yearning for the amateur to come in and do it right all point to the same misunderstanding of modern politics, in which professionalism is but one option among many. The fact that professionalization of politics is a child of democratization has been lost on citizens. Instead, the manifest pathologies of professionalism resulting from the tension between professional career interests and electoral competition are taken as prove that we would be better off with a political system run by amateurs. Anti-professionalism has a long tradition, but it simply ignores the basic facts about modern democracy and is based on 19th century liberal theory of democracy. Specifically, the aspect of the term professionalism linking it to a certain expertise is overlooked in this perspective: if democratic politics was run by amateurs, democratic politics as a whole would lose in influence against bureaucratic politics and actors deriving their power from their socio-economic position.

This is an admittedly polemical sketch of the current stage of representative democracy. Quite tellingly this stage has not yet found its appropriate theory (for an attempt see Zolo

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5 Przeworski et al. 1999 have brought the issue of accountability back onto the agenda of political science. Yet they apply the concept only to governments (collectively).
Instead, academic theory oscillates between old, unrealistic textbook versions of democratic theory (cf. Offe 1998, 371) and an apologetic justification of the current practice that is either based on a rather one-dimensional situational analysis (mostly the limits imposed by globalization) or projected upon the European screen where output supposedly can replace democratic input. We can suppose, however, that the actors themselves have a clear conception of what they are doing. This implies concealing it. Thus, a great number of members of the German Bundestag still counterfactually answer no when asked whether they are professional politicians.

We can sum up the model developed here very briefly and roughly in the following table:

**Table 1:**

*Changing Conceptions of Democracy from the Mid-19th Century to the Present*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parliamentarism</th>
<th>Party Democracy I</th>
<th>Party Democracy II</th>
<th>Era of Political Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identity of politicians</td>
<td>members of social elite</td>
<td>spokesmen of social groups</td>
<td>professional politicians</td>
<td>political class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role of parliament</td>
<td>deliberation</td>
<td>stage for conflict</td>
<td>focus of professionalism</td>
<td>core of political class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role of parties</td>
<td>minor; structure parliamentary politics</td>
<td>central; expression of social cleavages</td>
<td>central; invade state</td>
<td>reduced; recruitment and voter mobilization agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relation to opponents</td>
<td>friendly; other elite members</td>
<td>mostly hostile; intransigent</td>
<td>collegial, competitive</td>
<td>friendly; staged conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political competition</td>
<td>limited</td>
<td>adversarial; mostly non-electoral</td>
<td>electoral competition</td>
<td>partly suspended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relation to voters</td>
<td>trustee; individual, local representation</td>
<td>delegate of party and social group; collective, national representation</td>
<td>salesman; individual or collective, local or national representation</td>
<td>Dr. Kimble; only symbolic representation via media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall goal</td>
<td>reproduction of social relations</td>
<td>mobilization of own supporters</td>
<td>electoral success; professional survival</td>
<td>reproduction of political order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appropriate theory</td>
<td>liberal democracy</td>
<td>theory of democratic class struggle</td>
<td>Schumpeter/Downs (plus professionalism)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the three transitions involved in this four-stage model of political development, we can identify one decisive force for each transitory process: The transition from parliamentarism to party democracy I was driven by democratization. This is a process that has been analyzed quite extensively in the literature. The second transition has so far been attributed largely to social change (and the effects of the war). While is certainly true, it systematically underestimates the dramatic effects of professionalization.
Finally, the third transition – which again often is explained with reference to social change (individualization or the like) – really is due to the formation of a political class ‘for itself.’ Now politics not only becomes a sphere distinct of society as under democratization, it successfully severes many of its ties to society while maintaining the institutional structure of representative democracy. This implies an inherent contradiction since representative democracy in whatever form ties politics to society – or ‘the people.’

While I believe this model to be generally adequate, it entails a number of problems. First, while it quite rightly directs the attention to the transitory periods as critical junctures, it cannot explain the mechanisms of change involved. Who did what, with which purpose, which unintended consequences, and how did these actions lead to the outcome? The second – and related – major problem (I am quite sure workshop participants will be able to point to many others) is: „how many exceptionalisms“ can a model bear? If we think of real-existing countries, we will find a lot of cases where things went quite differently. Thus, only detailed historical case-studies can bring us near to an understanding of the mechanisms of this development. The model can well serve as a foil then, as a (potential) counter-factual which shows us more clearly where something extraordinary happens which might enlighten our understanding of the more general pattern as well. And it is with this consideration that I am turning to my two case-studies.

Germany and the U.S. were chosen, since they represent very different trajectories in the universe of advanced democracies. The unbroken constitutional tradition of the United States contrasts sharply with the crisis-ridden history of regime changes in Germany. But even apart from that the early democratic patterns were as different as the current ones, the irony of history being that the two pathways in some way crossed each other: The United States arguably were the first party democracy in the world and switched to an entrepreneurial politics with a strong role for interest groups at some point in their development, whereas Germany started out with strong interest groups and weak parties and ended up a party democracy. Finally, Germany is much closer to the general contours of the model outlined above, while the U.S. shoes us its limits – or rather the need for modifications.

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6 This is a question raised by my teacher Ari Zolberg in a different context. I still like his answer: „as many as there are cases under consideration“ (Zolberg 1986, 455).
3. From Party Government to Political Entrepreneurialism: 
How the United States Changed their Pattern of 
Political Professionalization and their Theory of Democracy

If we can identify one point in American history when the step from party democracy to entrepreneurial politics was made, it must be the ‘Cannon Revolt’ of 1910/11. In a series of votes, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Joseph ‘Csar’ Cannon (R-IL), was stripped of his powers which had made him the most powerful man in the United States and the most powerful chairman of any democratic assembly ever. Cannon single-handedly appointed chairmen and members of all committees, he used the procedures of the House masterly to trounce opposition to Republican party rule, and he reserved the right to recognize (or not to recognize) any member on the floor. How this regime could be erected and then be overthrown is a key story for the understanding of American political development and leads right to the role of political professionalization.

From early on, American politicians had created one crucial precondition for the emergence of the professional legislator: Legislative salaries were introduced back in 1789. While these took the form of a per diem during Congressional sessions, this was an important first step. Yet the subsequent development did only partially follow the line thus prescribed. Per diems were transformed into salaries in 1816, repealed in 1817 and again changed to annual salaries for good in 1856 (Fisher 1980, 36-40; for the following numbers also cf. Fisher 1995, 1755). $ 3,000 per year doesn't sound much, but in 1990 dollars that was $ 46,000. In 1873, Congressional salaries were raised to the equivalent of $ 81,400 a year. This remarkable advance had to be repealed under tremendous public pressure against what was called "the salary grab" the year after (Fisher 1980, 40-1), but negative inflation rates helped to raise Congressional salaries gradually until members of Congress finally granted themselves a 50 per cent pay raise in 1907 bringing them up to the historic high of $ 103,700 (again in 1990 dollars). This was not to be surpassed until 1955!

Even though there are plenty of historic testimonies of Congressmen complaining about their dismal pay and how they cannot support their families (cf. Rothman 1966, 139-40, 147-8), I think it is fair to say that during the 1870s and 1880s Congressional pay reached professional levels by all standards. That is, Congressmen could make a living on their salaries while they served. Yet the problem was long-term career planning. Elections were competitive and so were nomination contests. One could not build a career on the reasonable hope of being returned to Washington as long as one wished. Nor did many people think that being in Washington for a long time was a goal to be pursued. This was true partly because of the often described lack of attractiveness of the Washington of the time, partly because of the still limited nature of the federal govern-
ment (cf. Wiebe 1995, 69). A final reason why early professional political careers for the most part were not Congressional careers lies in the control over access to such a career that was exercised by political parties, or rather, local party machines (cf. Ostrogorski 1912, 225-81; Lotchin 1984), as gatekeepers. So on balance all three contextual preconditions for a professional career focusing on Congress were still absent at the time: availability, attractivity, and accessibility.

Yet there had been professional politicians partly replacing old-style local notables for quite some time, namely in the parties. Jacksonian Democracy provided the United States not only with the first modern political party based on mass mobilization, it also established patronage as the crucial means of party rule. The emergence of a "mass-based, geographically organized, and patronage-fueled party apparatus" also had another result of some importance: it "placed at the very center of the political system a group of middle-class professional or semiprofessional politicians" (Shefter 1994, 69-70). When the Whigs organized accordingly, Shefter speaks of a "new political class" characterized by "a community of interest within this political class that united it across party lines" (1994, 71). At this point I wouldn’t speak of a political class yet. But certainly another pre-condition for the formation of such a class had thus been established. In the following decades up until the realignment of the 1890s, parties pervaded every aspect of public life on a national scale, as Joel Silbey (1991) has so forcefully described.

The reason I would not define these early professional party politicians as a political class is that while party identification clearly was national, party organization still was strictly local and state-wide. Thus, a common focus lending the emerging class coherence and a common consciousness was still missing. The Civil War then was a rupture that further postponed the building of a unified political class. It was in the 1870s and 1880s that some basic conditions changed. The end of Reconstruction brought Southern politicians back and consolidated the Democrats’ hold on the South. Thereby two-party competition was restored on the national level. Also, not only became life in Washington more agreeable (cf. Rothman 1966, 138-9), the federal level also became more important. The economic take-off necessitated a more active role of the national state. At the same time that legislators transformed their salaries into a professional income, there also were all kinds of extra incomes to be made in Washington (cf. Thompson 1985). Above all, federal patronage increased tremendously, and as that provided the cement of local and state party machines, a presence in the nation’s capital became essential for local and state leaders.

Parties had for a long time controlled access to Congress, but during this time they increased their organizational capacities. Party organizations became more centralized and more hierarchical – at least in the Eastern half of the country (Shefter 1994, 174-6). Longer congressional careers became more usual (but still not the rule). The Senate as
the institution controlling most patronage was staffed with bosses of local machines and their confidants. During the mid-1890s, Senators included such undisputed party leaders as David Hill (D-NY) or James McMillan (R-MI), Arthur Gorman (D-MD) or Matthew Quay (R-PA), Thomas Martin (D-VA) or William Sewell (R-NJ), to name but a few (Rothman 1966, 159-90; also cf. Ripley 1969). The American state entered the modern era a "state of courts and parties" (Skowronek 1982), but that did not preclude neither a high level of organization and professionalization nor an increasing level of state intervention.

The material base of party government is best analyzed by Yearley (1970; cf. especially chapter 4) who provides a vivid picture of political finance during the late nineteenth century. Local party machines in some instances had introduced a dual system of taxation with parties running the more important of the two siblings. The goal was to finance the labor-intensive workings of the machines on and off electoral campaigns (Wiebe 1995, 71). Businesses had to pay to party according to size and degree of legality. Patronage employees in the public service had to give a fixed part of their income back to the party which had given them their job in the first place. While building the base for both Mugwump and Progressive attacks upon the corrupt regime of the machines, these practices were pretty much institutionalized and routinized. The patronage system provided both legitimacy for the parties and the resources necessary to support party staff and run costly campaigns.

More rigid internal organization and a deeper invasion of the federal state then paved the ground for a party-based political professionalization and the emergence of a fairly unified political class. A political career became available as more and more positions were professionalized. It was attractive in terms of the legal and illegal benefits it provided as well as in terms of policy influence. Finally, the points of access were well defined by the party machines, and those machines could also guarantee career maintenance as they controlled a vast array of positions across all levels and branches of government.

The type of politician this regime required and socialized by way of a rather long apprenticeship was the 'party soldier', the 'backbencher', or, as Weber (1958, 103) said, the "party official." As Weber understood, the American parties were the first of their kind, and in some ways – but not in others – European Social Democrats followed their model of organization. While machines still had their roots in the states, counties, and municipalities, they had established close links to Washington. Congressmen assumed important roles in this regime. While the Senate became what one analyst called a "federation of state bosses" (Dobson 1972, 33), so to speak the ‘Central Committee’ of the emerging political class in the United States, the House mirrored party organization.
As Peter Swenson has pointed out in what is a brilliant article on the subject, "tame, careerist politicians" became the norm in the House because "to these relatively docile and malleable politicians a stable and centralized authoritarian structure would be a natural if not desirable political environment" (Swenson 1982, 15). The reason is very simple: political careers depended on party machines and the only way to endanger a career was to bolt the party. Consequently, we see much fewer changes of party in this period than before. Voters on the other hand did not pose much of a danger, as all they could do was to refuse re-election – but political careers were not dependent on re-election as they are today. The party always could provide a job, and thus career maintenance was ensured. Increasing tenure and decreasing turnover in Congress before 1896 were mainly a result of declining party competition in the South (Brady, Buckley, and Rivers 1999, 500). They did not indicate fundamentally different career patterns. Career advancement was more of a problem, but it seems that the idea of a hierarchy of offices was less established in those times. Returning to the local or state level after a number of terms in Washington was not considered a degradation⁷.

Congressional structures adapted to the career needs of members. As Swenson (1982, 5) put it, party machines produced the machine Congress. The 1890 introduction of the Reed rules building upon earlier precedents of power centralization installed a rather authoritarian regime. This did not meet any resistance at the time, precisely because career maintenance was independent of floor achievements and career advancement did not focus on Congress anyway. Some committee chairs were considered an important asset already, but they were handed out by the Speaker as a return for support in speakership contests. Thus, one could not hope to be chairman of any one committee for a long time, and neither did it help to have been around for a long time.

If we try to capture the conception of democracy underlying this practice of democracy, it is certainly one that differed significantly from the one outlined in the Federalist Papers. Yet the model that gradually had developed during the 19th century in itself was quite coherent. National two-party competition was broken down into local fiefdoms with one-party dominance. The party (machine) occupied a central role in that conception mobilizing votes, recruiting candidates for elective office, and distributing divisible benefits to its adherents. Politics thus essentially was a local affair, except for the control of state and federal patronage which was the prize of gubernatorial and presidential elections. This model of democracy differs from European experience in that professionalization occurred much earlier, the organizational effort was much higher, and political competition is electoral competition between geographically (and not socially) defined entities.

⁷ In fact, local custom or local rules required some congressmen to step down after one or two terms. Rotation in office went back to the Continental Congress and obviously remained an important norm in some places until it faded in importance towards the end of the nineteenth century (Kernell 1977, 675-7, 685-8; Brady, Buckley, and Rivers 1999, 498-9).
So, how could a regime that was so well established and that had been in the making for over half a century be overthrown? Again, I would side with Swenson who maintains that changes in recruitment provide the key to any explanation here. But if parties controlled political recruitment, how could there be any fundamental change? The answers lies in the regional variations with regard to party organization that Shefter (1994, 169-94) and Mayhew (1986) have highlighted. Party machines were much more firmly entrenched in the Eastern part of the country, and parties there relied much more on mass mobilization.

Thus, parties in the West and Midwest were more vulnerable to challengers, and there were parts of the population that could be mobilized into politics by those challengers. That’s exactly what happened during the Progressive Era. The earlier challenge to machines had already resulted in some reforms like the introduction of the Australian ballot in most states during the 1890s (cf. Argersinger 1984, 501-5; Rusk 1970). Tickets provided by the parties – and hence straight tickets – were replaced by state ballots. This went hand in hand with state regulation of elections. What could be seen as a mere step towards modernization was not at all neutral in contents, however. Ticket-splitting now was made much easier thereby reducing the cohesion of the party. Being on the same ticket no longer meant sharing the same fate. This was further aggravated by the decoupling of federal, state, and local elections that the Progressive reformer sought and achieved in many places.

Between 1905 and 1910 then, most states introduced direct primary elections, thus potentially at least depriving parties of the control over nomination they had exercised under the convention system (cf. Argersinger 1984, 506-8; Merriam and Overacker 1928). A number of other reforms on the municipal level at the same time reduced the political clout of machines as well as eroding their material base. While party machines in the East were still quite well equipped to weather down the challenge – here the stronger machines often were able to weed out weaker ones and establish a monopoly –, reformers were much more successful in the Midwest and West. The thrust of all Progressive reforms was anti-party – the undoing of Jacksonian democracy. Hope was vested in the executive staffed with capable professionals erecting an ethical regime. In a way, it is quite ironic that the highly professionalized party managers should be challenged in the name of professionalism. What was at stake here was rather the replacement of one kind of professionalism by another which was differentiated according to a strict di-

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That this really was a struggle over the distribution of power and benefits is revealed by Silberman’s analysis of the transition from legislative patronage to executive patronage under Theodore Roosevelt on the one hand and of the clash between reformers and party leaders on the other. Cf. Silberman 1993, 250-83.
vision of labor and which sought to replace the generalist politician with the specialist expert (cf. Finegold 1995).

Progressive reforms also changed the recruitment of Congressmen particularly in the Midwest. Reform candidates won – mostly on the Republican ticket – in states like Wisconsin and Michigan. Upon arriving in Washington they confronted the regime of Czar Cannon who had put Reed’s rules to full fruition. These were representatives within the Republican caucus who stood nothing to gain from party loyalty. Their career was linked not to the fortunes of the party, but precisely to the opposite: Only if they could effectively challenge party rule in the House, could they hope to gain benefits for their district and thus to be returned to Congress on this balance. And to return was what they had to do in order to continue their political career. Loyalty simply was no longer a rational option for the members of this group which came to be known as ”insurgents.” The choice was between exit and voice. It is a testament to the level of careerism already prevalent at this point that there was a clear preference for the latter option.

The electoral realignment of 1896 in itself did not produce professionalism and longer careers. True enough, party competition decreased and thus reelection was made safer. This was not sufficient, however, to safeguard political careers. Between the decision to pursue a Congressional career and a successful reelection campaign lay the necessity to be renominated. The attractivity of nomination on the dominating party’s ticket increased tremendously, but that contributed to the increased uncertainty of reelection as it was true for all potential candidates and not only for the incumbent. Electoral realignment shifted the decisive stage of election to the nomination level. And here the introduction of the direct primary took away coordinating power from parties\(^9\). The incumbent had the advantage of name recognition, but to be reelected he had to be able to appeal to voters individually and directly. Thus the modern electoral connection in Congressional politics was born (cf. Mayhew 1974).

This then was the background of the ‘Cannon revolt’\(^{10}\) An established pattern of party-based political professionalization was effectively and successfully challenged in some regions of the country. This challenge changed the recruitment of Congressmen to the point where there were two groups with irreconcilable professionalization pattern and legitimation needs within the same institution. The struggle about the powers of the Speaker of the House were a struggle between these two patterns. Ironically, the pattern to which only a minority of members was wedded won out, because Democrats – the majority of which came from machine-run districts – joined the Insurgents for partisan

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\(^9\) The principle of self-selection that was thus strengthened had been deeply embedded in American politics, as Wiebe (1995, 68) points out. But before it had been checked by the parties’ requirements of apprenticeship.

\(^{10}\) Among the large literature cf. inter alia Brown 1922; Hasbrouck 1927; Hechler 1940, 27-82; Holt 1967; Peters 1990, 75-91.
reasons and voted – strictly on party lines – for the proposal (which could also count on widespread popular support). That the vote against Czar rule in the House would change the context of professional politics in the U.S. for good, they did not and could not foresee. The asynchronism of regional patterns produced the tension and the momentum for change on a national scale. It also decided the struggle between competing conceptions of democracy in favor of those who combined a return to U.S. constitutionalism – mistrust of parties, checks and balances – with a ‘modern,’ technocratic belief in the expert.

The heterogeneity of the reform coalition is revealed when we compare the anti-partisan leanings of Insurgent Republican leader George Norris (cf. Zucker 1966, 30-48) with the highly partisan regime Democrats erected after they took control of the House in 1911. The short-lived age of ‘King Caucus’ was a regime that was based less on formal authority but just as much on party discipline. But with the erosion of party control over political careers and the presence of a critical number of career legislators this could only be a transient stage. What followed was the institutionalization of the House as Polsby (1968) described it. Power shifted from the caucus to the committees, and the seniority rule became the chief instrument for distributing power among members (cf. Polsby et al. 1969). Congress became the focal point of political careers that it had never been before. There were still a number of roads to Washington but almost none leading out of town again. The professional politician became the professional legislator, and Congressional service became the high point and simultaneously the end-point of political careers. As Peter Swenson (1982, 27) put it:

Professional politicians were replaced by professional legislators who would attend more carefully to getting reelected, and who would thereby alter the institution so as to provide the political resources to make that task easier, and to reduce the risks of a political career.

That also implied a vastly increased coherence among professional politicians as they not only shared common characteristics and interests, but actually met in person when going about their business. As in other class formations (cf. Katznelson 1981), unity of place was the decisive final element for the emergence of a political class centered around Capitol Hill.

It was not accidentally that the Seventeenth Amendment should be passed at just about the same time as the power in the House was redistributed. The Senate as the federal arm of local and state bosses was part of an earlier regime and gave way to a Senate that was the one career step up that one could make from the House. Thus the Senate was fit into a hierarchical order of political offices and took its present place above the House.

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The thesis I advanced here is that the given institutional context structured career opportunities in a way that gave politicians the option to professionalize their activities within a party-dominated system. It was in the era of the political machines that for the first time in American history all three pre-conditions for political professionalization were given. A professional career in politics seemed attractive, was made available by party machines and was accessible at given points of entry into a party apprenticeship. Yet the convergence of the state-administered systems of recruitment proved to be contingent. For those elected under different conditions, a political career still seemed attractive, but their point of access was different and, above all, chances for a prolonged career seemed dim under the given structural constraints within Congress.

The change the Insurgents brought about resulted in a new equilibrium where an attractive professional career was available within Congress. The seniority rule, the committee system, and the erosion of party discipline provided members with ample opportunity to claim credit for particularized benefits going to their districts and to take positions that are popular at home. The point of access still was local, but there were no more formal gatekeepers. Instead, the self-starting political entrepreneur could base his career on whatever made him a well-known and popular figure in his district.

What emerges from Table 1 is the model of a two-step transition to the current pattern of political professionalism in the U.S. Professionalization was complete by the 1880s. Yet the pattern changed once thereafter leading to the emergence of the American political class. There has been no fundamental change in the new pattern after around 1920. That is in so far surprising as the decentralized federal system that had made the overthrow of the old pattern possible continued to exist. The difference then is in the common interest of the American political class that from then on consolidated and improved upon those institutional structures to which it owed its existence.

The history of Congressional reforms after the 1910s can well be read as a series of changes intended to safeguard prevalent career patterns and career opportunities. As salaries were on a fairly high level from the beginning and there was no incentive to change points of access, most reforms focused on two things: benefits and career maintenance, that is insulation against the risk of forced resignation at the hand of voters. Thus, in 1942 Congressional pensions were introduced, an important step towards the professional Congressperson. Perquisites of office were expanded, as was Congressional staff. The successive strengthening of the individual member at the expense of hierarchical elements provided incumbents with enough leeway to increase their advantage over challengers. Congressional observers have often wondered why seemingly safe incumbents are worried so much. The answer lies in what is at stake – their career.
Thus, the Legislative Reform Act of 1946 and the extensive congressional reforms of the 1970s have to be seen as successful attempts by the American political class to adapt their institutional environment to their career and legitimation needs (cf. Davidson 1990; Davidson and Oleszek 1976; Dodd 1977). The decentralization of Congress was not a result of the missing capacity of members to stop a secular trend, but rather a conscious effort to stall electoral competition and safeguard incumbents by giving them superior resources to any possible contender. Hardly recognized as such, Newt Gingrich’s ‘Contract with America’ – rather than APSA manifestos – was the only notable attempt to bring party government back to the U.S. His failure was due to his ignorance towards the career interests of freshmen Republicans who came in fervent ideologues of a term-limit democracy and very fast evolved into converts seeking their constitutionally guaranteed pursuit of happiness in professional politics.

If we hold U.S. historical development against our model, we find a number of very significant aberrations, but also equally interesting commonalities. The United States seem to be closest to the model in the first and fourth stage, with greater differences in the other two. The era of parliamentarism, or rather: a politics of notables, was much shorter in the U.S. than elsewhere, its elements however were largely the same. The second stage did not see the development of mass parties based on deep socio-cultural and ideological cleavages, but rather professionalized mass parties based on patronage. This made for a very different experience with the high degree of political mobilization being the common denominator.

In the third phase entrepreneurial politics gained a hold and replaced party politics. While different in many regards from the ‘professional catch-all party’ era in Europe, there were also common traits in the primacy of professionalism and the market character of electioneering. The current era sees a convergence of the trans-atlantic experience in the successful insulation of the political class from accountability demands – and in the popular frustrations this produces.

4. Germany: The Crooked Path to Party Democracy

Though Germany today is one of the quintessential models of party democracy – and the SPD was seen as a model of party organization in the beginning of the 20th century – this was far from a predetermined outcome. Rather, Germany’s way to party democracy is rather crooked and takes its present shape only after 1945. Thus, in this part I will outline the previous pattern of (retarded) professionalization and the prevailing model of democracy and try to explain the break of the post-war years.
In Germany political professionalization started much later than in the U.S. The persistence of the old absolutist regime and the defeat of the 1848 revolution retarded the emergence of mass politics and mass democracy. Political mobilization was feared by the ruling class that still represented the nobility. The unification of the German states in the German Reich of 1871 brought universal manhood suffrage for the Reichstag. But that advance was more limited than it may seem: Many states stuck to their socially biased election laws for their own legislatures; the Reichstag did not control the government that was solely responsible to the Emperor; and the second chamber at the federal level – the Bundesrat – not only represented the undemocratically elected state governments, but also gave a minority veto right to Prussia or to about any combination of smaller states.

Even more cumbersome for those would-be members who did not own large estates or could live as rentiers was the absence of legislative salaries (cf. Molt 1963, 38-48). While Bismarck had consciously opted for rather democratic voting rights (Sheehan 1968, 516), he just as consciously had opposed the introduction of legislative salaries in order to maintain a socially skewed composition of the Reichstag and thus prevent calls for parliamentary government. Only the fourteenth attempt to introduce salaries in 1906 was successful and a small salary of 400 Reichmarks for each month of session was approved (Molt 1963, 38-9). Resistance to mass democracy and the absence of salaries reinforced each other and worked effectively against political professionalization focused on Reichstag service. Thus, the Reichstag for all practical purposes consisted of a small group of people divided into the remnants of feudal representation and a handful of early proto-professionals.

German parties were organizationally weak but ideologically deeply embedded in civil society. They represented distinct political milieus or subcultures (cf. Lepsius 1973) which also had interest groups and civil associations as their additional instruments of political expression: Social Democracy, political Catholicism, Liberalism, and Conservatism. Parties did enter into electoral alliances (which were almost a must because of the run-off electoral system) and parliamentary coalitions from time to time (cf. Eley 1995, 102-3), yet the boundaries between them remained always clear. Political allegiance under these conditions was a given; only parties within one milieu could compete for the same voters. Thus, until well into the 1890s political organization and mobilization was unnecessary in order to maximize votes. In the three bourgeois camps, local notables and very often the local nobility dominated parties and elections. Voters voted according to their milieu affiliation (much like the Italian voto di appartenenza) and in rural areas especially in East Elbia out of deference to the local nobility. Voters came out “to be counted” for their sub-culture (Suval 1985, 36).
The Social Democrats of course relied on organizational efforts much more heavily than bourgeois parties. But even here organization was precarious, as the legal status of the party was always endangered and overly hierarchical structures would have been disastrous in the case of a legal ban as under the (Anti-)“Socialist Act” of 1878 (until 1890; cf. Lősche 1993, 57; Nipperdey 1961, 307-18). Thus, decentralization was the most prevalent organizational feature even in the SPD that was envied by other parties for its organizational strength. For thirty years the party executive did not even know how many local members there were. Party membership was only loosely defined, and dues became mandatory only in 1909 (Roth 1963, 267). The district-oriented electoral system (majority run-off) and the reactionary Law of Association – formally preventing any supralocal parties and interest groups until 1900 – generally kept party organizations limited to the local level. Committees of local notables and the Reichstag parliamentary parties were the twin pillars of party organization (Nipperdey 1961, 394) – even in the most modern of parties, Social Democracy. The best organized bourgeois party, the Catholic Center Party, incidentally, had been able to circumvent legal obstacles to national organization by using the infrastructure of the Catholic Church and of Catholic associations that provided the backbone of the party which therefore was dubbed „chaplainocracy“ by Weber (1980, 840; cf. Molt 1963, 265-70; Nipperdey 1961, 265-92).

Still, the Social Democratic Party contributed quite a bit to political professionalization. From 1876 on it paid salaries to its members of the Reichstag. As this was considered illegal by the government, the party faced prosecution for its disobedience. But more important than the merely symbolic legislative salaries paid by the party was the great number of jobs that it provided to functionaries and journalists (Molt 1963, 44-6). This proved to be an important asset when politics modernized during the 1890s and 1900s. After 1898, the share of party functionaries in the parliamentary party never dropped below 40 percent with the unions supplying another 15-20 percent (Molt 1963, 52, 230-1). In 1920, a full 77 percent of SPD representatives were employed by the party or the unions (Meyer 1992, 180). It was this model of professionalism that Weber based his analysis of „politics as a vocation“ on in which he expected a party-based process of professionalization that would replace the legislative and partisan amateurism of earlier days (1958, 102-3).

The social democratic approach of a party-based professionalization was viewed as a decisive organizational advantage and hence a model by bourgeois parties12 (Nipperdey 1961, 394; Roth 1963, 158). Bourgeois parties, however, lacked the necessary resources, and as a tight party apparatus would have been too alien a concept for them, they increasingly turned to that other new actor in German political life, interest groups. The rise of interest groups parallels the growth of state interventionism which made ac-

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12 In 1905, a new conservative journal tellingly was subtitled a „Journal for the Technique of Political Organization and Agitation“ (Retallack 1988, 179).
cess to or even a presence in the national legislature an important asset for economic interests. On the other hand, there was a strong presence in German political thought of ideas of corporate representation that furthered interest groups’ involvement in electoral politics\textsuperscript{13}.

The most formidable if somewhat one-sided of the alliances thus created was the one between the Conservatives and the „Farmer’s League“ („Bund der Landwirte“ – BdL)\textsuperscript{14}. Founded in 1893 as a representative of the interests especially of East Elbian big agriculture, the BdL soon achieved hegemonial status in the rural electoral districts of Prussia and many other regions (Molt 1963, 121, 283-8). Ideologically, it used agrarian populist rhetoric as well as nationalism and anti-semitism to attract a mass following among small farmers – although in practise it always favored the interests of large estate owners. The membership rose from about 180,000 in 1894 to 328,000 in 1910 (Bertram 1964, 98, Molt 1963, 283).

The BdL was tightly organized and had a highly centralized, authoritarian structure and superb financial and campaign resources which it used to support the increasingly expensive electoral campaigns of Reichstag candidates. The Federal executive of the League screened every Reichstag member for his voting behavior and gave recommendations to the local branches. In 1910 – not an election year – the League fielded a full-time staff of 187 and a part-time staff of 118 professional agitators who spoke in 10,840 meetings (Bertram 1964, 98-100). The next year the number of meetings rose to 18,892. The League had its own school for speakers which turned out 96 graduates in 1910 and 167 the next year. The BdL’s purely political and quasi-partisan character is revealed in the fact that the most important organizational unit was the „Electoral District Division“ (Molt 1963, 283-4). In return for its support, it asked candidates to commit themselves to its agrarian platform (Molt 1963, 262). While some of its leading professional functionaries joined the Reichstag themselves – running as Independents or as BdL candidates – the BdL exerted its greatest influence by totally controlling one of the conservative parties, the „Deutsch-Konservative Partei,“ and also pocketing the great majority of legislators from three other conservative and national-liberal parties. In 1907, for example, the BdL managed to singlehandedly send 139 legislators (of 397) to the Reichstag (Molt 1963, 288). Overall, this interest group certainly contributed a lot to the centralization and professionalization of German politics, while at the same time modernizing and uniting the bourgeois camp (cf. Berghahn 1994, 239). Its modernizing thrust can be seen in its support of legislative salaries which otherwise were rejected by conservative forces (Molt 1963, 40).

\textsuperscript{13} It is worth mentioning and testament to the longevity of estate-oriented political thought that most of the bourgeois opposition to Hitler in the 1930s and 1940s would have replaced the Nazi system with one of corporate representation rather than representative democracy.

In sum, the seeds of political modernization and professionalization in Germany are clearly visible in the polity of the Kaiserreich (cf. Berghahn 1994, 208-10; Eley 1995; Sheehan 1968). Yet professionalization was incomplete having no clear-cut institutional focus and Weber’s (1958, 112) "guilds of notables" were still predominant. Political professionalization remained incomplete during the Kaiserreich, as neither were there many political positions available which could provide a living nor were the points of access clearly defined nor was professional politics particularly attractive. The emergence of a unified political class was even farther away: German politics of the time were deeply divisive (also cf. Sheehan 1968, 525-7; Best 1990b, 24, among others). The main cleavages were rooted in the life-world of distinct sub-cultures on the one hand and in the conflict over the form of political government itself on the other – over democracy and not on its terrain.

The loss of World War I precipitated the revolution of 1918/19 at the end of which the Weimar Republic was established. Thus, full democracy, parliamentarization, and the republic coincided. Yet what could have been seen as a huge step towards modernization largely remained external. Many of the patterns of the Imperial time did endure. Parties remained wedded to their social milieus, and even party leaderships did not fully understand the mechanisms of parliamentary government. Interest groups continued to proliferate and they competed with parties as institutions of political mediation (cf. Lederner 1979, 33-50, 186-98). As the idea of corporate representation remained strong – and was reinforced by the less geographically oriented electoral system –, interest groups continued to exert direct influence over electoral politics. Parties regularly gave safe seats on party lists to interest group representatives. Some small parties that also blossomed due to the strict PR system were mere extensions of interest groups or even single-issue groups.

The Reichstag now was not only symbolically the center of political power and political activity; yet it did not really develop into a modern legislature. Parliamentary parties did see themselves as mere extensions – and coordinating bodies – of parties at large. The most dramatic change came with the change of the electoral system: The switch from a majority run-off system to one with PR in large districts moved the recruitment function from local committees to the executive committees of parties in Berlin. Thus, it had a strong centralizing impact upon the organization of politics. Party headquarters in Berlin were expanded and professionalized. Party leadership and parliamentary party leadership now tended to be identical in terms of their personnel. Particularly in the SPD, the importance of the party apparatus increased tremendously. Realistic estimates put the numbers of full-time political staff employed by the Social Democrats alone at between 10,000 to 30,000 in the late 1920s (Hunt 1964, 57; Lösche 1993, 75). The party secretary in particular became the leitmotiv of party organization and the epiphenomenon of
political professionalization more generally. While legislators still received only very limited legislative salaries, most of them held some party (or interest group) function concurrently which enabled them to be full-time politicians. The vast majority of professional politicians was paid by the parties, with only a small minority of them serving in the legislatures. Thus, during the Weimar Republic the pattern of professionalization came fairly close to what Weber had foreseen.

While the transition to the Weimar Republic thus brought a modernization in many regards, in others political patterns were still very much Imperial. Electoral results at first very much resembled those of the Kaiserreich (Lösche 1993, 67-9). The political personnel in the Reichstag remained essentially the same and thus was formed by its experiences in the Imperial years (Molt 1963, 357). This was notably different to the Prussian state legislature where the democratization of the electoral law had led to a wholly new type of politician and new style of parliamentary politics that in some ways foreshadowed the later experience of the Federal Republic (cf. Winkler 1993, 598; Lösche 1988). But even more importantly, the struggle over democratic government endured and overshadowed all other aspects of political life. On balance, the Weimar Republic brought a large step towards political professionalism, but professionals were still far from united in anything worth calling a ‘political class.’ One might even argue that the absence of this sense of unity distinguished Germany from some other advanced industrial countries at the time and made the fatal disintegration of the political system at the hands of the Nazis much more likely. The multiple and deep divisions within the Reichstag were all the more problematic since the prevailing theory of democracy among political actors in Germany still was classical liberalism, juxtaposing parliament as a whole to the government rather than a governmental to an oppositional bloc within parliament.

The NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers’ Party) bundled and radicalized those themes that had already been voiced by the radical nationalist right before World War I. In a way, it advanced upon earlier attempts to unite the bourgeois parties under the banner of nationalism, anti-parliamentarism, and anti-Semitism. Interestingly enough, sociologically the NSDAP was the first German party to overcome the narrow boundaries of sub-culture. Thus, it was both an indicator of social change taking place that was eroding traditional affiliations and an agent of modernization. Yet, its integration function was purely negative – old structures were effectively destroyed (Best 1990b, 23-4).

When Germany had lost yet another war, and the Allied Powers occupied its territory, the three Western powers reinstituted democratic institutions first on the local and state level. Only in 1948/49 was a new federal constitution drafted and a federal legislature elected. While again there was much continuity in spite of the regime change in terms of the bureaucracy and the judiciary, this transition period proved to be of far more consequence than the one in 1918/19. After World War II, the German party state was born
although that was neither the primary intention of actors nor could it be easily foreseen at the time.

Indeed, some forces saw the breakdown of the First Republik as a result of too strong an influence by irresponsible parties. Consequently, they favored a more American-like model of independent politicians (cf. Lange 1980, 66). Yet the majority of actors saw the problem more in the narrowness and irresponsibility of parties in the Weimar Republic than in their influence. Thus, in the deliberations of the ‘Parliamentary Council’ (consisting of representatives from the elected state legislatures) about the new constitution the parties were given a quasi-official role for the first time in German history. Article 21 of the Basic Law stated that the "parties contribute to the formation of political intentions."

Probably more important for the future development than the constitutional language were changes in German politics that resulted from the formative period of 1945-49. After some initial Allied skepticism towards German political organizations, Democratic parties reformed very early (cf. Jesse 1990, 68-70). The major change from the Kaiserreich as well as the Weimar Republic was the consolidation of much of the three bourgeois camps (catholic, liberal, conservative) in one party, the Christian Democratic Union (Christian Social Union in Bavaria). This overcoming of milieu boundaries would have been unthinkable before. But now the social milieus had been eroded both by social modernization and by the experience of fascism and war. The close-knit communities that were the backbone of social milieus had been destroyed especially through the loss of the Eastern part of the country and the huge migration to the West. From this resulted a fairly clear opposition of two large party blocs based on an appeal to broad segments of the population, the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats as ‘catch-all parties,’ moving the struggle among social interests – at least to a certain extent – from the inter-party to the intra-party level.

Equally important were the common experiences of party leaders under allied occupation. The Allied Powers displayed a strong tendency to create all-party cartels whereever they chose to give self-rule to Germans: Local government first consisted of all-party magistrates. Newspaper licences were given to all-party groups of applicants so as to ensure pluralism. Finally, the drafting of the Basic Law was done mostly based on a consensus way of decision-making. Thus, German politicians made a new experience of unity that sharply contrasted with their pre-war experiences of intransigent party struggles – although there were some experiences of commonality they could build on (cf. the forthcoming work of Thomas Mergel). One leading German political scientist wrote about the "camaraderie of the party people" typical of the immediate post-war years (Wilhelm Hennis, quoted in Jesse 1990, 69). It is this experience that lay the ground for the belated emergence of a political class in Germany (also cf. Stöss 1997, 21-2).
Yet the process of constitution-making was also the site of an underlying struggle between different conceptions of democracy in Germany. The two most important groups of actors were on the one side the leadership of the two big parties around Adenauer and Schumacher (who were both not present in state governments) and on the other side the prime ministers of the state governments (cf. Klein 1990, 63-82). Party leaders favored a strengthening and a formal recognition of parties and the constitution of a central West German government, whereas the prime ministers were more committed to a bureaucratic model of government and state power. The Constitutional Convention of Herrenchiemsee in 1948 was called by the prime ministers in order to counter the claim to power by parties and institutionalize the strong position the states had achieved in the absence of a central level. Indeed, their position proved too strong to overcome in favor of a more unitarian structure. But at the same time political life was too much party-based already to keep the parties at bay in the Parliamentary Council and later on (cf. Klein 1990; Otto 1971, 150-75; Stöss 1997, 22). Thus, the outcome was a lasting compromise combining federalism and party democracy (cf. Lehmbruch 1976).

Theoretically, the turn to party democracy was underwritten by the theory of Gerhard Leibholz who had been advancing his brand of party democracy since the days of Weimar. Now as a leading teacher of public law and a judge on the Constitutional Court, he was in a position to write his theory into constitutional law. While the importance should not be overstated, his approach had an important function as a legitimatory device.

What was missing at this time was the material base for a re-professionalization of politics. This was changed rather fast, however. First, the Social Democrats relied mostly on membership fees, whereas Christian Democrats and smaller bourgeois parties received money from industry. Money given to parties was made tax-deductible in 1954. When the Constitutional Court declared that practice unconstitutional, parties appropriated themselves money from the state budget for purposes of "political education." These funds were continually expanded and amounted to DM 38 million in 1966 for each major party. When this way of party finance was ruled unconstitutional, too, a Party Act was approved by the Bundestag in 1967 that gave parties access to state-financed campaigns based on votes received. Additionally, the funds for political education were rerouted to the party foundations and thus made accessible for party purposes (Lösche 1993, 174-5).

While the Party Act of 1967 marked its ratification, the parties’ invasion of the state started very early in the Second Republic. The newly found common interests served as

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15 Konrad Adenauer personally had taken care of this issue before the first Bundestag elections. An association was founded in which all leading German industrialists and bankers were members. This association then collected contributions and gave them to bourgeois parties according to a fixed distribution formula (Lösche 1993, 177-8).
a background for a pattern of political professionalization and political finance that relied heavily on state funds. Parties found ways and means to colonialize large parts of state and society. Their ‘long arm’ assured jobs for party members at high as well as at lower levels in the bureaucracy. The erosion of boundaries between parties and the state made it also possible to externalize the costs for political personnel by way of legislatures. As leading party members also tend to be members of the Bundestag or a state legislature, raising the legislative salaries freed the parties from having to pay them.

The most dramatic shift occurred within the SPD which in its 1958 organizational reform depprofessionalized its party staff. After decades of reliance on its own organizational strength the Social Democrats decided to replace the heretofore omnipresent party secretaries with honorary personnel. Hence party staff was reduced while functionaries were supposed to make a living off public mandates and offices. Lösche (1993, 138-9) has called this process the "parliamentarization of the SPD." Party staff generally is rather small today compared to Weimar times, but Bundestag staff tripled between 1950 and 1980 while appropriations for parliamentary party staff were more than 27 times higher in 1980 than in 1950 (Blischke 1981, 547, 555).

Thus first the Bundestag and then also the state legislatures became the focus of professional political careers in Germany, but the parties remained in control over the nomination process. In comparison to Weimar, the process was somewhat decentralized, however. State and local organizations used the political vacuum on the federal level in the early days of the Federal Republic to gain a firm hold that they were not willing to cease afterwards. Interest groups remained powerful, but could only rarely provide political careers. Rather, they maintained institutionalized links to parties as organizations.

As parties gradually expanded their sphere of influence, Weber’s (1958, 87) recognition that “all party struggles are struggles for the patronage of office, as well as struggles for objective goals” was confirmed. Public administration on all levels, public radio and television, state-owned industries, local banks, utility and transportation companies, the higher judiciary, foundations, charities – all of these were considered within the legitimate reach of party democracy\(^{16}\) (cf. Beyme 1993, 58-88). Thus, Weber’s distinction of

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\(^{16}\) Thus, Shefter’s (1994, 44) thesis of "reverse colonization" of the parties by the bureaucracy in Germany is mistaken. It is true that public officials (‘Beamte’) in Germany are overrepresented in the Bundestag and thus find it relatively easy to safeguard their material interests. Yet most of them are teachers and hence hardly can be counted among the bureaucracy proper. More importantly, though, careers within the civil service are linked to ‘party tickets’ whereas the bureaucracy has no influence whatsoever on political careers. Due to historic reasons – Bismarck eased the way of higher public servants into the Reichstag – it has always been easy for public servants to pursue a political career. Yet once the boundaries between party and state were eroded, the direction of influence became pretty obvious: the German public service is a *partitocrazia* and in many ways partisan pockets within the civil
professional politicians being either "entrepreneurs" or "political officials" in Germany was resolved in favour of the latter.

Professional careers in politics thus became attractive, available, and accessible in the Federal Republic. Salaries rose and today are second only to the U.S. among advanced industrial countries (Hood and Peters 1994, 229). Benefits and pensions are extremely generous. The availability of political careers is regulated by parties. A safe place on the party list effectively insulates the political professional against the exigencies of electoral politics – he or she cannot be voted out of office unless his or her party falls below the 5 percent threshold. Only a small number of marginals has to fear annihilation at the voters’ hands. Typically, however, marginal seats are reserved for newcomers and thus getting a safe place on the list can be considered part of the career advancement process. Within the party it is the local and state branches that are most important within the federal structure. Access to a political career is clearly defined by the local level of a party. The rise within party ranks and from local mandate to state or federal legislature is parallel, and party offices and public mandates and offices are held concurrently. Strategic offices within the party such as county chairperson or on the local level such as mayor are kept even if one gets a seat in the Bundestag, as this is the way to control and preempt potential challengers (cf. Golsch 1998).

The insulation against electoral politics and the invasion of state and society are typical features of what Katz and Mair have characterized as cartel parties. Germany clearly is a cartel party system. For the individual politician this means that he or she is a conscious part of a political class based on party government. Thus, we should not expect to see deviant behavior within parliamentary party caucuses all too often. After all, one’s own party is about the only potential danger to one’s career. This reinforces a rather passive backbencher role. As to policy-making, it should be clear from the above that legitimation is to social groups rather than geographically defined entities (with the exception of the Bavarian CSU). Public policy is not the only means of appealing to people. The parties have a very strong patronage function within the German bureaucracy.

Thus, professionalization was complete with the Weimar Republic, yet the patterns changed once again after World War II. And it was only then that the cohesion and common consciousness – the esprit de corps – could develop that is necessary to form a political class. Until after World War II politicians had a rather detached attitude towards the national legislature, first because most of them were amateurs during the Kaiserreich and then because their careers took place within the party apparatus during the Weimar Republic. This changed in the Federal Republic when politicians remained dependent on their party for a career but relied on legislative salaries for an income. The service have replaced the parties’ own organizations. The autonomy and strength of the German bureaucracy is mostly a long-lived myth, for which probably Weber has to be faulted most.
relationship between the parties and the state bears the most dramatic change between First and Second Republic, as the parties transformed themselves from agencies of civil society into state institutions.

Thus, the party state which theorists had seen emerging in Weimar already – these were mostly analyses motivated by strong anti-party sentiments (cf. Stöss 1997, 17-21) – came into being in Bonn. With it finally a cohesive political class of professional politicians emerged. Like its American counter-part, the political class stabilized the institutional context to which it owed its existence to a remarkable degree. Due to the regime changes that Germany had undergone in the process, there seemed to be even less need for further institutional reform. Even after reunification with East Germany, the debate on constitutional reform was restricted to academic circles – much like the ‘more responsible parties’ debate in the U.S. during the 1940s and 50s. The political class much preferred to have the system that nurtured it transfered to the new territories without much fuss and discussion.

Overall then, Germany resembles the model developed in part 2 very closely (which may, of course, be simply due to the fact that the model was developed against the background of the German experience). What is noteworthy, however, how much theories of democracy have remained wedded to older practices of democracy even when political relaity had already surpassed them.

5. Tentative Conclusion – Author Running out of Time

The two case-studies have confirmed the pattern outlined in my theoretical model. Hence there is a historical process that is common to these two countries – and, as I would claim, to many others as well: There is a development in the practice of democracy that leads from parliamentarism to the political class. The ways to get from a) to b) differ, yet there seems to be a force that produces convergence. This force, I have argued, is the professionalization of politics and the ensuing formation of a political class. Both of these tendencies have been inadequately recognized in empirical theories of democracy.

Yet any attempt to build developmental models has to be aware of the fundamentally different paths travelled by different countries. Reading history from today might lead us to over-emphasize similarities which would then disable us to understand history as being ‘made’ by concrete actors under specific circumstances. The only way out then is comparative historical analysis.
Also the roads that lead to the present are so winding that the critical junctures in which a change of direction takes place become especially interesting. In these critical junctures competing conceptions of democracy are underlying the choices actors make. To identify and account for these conceptions, their competition, and the eventual outcome then seems to be a very worthwhile endeavor for which this paper could only name some starting points.

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