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**Article**

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13. Wacquant summarizes Bourdieu's twin emphases well when he declares that "[c]lass lies neither in structures nor in agency alone but in their relationship as it is historically produced, reproduced, and transformed" (1991, p. 51).

14. For an effort at an informed transposition of certain aspects of Bourdieu's educational sociology to the U.S. context, see Weininger and Lareau (forthcoming). It must be admitted, however, that this essay makes use of a traditional concept of social class.

## **"Le patronat norvégien": State vs. Market?**

### **Capital Structures, Oppositions and Political Position Taking in the Norwegian Field of Power.**

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#### 1. Introduction

Concepts like power, class and elite are most often founded on an assumption that society, the positions an individual occupies herein and also the relations between individuals located in these positions, can be analysed as a multidimensional hierarchy. And while it is common to separate between different forms of power (as for instance military, bureaucratic, economic or symbolic power), it is also common to separate between different types of elites, for instance political, administrative and economic elites (Scott (ed.)1990, Suleiman & Mendras (eds.) 1997).

The criteria for the latter differentiation have usually been related to societal sectors, specific societal tasks, levels of power or to functional criteria. As early as in 1950, Raymond Aron argued in favour of a division based on the function of ruling, and identified 5 subgroups of the elite: political leaders, government administrators, economic leaders, leaders of the masses and military chiefs (Aron 1950a : 9). Aron went on to emphasize that an analysis of elites also had to be relational and comparative in orientation: "By the structure of the élite I mean the relation between various groups in the élite which is peculiar to each society. Indeed, although there are everywhere business managers, government officials, trade union secretaries and ministers, they are not everywhere recruited in the same way and they may either form one coherent whole or remain comparatively distinct from one another." (ibid. p.10)

While not sharing Aron's functional approach, we agree with his relational strategy and his call for comparative analysis. Drawing inspiration from Bourdieu and Bourdieu & de Saint-Martin's work (in particular Bourdieu & de Saint-Martin 1978, Bourdieu 1989), we will in this short article suggest how a relational strategy in studies of classes and elites may be developed through a brief analysis of attitudes of "le patronat norvégien" towards the role of the State vs. the Market when it comes to what should be the central principles of political and societal organisation.

Struggles between elite groups are also struggles over what principles should be the central with respect to the distribution, differentiation and accumulation of the various types of power or capital in the field of power, a concept first coined by Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002). This struggle is at the same time a struggle over what should be the dominating logic in the field of power (for instance to what degree the dominant neoliberal economic logic in the economic field shall prevail over the logic in the political field) and over the value of different types of capital (e.g. economic, political, cultural and social capital).

Internationally, a commonly raised issue about Bourdieu's empirical analysis (both in connection with Bourdieu 1979 and Bourdieu 1989) has been to question whether the results of the analysis would remain valid outside the French society. In our opinion, the debate over this issue has been flawed by the failure of some critiques (for instance Alexander 1995) to separate clearly between empirical and theoretical generalizations (see Champagne 1990, Bourdieu 1992). In our view, it is fairly obvious that the outcome of empirical analysis of power structures in e.g. Norway cannot be predicted from analysis of French data, but this does not mean that the theoretical understanding and interpretation of the French data is not relevant to the understanding and interpretation of the outcome of empirical analysis in a different social setting. Furthermore, recent empirical studies (Rosenlund 1998, 2000, Hjellbrekke & Korsnes 2003) also reveal structural similarities between the French and Norwegian social spaces. This will be further discussed below.

In contrast to Aron, the elite subgroups in our analysis will not be defined a priori, but will instead be identified through an analysis of what we tentatively may call "the Norwegian field of power". Based on survey data from the Norwegian Power and Democracy Survey on Norwegian elites (Gulbrandsen & al. 2002, Holt & Prangerød 2001), and using multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) (see Rouanet & Le Roux 1993) as our main statistical tool, two main questions will be addressed:

1. What are the dominant capital structure oppositions in what we tentatively may call "the Norwegian field of power"?
2. What are the relations between the structures in the Norwegian field of power and the structures in the habitus of the agents that are located in the positions in this field? In other words; are structural oppositions and relations between positions in the field of power also present in position specific variations in perceptions, attitudes and dispositions?

Whereas the first analysis will be based on a MCA of a set of capital indicating variables, the latter analysis will be based on a MCA of the respondents' responses to 20 statements about what should be dominant political goals and principles, societal views, ethical guidelines, control and ownership of Norwegian businesses and enterprises.

Before presenting the results, we will strongly emphasize that an exhaustive analysis of the capital structures in the Norwegian field of power demands far more than the analyses and the discussions presented in this article. Furthermore, advanced statistical techniques cannot replace a detailed historical-sociological analysis of the issues we are addressing. Finally, as Henry Rouanet, Brigitte Le Roux and Werner Ackermann (2000) have pointed out: "In the analysis of questionnaires, doing correspondence analysis is not enough to do "analyses à la Bourdieu".

2. Key concepts. 'Social space', 'fields', 'habitus' and 'field of power'.

As is well known, Bourdieu's theory of the social space "presupposes a series of breaks with

Marxist theory" (Bourdieu 1991: 229). "Classes" are located theoretically as positions within a multidimensional social space of relations. The dimensions in this space are constructed on the basis of various types of capital that also are active as principles of social differentiation. The relative positions and the systems of oppositions within the social space are thus seen as products of the distribution of different types of capital (economical, cultural, social etc.) and social power relations in the society that is analysed. These relationally defined "classes" are not to be understood as *actual* classes (or mobilized groups), but rather *probable* classes (groups that may be socially and politically mobilized).

At the same time, the various types of capital are also structuring mechanisms in the various *fields of action*. These are the arenas in which the agents invest their capital as means in a struggle for realizing field specific goals, e.g. the achievement of powerful positions in the political or the scientific field. A given agent's power in a field can be seen as dependent on the volume of capital the agent can "invest" in the "field-play", the structure of the agent's capital, and the agent's *habitus*.

The *field of power* is the arena where agents located in dominant positions in various fields are engaged in struggles that affect the continuation or change of the power relations within the different fields, but also, and not at least, struggles over the relations between the different fields (see Bourdieu & de Saint Martin 1978, Bourdieu 1989, Bourdieu 1991).

Not surprisingly, in Bourdieu's analyses (for instance Bourdieu 1989:379-80), the field of power has been located in the most "capital loaded" sectors of the social space. The same goes for the positions we are focusing on below (see Hjellbrekke 2000, Hjellbrekke & Korsnes 2003 for details).

### 3. Data

The analyses are based on data from a survey of 1711 persons in leading positions in the Norwegian society during the autumn of 2000, performed by the Norwegian Power and Democracy Survey. The sample is as follows:

- a) Research and higher educational institutions - 146 persons
- b) Defence/military - 68 persons
- c) Central administration - 197 persons
- d) Church - 107 persons
- e) Culture organisations/institutions - 143 persons
- f) Media - 116 persons
- g) Private and public businesses - 308 persons
- h) Organisations - 215 persons
- i) The political system - 190 persons
- j) Police and judicial system - 138 persons

A first examination of the univariate distributions reveals a clearly gendered sample. The

position holders are also well educated, their income levels are well above the average for the population, and their social background is (not surprisingly) also clearly skewed:

1. 85% are men and 15% women
2. 62% have a higher university degree or an education at phd-level. Only 2.6% finished their education after compulsory education
3. 50% have an income > NOK 1 mill.
4. 25% have a fortune > NOK 1 mill.
5. 8% have a capital income > NOK 200 000
6. 30% have a father and 11% a mother with a university degree.
7. 40% have a father who holds/held a position as a leader at higher or intermediate levels, whereas 33% of the mothers work/worked in what John H. Goldthorpe (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1991) has coined "non-manual routine jobs".

#### 4. Capital Structures and Oppositions in the Field of Power.

17 variables have been selected as active capital indicators and as indicators of the respondents' social positions, giving a total of 95 active categories in the MCA:

Income - 8 categories

Capital income – 7 categories

Own education – 6 categories

Father's education – 6 categories

Mother's education – 6 categories

Father's occupation – 7 categories

Mother's occupation – 7 categories

Yrs of experience in central administration – 5 categories

Yrs of experience in research – 5 categories

Yrs of experience in politics – 5 categories

Yrs of experience in

organisations – 5 categories

Yrs of experience in

police/judicial system – 4 categories

Yrs of experience in business – 6 categories

Yrs of experience in defence – 4 categories

Yrs of experience in church – 4 categories

Yrs of experience in media – 5 categories

Yrs of experience in culture – 5 categories

As this list indicates, we mix two types of information in the analysis, and this is not a strategy without problems: both intra- and intergenerational mobility trajectories are inscribed in the solution. The reason why we still think that this can be justified, is that this solution unites two of the central conditions that are active with respect to the formation of structures in the agents' habituses: professional or occupational conditions and social background conditions. The variable on field positions is given status as a supplementary variable, and will be "projected" into the solution.

The MCA gives us two main axes to interpret.

Axis 1:  $\lambda_1 = 0.16105$  34.4 % of the inertia

Axis 2:  $\lambda_2 = 0.14089$  22.2 % of the inertia

If we follow the interpretative strategy outlined by Le Roux and Rouanet (1998), the examination of the absolute contributions reveals two clear oppositions along these two axes. The first axis separates between high and low volumes of inherited cultural capital:

*Table 1: Absolute contributions from variables to axes 1 and 2. Contributions from oppositions between categories to variable (intra-contribution). Threshold value for variables = 5.9%, for categories 1.1%.*

Variable	Contribution to axis 1 Intra-contribution to variable	Contribution to axis 2 Intra-contribution to variable
Own income (NOK)		17.6% to axis 2. 340'-399' vs. 750'-999'/1 mill+ : 64.5%
Capital income (NOK)		9.5% to axis 2 <10' vs. 200'-999'/1 mill+: 74.7%
Own education		13.3% to axis 2. Continuing Ed.2/Univ2 vs. Phd. : 81%
Father's education		6.4% to axis 2

	21% to axis 1. Basic education vs. Univ2/Univ3: 94.5%	Continuing Ed.1 vs. Univ.3 : 72.7%.
<b>Mother's education</b>	18.7% to axis 1 Basic education vs. Continuing Ed.2/Univ.1-3: 98.4%	
<b>Father's occupation</b>	21.1% to axis 1. Leading position vs Skilled/Unskilled manual/Farmer: 93.9%	
<b>Mother's occupation</b>	13.7% to axis 1. Leading/Intermediate vs. Unskilled manual/Farmer: 92.3%	
<b>Yrs of experience in research</b>		8.9% to axis 2. 5-9 yrs/10-19 yrs/20 yrs+ vs. None: 94.5%
<b>Yrs of experience in business</b>		24.3% to axis 2. 20-29yrs/30yrs+ vs. None: 95.4%
<b>Sum, contributions of variables</b>	<b>74.5%</b>	<b>80%</b>

Four variables, Father's and Mother's educations and Father's and Mother's occupations account for 74% of the inertia explained by the dimension. The intra-contributions are systematically generated by the opposition between Basic education vs. Continuing ed. 2 and/or university studies, and by the opposition between leading non-manual positions and manual positions/farmers.

The second axis can be interpreted as a capital structure axis, separating between the highest levels of economic and educational (i.e. institutionalised cultural) capital. There is also a clear opposition between leaders of larger businesses and leaders of academic institutions. However, the patterns of the intra-contributions are not as uniform as those found for axis 1. While the intra-contributions generated by the oppositions between the higher and lower values on the economic capital, the central oppositions is found between the intermediate continuing educations/lower university degrees and educations at Phd-level or equivalent.

In the diagram below, the mean points of the various positions are "projected" into the solution found for the cloud of the individuals:

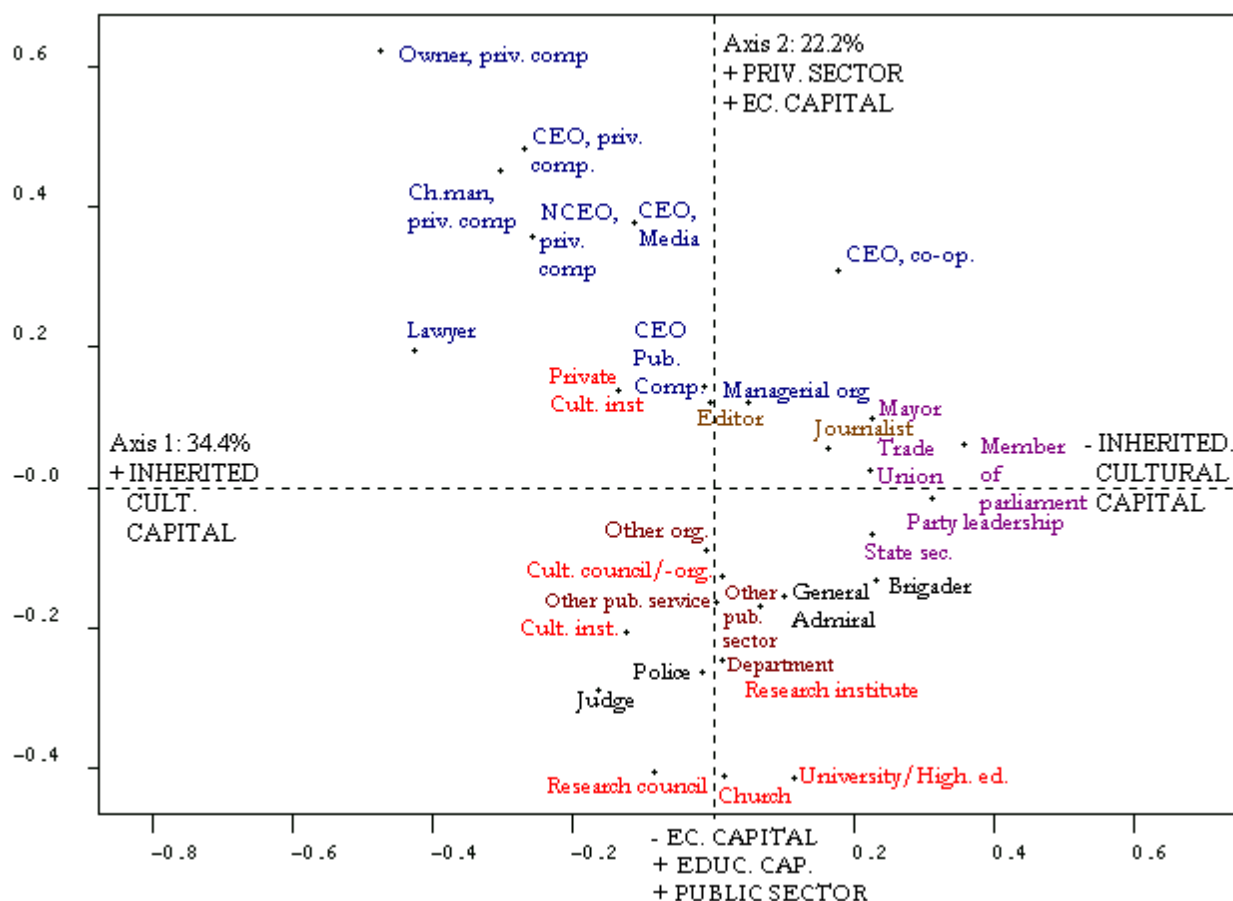


Fig. 1: Positions in the Norwegian Field of Power.

As can clearly be seen from the figure, the structure of the Norwegian field of power is tri-polar. We find one cluster of positions that all are related to private businesses, one cluster in and around the political system and one cluster of positions that belong to public sector.

A detailed examination of the cloud of individuals (see Hjellbrekke & Korsnes 2003) also confirms the interpretation of the first axis. While respondents having parents in leading positions, i.e. being of upper white collar background, are located in the left quadrants of the figure, respondents whose parents worked in manual occupations or who were farmers are located at the right hand side of the figure. It also turns out that the first axis, if not perfectly, separates between persons with the highest and the lowest levels of own education.

Axis two turns out not only to be a capital structure axis, but also to describe a related opposition between positions in private vs. public sector, expressed most clearly by the opposition between owners/CEOs of private companies (upper left quadrant) and leaders of institutions of higher education/research (lower quadrants). In the two right quadrants, we find the mean points for the various political positions, included the leaders of the unions and also the political journalists. The area where the accumulation and reproduction of cultural capital is at its strongest (lower left quadrant), is where we find the leaders of cultural institutions, leaders of independent research institutes, and higher civil servants like supreme court judges. High volumes of accumulated cultural capital thus give access to positions in institutions that are important distributors of the same capital.

The mean points for the political positions, to the contrary, are located in the field areas



where the accumulation and volumes of educational and inherited cultural capital are at their lowest: persons whose parents left school after compulsory education, most often working in manual occupations, are found in the two right quadrants. The political positions are thus the most "open" with respect to social mobility, whereas the positions in the lower left quadrant are the most "closed". So far, there are therefore clear indications that the cultural and political/organisational field areas are in diagonal opposition to each other in the Norwegian field of power.

Finally, the field is strongly gendered. Women are in reality excluded from the upper left quadrant where the positions of the business leaders are located. Thus, the internal opposition between cultural and political capital is seemingly more dominating for women than for men.

To sum up the results of the analysis so far, the Norwegian field of power anno 2002 seems to be organized around an opposition between cultural and political/organisational capital, and between cultural and economic capital. The question that now arises is whether similar oppositions are present in the agents' position *taking*.

##### 5. State vs. Market? Political Position Taking in the Norwegian Field of Power.

Among leading Norwegian economic historians, one of the dominant views of the country's economic history is that it constitutes a "Sonderweg" when compared to the rest of Western Europe. The capitalist history of Norway is not impregnated by a strong internal financial bourgeoisie and/or bourgeoisie families, as for instance the Wallenberg family in Sweden. Furthermore, Norwegian banks and financial institutions were not long-term investors in industrial companies and did not act as industrial and economic strategists, as under the so-called Rhein-model. As the economic historian Francis Sejersted (1993) points out, the role of the State was not only regulatory, but also compensatory; to act as an investor, owner and strategist. State ownership of banks, industrial companies and oil companies has increased during the post-war period and despite the neo-liberal turn in the 1990s, it is at present probably higher than ever, and the centralised tripartite system of income regulation has not been dismantled, but rather invigorated (Dølvik and Stokke 1998). In general, one would therefore expect rather strong pro-state sympathies among all actors in the Norwegian field of power. However, at least since the mid-1980s a growing emphasis on deregulating markets (housing, finance, mass media, post, telecommunications, energy etc.) and adjusting to a more fierce global economic competition (e.g. in the oil industry) is so conspicuous that it would be surprising if it was not also reflected in the position-taking in some areas (in particular the business area) and among some actors (in particular economic actors) in the field of power.

Also, and perhaps as a consequence of the lack of both a landed gentry and a strong financial bourgeoisie, the state and struggles over state intervention and power has been of particular importance in the political and cultural fields, as these fields both bears traits of a historical tension between a state-upholding elite of well-educated senior civil servants (during vital phases in the building of the nation-state), a well-organised labour movement and a variety of popular "countercultures".

Analyses of Norwegian political history, and of struggles over the State have thus strongly emphasised the persisting role of the so-called "countercultures" (Rokkan 1987) and their opposition to urban, conservative elites. Historically, the "countercultures" can be described as an unstable alliance between members of religious groups, the temperance movement,

teachers, workers, farmers and fishermen in the rural districts, and urban liberals and intellectuals. Combining nationalist views with a progressive political agenda, e.g. a persistent struggle for expanded democratic rights, and an emphasis upon the active role of the State as a welfare provider, this "counterculture" constellation provided strong support for the new state-upholding social-democratic regime, which consolidated its position in the first post-war period. And although both this regime and the "counterculture" constellation have crumbled, there is reason to expect that this historical heritage still leaves an imprint on the structure of oppositions in the Norwegian field of power, and on position-taking on state vs. market issues. As we have already observed there is e.g. a diagonal opposition between a rather "closed" cultural zone and a much more "open" political one, which is partly an opposition along an economic capital dimension, and which suggests that a more pro-market position-taking can be expected in the latter zone.

An analysis of the responses to 20 statements (see appendix), all coded from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree" with a total of 80 active categories once again gives us two axes to interpret, summarizing a total of 81% of the inertia:

Axis 1:  $\lambda_1 = 0.23078$  55 % of the inertia

Axis 2:  $\lambda_2 = 0.17385$  26 % of the inertia

Table 2 provides a synopsis of the contributions from the most central variables with respect to the construction of the axes, and of the intra-contributions from the oppositions between the various categories:

*Table 2: Absolute contributions from variables to axes 1 and 2. Intracontributions from oppositions between categories. Threshold value = 5% for variables and 1.3% for individual categories.*

Variable/Statement	Contribution of variable to axis 1 Intracontribution to variable	Contribution of variable to axis 2 Intracontribution to variable
Important businesses and financial institutions in Norway should be owned by Norwegians.	5.2% to axis. Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 73%	
The political control over a number of partly privatised state companies, e.g. Telenor ("Telecom Norway"), Norwegian State Railways and the Postal Service, is too weak and should be strengthened	5.4% to axis Partly agree vs. Totally disagree: 72.7%	
Norwegian investments abroad should follow Norwegian environmental standards for work regulation and environmental protection whenever they are stricter than the local laws.	7.0% to axis Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 89.2%	5.7% to axis Totally agree vs. Partly disagree: 73.3%
In Norway, we've come far enough in reducing economic inequalities.	10.2% to axis Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 83.1%	7.3% to axis Totally agree vs. Partly disagree: 79.3%
Cultural enterprises, e.g. media and publishers, should mainly be owned by Norwegians.		5.0% to axis

	6.1% to axis Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 82.5%	Totally agree vs. Partly disagree: 71.5%
In Norway, the distance between the elites and the population is too large when it comes to real political influence		5.2% to axis Totally agree vs. Partly disagree:79.3%
It is more important to further the level of public services than to reduce taxes.	11.6% to axis Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 89.2%	7.1% to axis Totally agree vs. Partly agree/disagree: 75.6%
In Norway, one should favour more privatisation and a smaller public sector.	13.8% to axis Totally agree vs Partly/Totally disagree: 96.7%	7.4% to axis Partly agree vs. Totally disagree: 79.8%
State control over private enterprise should be reduced.	10.9% to axis Totally agree vs Partly/Totally disagree: 96.9%	7.8% to axis Partly agree vs. Totally disagree: 87.8%
We should construct gas power plants in Norway, based on the existing technology.	5.9% to axis Totally agree vs Totally disagree: 95.8%	
We should favour a society where Christian values play a more important role than they do today.		5.4% to axis Partly disagree vs. Totally disagree: 85.8%
Immigration levels should be adjusted to labour market demands.		6.4% to axis Partly disagree vs. Totally agree/disagree:79%
<b>Sum, Contribution of variables</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>

A closer examination of the structure of the absolute contributions yields support to an interpretation of axis 1 as a "classic" political left-right dimension. Categories indicating a general "rightist", liberal/neoliberal political orientation (in favour of market/private solutions, opposition to state control, economic issues given predominance over environmental issues) are all localised at the right hand side of the axis (positive coordinates), whereas categories indicating a general "leftist" political orientation are at the left hand side of the axis (negative coordinates).

At first, axis 2 may seem less clear. Not only are the statements that contribute the most to its construction more heterogeneous than what we find for axis 1. There are also oppositions between categories that indicate strong rightist/leftist political views (strongly agree/disagree) and the more moderate categories (partly agree/disagree). But this pattern is consistent. Whereas the "extreme" response categories are given negative categories on

the axis, the "mid"-categories are given positive coordinates. While axis 1 separates between this elite (and part of the political elite) and an academic/cultural elite defending a strong state involvement in the economy, low income differentials and participatory political principles.

Between these two clusters, we find "neutral" positions that either are related to institutions that have an obligation under the Constitution to remain politically neutral (Police/Attorneys, Judges, Departments, Other higher public offices, Armed forces) and business enterprises that depend upon a "balancing act" between the Market and State regulations (Co-operatives, State controlled businesses, Private cultural institutions, Media companies), or positions where it is important to avoid any suspicion of making decisions on the basis of political sympathies and ties (Research council, Research Institute, Mass media). These are mainly also given positive coordinates on the second axis.

It is also a gendered space: the clear majority of women are located in the two left quadrants, whereas men (yet again) are evenly distributed in all the four quadrants. With respect to social background, respondents whose fathers were manual workers (an indicator of low volumes of inherited cultural capital) are found on the right side of the axis. Finally, there is an opposition between respondents having a higher degree in humanities or pedagogy and degrees in engineering/sciences (i.e. a version of a classic opposition between educations that also was found in Bourdieu's studies of France). This pattern is interesting in view of the historical opposition in Norwegian society between a well-educated elite of senior civil servants and more popular forces, as reminiscences of this opposition still seems to be active. However, it may now seem that the heirs of the class of civil servants are more prone to defend state involvement and norms of equality than the descendants of ordinary people, although a much more detailed analysis is needed in order to corroborate this. If this is the case, it may appear to be an historical paradox, but considering the mechanisms of social mobility relating to cultural capital it is not, as the institutions that distribute cultural capital and which the reproduction of the elite positions we are talking about very much depend upon, are (so far) also much more state-dependent than elite positions within politics and business.

As we can see from a comparison of figures 1 and 2, the political position taking (shown in figure 2) cannot simply be derived from the oppositions found in the analysis of the capital indicators (shown in figure 1). Even though axis 1 (in figure 2) clearly can be interpreted as a capital structure axis, and we once again find the opposition between cultural and economic capital to be the dominant, the mean point for agents' holding positions at the national political level are found in the same quadrant as the mean point for the leaders of cultural institutions. Despite differences with respect to the average volumes of inherited cultural capital, both tend to defend the role of the State vs the role of market. The interaction between the positions in the social space and the trajectories leading into positions in the field of power (which in both cases, although in different ways, are carriers "linked" to the State), in this case generates similarities with respect to political position taking; high volumes of political and inherited cultural capital stands in opposition to high volumes of economic capital. In this context, the secondary structures in the habituses, embodied through trajectory related and position related experiences, dominate over the primary structures.

Given that one of the central issues in the analysed data set is whether or not the State should be perceived as an ally or an adversary, the distance between the mayors and the other political positions is of particular interest and merits further analysis, also because the mean points for the journalists and the leaders of the trade unions are located in proximity to the other national political positions. We can only speculate whether this is an indication

of an internal opposition between high and low volumes of political capital specific to the political field, and simultaneously of a distinct field logic that, while at the same time generating "correct" views of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" political position takings, also works to exclude less central positions from setting the political agenda.

## 6. Concluding comments.

As cited in the introduction, Aron referred to the structure of the elite as " the relation between various groups in the élite which is peculiar to each society." The above analyses indicate that in the case of Norway, this structure is tri-polar. The point of departure for our construction has not been an a priori defined set of characteristics, but a set of capital indicators related to a set of characteristics of a sample of persons located in specific positions. So far, our analyses indicate that the three identified clusters are not homogenous when it comes to tasks and functions. The most homogenous group is found among leaders in private businesses. At the opposite pole, we find a cluster of positions located in the public sector, but being far more heterogeneous both with respect to tasks and functions. The third, and mainly political cluster is also heterogeneous. Thus, if judged with respect to tasks and functions, it is difficult to claim that the two latter also arrrtant businesses and financial institutions in Norway should be owned by Norwegians.

The political control over a number of partly privatised state companies, e.g. Telenor ("Telecom Norway"), Norwegian State Railways and the Postal service, is too weak and should be strengthened

Norwegian investments abroad should follow Norwegian environmental standards for work regulation and environmental protection whenever they are stricter than the local laws.

First generation immigrants convicted for crimes committed in Norway, should be expelled to their country of origin upon ended prison term.

Norwegian soldiers should not participate in NATO-missions that go beyond defending members of the alliance against attacks.

A further regulation of rivers and construction of new hydro power plants should be started.

In Norway, we've come far enough when it comes reducing economic inequalities.

Cultural enterprises, e.g. media and publishers, should mainly be owned by Norwegians.

The way the media criticize power and politics creates an unfortunate distance between decision makers and the rest of the people.

In Norway, the distance between the elites and the population is too large when it comes to real political influence.

The Work Environment Regulation Act has generally been very positive for the development of Norwegian working life.

It is more important to further the level of public services than to reduce taxes.

In Norway, one should favour more privatisation and a smaller public sector.

Violent crimes should be far harsher punished than they are today.

State control over private enterprise should be reduced.

Religious minorities and atheists should be allowed not to take classes in the new "Christianity, religion and view of life" -subject in basic education

We should construct gas driven power plants in Norway, based on the existing technology.

Further constructing of highways, bridges and tunnels in regional parts of Norway should be moderate.

We should favour a society where Christian values play a more important role than they do today.

Immigration levels should be adjusted to labour market demands.

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# **Economic Sociology and the sociology of economics**

## **What is sociological about the sociology of economics?<sup>1</sup>**

### **Some recent developments**

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Economics is a well-traveled subject, both by scholars and popular writers. Its history is replete with bestsellers and efforts at vulgarization: every year brings its cortege of books, pamphlets, TV and radio shows, by professional authorities or skilled mavericks, which explain economic mechanisms, theories, facts and trends to vast audiences. The discipline and profession of economics themselves often attract public attention, and at times real controversy. Denunciations of the "dismal science", lost in mathematical sophistication and cut off from the real world, are a recurrent discussion topic in intellectual circles and public opinion outlets.<sup>2</sup>

Yet beyond these popular literatures, the study of economics is also a lively academic