Table 7. Super-elite numerical dominance, office market concentration, and super-elite versus non-elite profiles, across time periods

I. Dworaczek’s super-elite families’ dominance by period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Super-elite</th>
<th>Percentage from super-elite families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto</td>
<td>1635</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Degree of concentration of office-holding, measured at family level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Hirschman-Herfindahl concentration index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance</td>
<td>.008706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy</td>
<td>.006704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto</td>
<td>.005970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition</td>
<td>.005809</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Average ranks compared across time periods, using data on all castellanies and palatinates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average rank</th>
<th>Average starting rank for all positions held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Super-elite</td>
<td>Non-elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance (N = 838)</td>
<td>72.50</td>
<td>95.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy (N = 1466)</td>
<td>78.29</td>
<td>100.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto (N = 1686)</td>
<td>72.84</td>
<td>99.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition (N = 770)</td>
<td>71.01</td>
<td>107.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Super-elite share of clerical and key ministerial offices over time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Roman Catholic clerical share</th>
<th>Total ministerial share</th>
<th>Share of chancellors</th>
<th>Share of marshals of the Sejm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indicate offices recorded earlier in Niesiecki's lists, which are arrayed in descending order of prestige). In fact, with respect to starting positions, this gap widens across all time periods; and with respect to all positions (i.e., at any stage of career) across all castellanies and palatinates coded, it does so except for the move from the Polish Renaissance period to the period of Magnate Ascendancy, in which the gap remains constant. So, combining parts two and three of Table 7, we could say that precisely as more and more families were enjoying entrance to senatorial offices, fewer and fewer of them were enjoying occupancy of the most prestigious of those offices.

This brings us to a debate in the literature about the consequences of elite population change and a key argument of this article. On the one hand, as Jack Goldstone argues, 41 population increases introduce more competition for prestigious positions; failure of the system to accommodate newcomers, or displacement of existing elites by newcomers, creates feelings of frustration — in the former instance on the part of the newcomers, in the latter on the part of the old elite — that ought to lead to political upheaval. In addition, failure of newcomers to maintain a pace of advancement from entry positions to higher status positions within the elite can also create frustration that eventuates in political conflict. Only when newcomers are "absorbed" and advanced without displacing the old guard is stability assured.

On the other hand, evidence from Renaissance Florence (see note 35) suggests that the success of many newcomers in simply gaining entry to the elite — or even the reasonable expectation that they might be nominated for office — was a sufficient condition for maintaining their political quiescence, as they eagerly hoped for and awaited their eventual opportunity for enjoying status as esteemed members of the regime. Throughout the course of the fifteenth century, the names of more and more Florentines were added to the scrutinies that defined them as persons eligible for office, yet the most powerful offices were frequently staffed through extra-constitutional means and controlled by a subset of important families. This is tantamount to a defining feature of clientage-based regimes: the ability to co-opt and assure the quiescence of subordinate groups through inter-personal ties forged across status group classifications.

The figures reported in Table 7 support the latter argument, although we see some support for the Goldstone argument. The decline in the concentration index, modest thought it is, is consistent with the idea
that the ruling elite was capable, over time, of absorbing non-elites into their ranks. Yet how did the constantly increasing gap between super-elite and non-elite fortunes not translate into violent upheaval? I contend this has to do with the sources of the gap. In moving from the Polish Renaissance period to the Magnate Ascendancy period, both groups “lost ground.” This is due chiefly to the addition of Lithuanian territories, most of which were represented by castellanies and palties considerably less prestigious than those in Małopolska and Wielkopolska. After 1569, the population of offices remains unchanged. In moving from the Magnate Ascendancy period to the Liberum Veto period, the main source of change in super-elite and non-elite fortunes occurs on the super-elite side: their average overall and average starting positions improve more substantially than do the non-elite’s. These were periods of consolidated magnate dominance; in particular, they were periods, economically speaking, during which small noble landholdings were often bought up by magnates.\textsuperscript{42} We see a kind of parallel development here in the senatorial office market: the super-elite managed to appropriate for itself the more prestigious offices, a frontal attack aimed at the consolidation of power. However, the transition from the Liberum Veto period to the Reform period reverses this trend. Here super-elite fortunes become static, while non-elite fortunes slide. Part of this slide no doubt is a result of the introduction of the “newly created castellanies” in the later eighteenth century. However, these were few in number; besides, the establishment of new offices is substantively meaningful here, as it dovetails nicely with the idea of expanding the pie as part of a political compromise with less powerful groups.

Part 4 of Table 7 adds some further evidence in support of this view that the form of elite power consolidation differed in different periods by looking at the share the super-elite had in staffing the “ministerial group” of senators “headed by the chancellors and the leading bishops.”\textsuperscript{43} In Wyczński’s view, these were the key positions of power and, in the sixteenth century, they had been staffed by highly literate individuals from the king’s secretarial staff. Perhaps this is why we see the super-elite share of the chancellorship, the vice-chancellorship, and the bishoprics comparatively low in the Polish Renaissance period, as they held down thirty-eight percent of the former two positions and twenty percent of the latter. Their share of these positions increased in periods 2 and 3, modestly in the case of the religious positions, dramatically in the case of the chancellorship. In the Reform & Partition period, their share of both positions dropped dramatically;
surely this was in part a reflection of King Stanisław Augustus’s effort, with the help of Russia, at creating a more efficacious, independent monarchy in the later eighteenth century. Yet overall super-elite participation in all ministerial offices does not slip in the Reform period, but instead shifts dramatically towards occupancy of the position of Marshal of the Sejm, a position to which candidates were elected by the deputies of the lower chamber of parliament. This, as Maczak notes, reasserting Dworzaczek’s argument, had already started in the seventeenth century, when magnate domination of the Sejm arose in earnest. Yet this only increased in the eighteenth century. Consequently, after 1750 members of super-elite families shifted their attention away from ministerial service, no doubt helped along by the hostility of the crown, and arguably towards deeper involvement in clientage-based control of the lower gentry through heightened participation in the leadership of the gentry’s representative body.

Another important component in this picture has to do with the elite’s ability to diffuse non-elite dissatisfaction through offers of marriage into the elite. The bottom half of Table 5, above, and the bottom half of Table 9, looking ahead, indicate for slightly different subsets of actors that, while the eighty-five super-elite families maintained an extremely high rate of inter-marriage over the entire three-hundred-year period, it was exceptionally high in the sixteenth century, dropping dramatically thereafter and then hovering between thirty and thirty-five percent through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Early cohesiveness of the elite marriage market did not translate into magnate dominance; on the contrary, it may precisely have been the strength of the crown and the gentry in parliament during the Execution of the Laws movement that drove the super-elite families into a compensatory obsession with status retention by means of high rates of intermarriage.

The bottom panel of Table 5 further documents a dramatic change in the second half of the eighteenth century. Super-elite families altered their strategy to become hypogamous; that is, they dramatically increased the rate at which they betrothed their daughters to (upwardly mobile) non-elite males, and dramatically reduced the rate at which they themselves married non-elite females. There is some controversy over the differing significance of these two types of marital alliance, although some argue that when property is passed down through the male line, the acceptance of non-elite sons-in-law signifies a redistribution of patrimonies and a shift towards more equality.
among social classes. 49 Here it is not just a situation of outsiders purchasing prestige through a connection, but the adoption of male protégés who will carry on the elite family’s “business.” There is little doubt that some of these later eighteenth-century marriages were not to lesser Polish noble families, but to non-Polish members of the European elite. This was part of a general trend among the Polish elite towards the increasing adoption of Western, and especially French Enlightenment, cultural values in the second half of the eighteenth century. 50 Nevertheless, the frequency of marital alliance with non-super-elite families through the “gift” of daughters to them is more suggestive evidence for the practice of political clientage. Finally, Table 5 also indicates that the difference between year of entry into the elite marriage network and year of entry into senatorial ranks in the second half of the eighteenth century was, on average, about five and a half years for super-elite males marrying their status equals. Yet note that roughly the same difference obtained for non-elite males marrying into the elite. Thus, there was a convergence in terms of the timing of political careers between non-elite males who were targeted for marriage by super-elites and the “best” of the super-elite males. This points towards selective upward mobility. It also marks a dramatic shift from the Liberum Veto period, in which non-elites experienced the most delay in their acceptance through marriage relative to the initiation of their senatorial careers (a difference of only half a year), a distinction that holds relative to all members of super-elite families.

And marriage had a demonstrable effect on – or at least was demonstrably correlated with – the complete profile of one’s political career, even if it was a less substantial benefit than blood. Table 8 documents that political success, measured in terms of total number of offices held, ministerial offices held, total number of years in the Senate, rank at entry, and highest office held, is greater for non-elites who married into super-elite families than for those who did not. At the same time, success was not as great on average as for all scions of super-elite families. On this side, too, however, marriage plays a role, as those who did not marry at all fared worse than those who married down, who in turn fared worse than those who married status equals. Thus, it would seem that blood was the more decisive determinant of one’s prospects, but marriage could decisively affect one’s prospects within one’s status classification.

This relationship between elite status and marriage was fairly consistent over time as well, but there are distinguishing features of the
Reform period that deserve mention. We can identify these features by comparing the figures in the first and second parts of Table 8. First, although the average number of offices held, and ministerial offices held in particular, was greater for the super-elite in periods 2 and 3 than in the Reform period, those super-elites who married into their own ranks were most distinctly superior to those who did not in the Reform period. Second, whereas in periods 1, 2, and 3, those super-elites who did not marry at all began their careers at a higher rank and achieved a higher concluding office than those non-elites who married into the elite, in the Reform period this pattern is decisively reversed: now non-elites marrying into the elite do better than those super-elite who do not marry at all. Moreover, the difference between non-elites marrying in and super-elites marrying out is least in the Reform period. While this shift is going on, however, the super-elite males marrying females of their own status pull further away from the pack in the Reform period, and in fact begin at the highest entry positions and attain the highest positions at the end of their careers of any group over the entire three-hundred-year period. The second half of the eighteenth century is thus marked by the pulling apart of the super-elite, or more precisely the pulling apart of super-elite clans, observable through the lens of marriage: a tighter and tighter hold on the highest offices by those elites who married other elites, a slight decline in the fortunes of those who married outside the elite, a more substantial decline in the fortunes of those elites who did not marry at all (or for whom marriage information is lacking), and a rise in the fortunes of non-elites who married into super-elite ranks—not relative to the core, self-reproducing super-elite, but relative to the elite on the periphery or outside of the elite marriage market. In other words, even as the core super-elite retained control of offices and were linked to each other through marriage networks, there are signs of "displacement" of the peripheral members of elite clans through the selective elevation of newcomers. This again helps us understand more accurately the character of the late-eighteenth-century Polish political landscape as a strongly elite-led phenomenon in which outsiders were selectively absorbed into republican politics.

In short, on the marriage front, as on the office-holding front, the shift from the Liberen Veto period to the Reform & Partition period is a shift from a relatively closed elite that served only itself to a relatively open elite with its hands still on the most essential reins of power. The demographic shifts documented here offer a trace of the history of Polish politics, but with some added nuance. The aggregate dynamics
Table 8. Distinguishing the value of marriage for political success for elites and non-elites

I. Over entire period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-elite</th>
<th></th>
<th>Super-elite</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total offices</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial positions</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years in service</td>
<td>11.08</td>
<td>13.72</td>
<td>12.74</td>
<td>15.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average entry position</td>
<td>109.91</td>
<td>97.88</td>
<td>88.07</td>
<td>88.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average highest position</td>
<td>103.13</td>
<td>89.07</td>
<td>81.10</td>
<td>74.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. For reform & partition period only (1740–1795)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-elite</th>
<th></th>
<th>Super-elite</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total offices</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial positions</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years in service</td>
<td>10.48</td>
<td>13.09</td>
<td>12.44</td>
<td>12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average entry position</td>
<td>116.32</td>
<td>91.62</td>
<td>103.44</td>
<td>82.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average highest position</td>
<td>110.28</td>
<td>87.83</td>
<td>98.44</td>
<td>79.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of the network of political offices and its interweaving with elite marriage networks resulted in a structural pattern in the second half of the eighteenth century that enhanced the capacity of the Polish-Lithuanian political elite to secure and consolidate power without agitating the middling nobility that staffed the lower chamber of parliament and the "entry level" positions in the system. This was part of an increasingly successful clientelism. This shift parallels another feature of the system in the second half of the eighteenth century: during this time control over the sejmiki that met locally to nominate deputies to send to the national Sejm was relaxed, in the sense that magnates relinquished the requirement of unanimity at these assemblies, yet political contestation there seemed to contribute, in a halting way, to the achievement of more open political discussion in the polity.
as a whole. Finally, as I noted at the outset, these changes help us to understand the genesis of the Constitution of May 3, 1791, which was remarkable in that, precisely at the same time the French Revolution was doing away with the privileged category of “nobility,” the Polish elite retained it – not as an exclusionary category, but as an inclusionary one; many new, usually bourgeois, members had it bestowed upon them.\textsuperscript{53} Poland’s constitutonal moment was very much managed by the elite. It was not a mass phenomenon, yet through its clientelistic organization, and the inclusionary quality of the rhetoric of Sarmatism, which spoke of noble equality while allowing super-elite politicians to maintain control of the political process, it incorporated certain elements of a more modern nationalist spirit.\textsuperscript{54} The Partitions that followed the Constitution were not so much a sign, as Norman Davies notes, of how “ungovernable” the Polish state was, but a conscious effort to eliminate a state whose new constitution precisely “made it governable.”\textsuperscript{55} Widening political access and tightening political control were not, and are not, mutually contradictory aspects of political power.

\textbf{Trends towards elite integration}

I turn finally to the issue of regional integration as a final element in the story of elite formation and transformation assembled in this article. As is well known, Poland and Lithuania only became fully amalgamated in 1569 with the Union of Lublin. In fact, the Commonwealth was geographically vast, and was composed not only of these two entities, but of a number of identifiable regions: 1) Wielkopoljska (Great Poland), the area now in Western Poland around Poznań and the Warta River; 2) Małopolska (Little Poland), the area along the Vistula around Kraków and stretching northeast towards Lublin; 3) the Crown of Poland, sometimes synonymous with Mazovia, surrounding Warsaw and stretching along the lower Vistula; 4) Lithuania, the area northeast of the Crown areas centering on Wilno but also stretching up towards present day Estonia; 5) Pomerania, or the Prussian Baltic littoral around Gdańsk stretching towards the city of Szczecin in the west; 6) Ruthenia, southeast of the Vistula encompassing parts of Galicia and present-day Ukraine; and 7) the easternmost palatinates, which were technically part of “Lithuania” but were closer to modern-day Belarus. Notwithstanding this vastness, it is commonly agreed that, over time, the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth achieved considerable cultural coherence, even as in the seventeenth century the
Table 9. Regional integration of the elite through promotional moves and marriage, across time periods

I. First promotions in senatorial careers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N outside region</th>
<th>Percentage outside region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N outside region</th>
<th>Percentage outside region</th>
<th>Overall percentage within super-elite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polish renaissance</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnate ascendancy</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberum veto</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform &amp; partition</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For purposes of this table, regions four (Lithuania) and seven (Eastern Palatinate) are collapsed into one region, to correspond with their actual political unity. Coding them separately does not substantially change the pattern of the results. Because actual region of primary residence is not available, I assume it is the same as the region in which first office is located. This then becomes the region of origin associated with the individual identification codes used in the marriage data. Further, because women did not hold senatorial offices, their region had to be constructed from family-level data of consanguineous males in the office dataset. A problem here is that families (i.e., clans) were often dispersed across multiple regions, resulting in many cases in which two or more regions tie for being the modal region of a given family. In this table, husband and wife regions are reported matching if any of the wife's family's modal regions match the husband's region of origin.

locus of political power devolved to regional magnate strongholds. The formula expressed by the seventeenth-century noble Stanisław Orzechowski to describe himself has been taken to exemplify this process: *gente Ruthenus, natione Polonus* – "of the Ruthenian people, and of the Polish nation." With the comprehensive data on senatorial office-holding before us, as well as the extensive information on super-elite marriages, we are in some position to assess the degree of regional integration achieved in terms of flow of officers through career steps, and number of marriages contracted between geographically dispersed families. Table 9 reports on these findings for the subset of cases for which there are the necessary data.
One can infer immediately from the first part of Table 9 that there is a substantial within-region bias in promotional moves, due in significant measure to the large number of within-province promotions from castellan to palatine noted in the first half of this article. However, it is also clear that integration through first promotions that span geographical regions increases substantially over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, indicating the formation of a more and more coherent national elite. This changes noticeably in the last period, when the percentage of promotions taking senators into new regions of the Commonwealth returns to the level observed in the Magnate Ascendancy period. In part this finding occurs because of the addition of some new, low-prestige (and hence low-mobility) offices in the 1760s; but as noted above, these were quite few in number. Research by Kula and Maczak^56 documents the extensive transfer of land from the gentry into magnate hands particularly in the 1670s and 1680s; the result may have been a marked increase in the ability of magnates to claim residence in multiple provinces. However, it is doubtful this change had only a temporary effect. It is tempting to suggest alternatively that the figures in Table 9 provide more evidence for the argument made above, that the Reform period is distinguished by an increasingly vibrant clientelism in political life: more newcomers from politically neophyte families entered the senate with fewer cross-regional ties to begin with, and senators in general had more invested in political networks operating in their own regions, and accordingly less incentive than earlier to move to new regions where their political capital was less developed.

In the case of promotion, regions are "joined" through individuals; in the case of marriage, regions are joined through pairs of individuals (or families). The extent of elite integration over time through marriages follows a somewhat different pattern from that observed for promotions. Here the percentage of cases in which different regions are joined is substantially higher: integration through marriage was far more common than integration through promotion. Moreover, integration grows consistently across the entire three-hundred-year period under consideration, increasing less substantially in the move from period two to period three than in the shift after 1569, but apparently accelerating again in the second half of the eighteenth century, to the point where three out of five marriages were inter-regional marriages. The implication is that the Reform period was one of an increasingly locale-based political focus combined with an increasingly nation-based "social" focus, the development of a coherent, integrated national elite
whose members also attended significantly to local clienteles. These are the two faces of the Polish political elite in the later eighteenth century: socially cohesive and culturally Europeanized on the one hand, politically conflictual and culturally Sarmatian on the other. Elite marriages were well known to be devices for securing political alliances between families and their local organizations.\textsuperscript{57} The factional fighting and turbulence that characterized the polity, and which always had a local base, increasingly federated localities into political blocs, and politics became more nationally “organized” even as it was often locally motivated.\textsuperscript{58} Again the parallels with the well-documented case of Renaissance Florentine politics, with its combination of an increasingly inter-neighborhood pattern of elite marriages and a staunchly neighborhood-based system of clientage, are striking.\textsuperscript{59}

Table 8 showed that marriage into the elite was correlated with political success and the displacement of inferior members of super-elite families. Table 5 showed that fewer years separated entry into the marriage network and entry into the ranks of senators for non-elites than for super-elites, because of their need to prove themselves before becoming eligible; and we saw that this difference was most negligible in the Reform period. Table 9 documents that, although marriage among super-elite families declines over time, inter-regional marriage increases in inverse proportion. Table 10 documents further how the super-elite managed their marriage networks over successive periods by dividing up elite marriages by type: the forging of alliances through marriage with other super-elite families, the acceptance of daughters-in-law from non-elite families, and the giving of daughters to non-elite males. The differences between periods are not statistically significant, so the numbers should be interpreted with some caution. Nonetheless, we may observe the following trends.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Super-elite hypogamy and inter-regional marriage, by period}
\begin{tabular}{lccc}
\hline
Time period & Percentage of marriages across regions (N) & \\
& & \\
& Within super-elite & Non-elite males & Super-elite males marrying non-elites \\
\hline
Polish renaissance & 41.2 (85) & 59.1 (44) & 41.7 (48) \\
Magnate ascendancy & 57.0 (135) & 49.5 (103) & 46.3 (136) \\
Liberum veto & 58.5 (123) & 58.7 (92) & 46.8 (124) \\
Reform & partition & 70.4 (44) & 61.2 (54) & 46.4 (28) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
First, over time, inter-regional super-elite marriages increase as a proportion of the whole, such that by the Reform period, fewer than thirty percent of super-elite marriages occur within region. This indicates, as we observed for marriages as a whole, an increasing integration of the Polish-Lithuanian elite over time through marriage, but driven especially by these consolidating, within-super-elite marriages. Second, over time, the super-elite males who marry non-elite females most often marry women from their own region; consistently more than half of their marriages are within-region marriages. Third, over time, marriages between non-elite males and super-elite females are within-region more than half of the time only in the Magnate Ascendency period, hovering around forty percent within-region in other time periods. The Reform period manifests the greatest rate of inter-regional within-super-elite marriage, and consequently the greatest discrepancy in marriage fortunes between those super-elite males who marry their peers and those who marry status inferiors, in terms of the breadth of the market of candidates for marriage they seem able to have considered. The Reform period also features a slight increase in the frequency of inter-regional marriage to non-elite males, suggesting a marginally greater willingness to grant status parity to males from other regions rather than one's own, thereby forestalling the legitimacy of contenders for pre-eminence in one's own region. This tendency had modest beneficial effects for these up-and-coming non-elites: cross-tabulation indicates that those individuals who married within their regions were more often than expected promoted within region, while those who married across regions also were promoted more often than expected across regions. More tellingly, perhaps, from a strategic mobility standpoint, and given that marriage typically preceded entry into the senatorial office market, marrying into the elite but within one's own region made it quite unlikely that one would achieve promotion to a more prestigious extra-regional position. Not marrying into the elite certainly had its liabilities, yet the chances of promotion were arguably better for true outsiders than for those with local marriages: more office-holders without any marriage into the elite get promoted across regions than expected, whereas fewer than expected with local marriage ties to the super-elite do so. Marrying outside of one's region thus did not guarantee inter-regional promotion, but it appears to have been an important condition for it.

In terms of both office-holding and marriage, then, early modern Poland experienced considerable and largely increasing regional integration over time. This no doubt grew out of the political institutional
unity that tied together disparate peoples under the banner of the Commonwealth. However, this integration also made Sarmatism an increasingly plausible and compelling proto-nationalist rhetoric and cultural style that came to play an important role in Polish politics in the late eighteenth century.

**Conclusion: Tracking political change demographically**

Needless to say, social and political processes are neither controlled by any one individual nor by any one bureaucratic organization. In early modern polities in particular, the distribution of patrimonial perquisites by kings often had unexpected and, for them, undesirable consequences, such as the establishment and subsequent entrenchment of beneficiaries' (and beneficiaries' heirs) independent claims to power and prestige. These inheritors of prestige became themselves the distributors of perquisites, among the most important of which were connections to these distributors themselves through marriage. I have demonstrated here that patterns in the distribution of such perquisites, largely unintended by particular actors, provide an important clue to the shifting character of an elite (and a polity) at particular points in time, determine the structural circumstances within which elite actors were operating, help to make better sense of an elite’s cultural practices, and suggest how the ground is prepared for key transformative events.

To an extent unprecedented in early modern Europe, control of political life in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth lay in the hands of the nobility. This “control” did not take the form of a consensual oligarchic control over political life. Rather, for many decades it meant periodic (and later more constant) contestation among a relatively small number of families and factional alliances for ascendancy. This history makes it an unusually valuable case for assessing the value of a networks-based demographic approach to understanding political change over the longue durée.

Despite the fact that the institutional context of political life remained more or less fixed in early modern Poland for the entirety of the period we have examined, this contestation was characterized by different kinds of strategies at different times: different degrees of elite closure, differences among members in access to family-based supplies of political capital, differences in the kinds of offices targeted, different
types of incorporation of newcomers with observable consequences for the constitution of lineages, and the pursuit of different target alters in the forging of political alliances through marriage. Some of these patterns have been uncovered and clearly documented here. In particular, a key payoff from this study has been to refine our understanding of Polish political activity in the later eighteenth century. In brief, I have argued that the Polish constitutional moment of 1791 was not purely serendipitous, nor the product of a long-delayed wake-up call to the realities of political life catalyzed by the surrounding powers, but was actually rather well prepared and managed through the emergent structure of noble office-holding and marriage-making brewing from roughly 1740 on, that allowed the entrance of significant numbers of newcomers into at least nominally influential positions while simultaneously maintaining (and in fact enhancing) concentration of the most powerful offices in the hands of a streamlined super-elite.

Future research on this case demands a more thorough understanding of the embeddedness of particular actors in multiple social networks and multiple systems of office-holding, as well as deeper biographical understanding of their particular attitudes and motivations, in order to understand the processes of both group formation and individual career-making in a more nuanced way. More importantly, in a comparative vein, I hope the argument set forth here encourages the further development of a multiple-networks approach to social change in historical sociology, by which I mean the empirical examination of multiple social networks and the ways they intersect, overlap, or conflict with each other in and through particular actors. Such network patterns, articulated and refracted through co-evolving cultural practices, generate meaningful macro outcomes and help to shape the character of an age.

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Notes


3. Admittedly, the use of rational choice theory in historical sociology need not be premised on the idea that actors are substantively or self-consciously rational, but that patterns of historical outcomes can be understood as if actors were so acting. All the same, as Jack Goldstone suggests, there is reasonable justification for the criticism that some practitioners of rational choice theory in historical research may "grossly simplify the actual complexity of initial conditions in order to make deterministic calculations of social outcomes." Jack A. Goldstone, "Initial Conditions, General Laws, Path Dependence, and Explanation in Historical Sociology," American Journal of Sociology 104/3 (1998): 839.

4. I.e., providing the minutiae of particular ties, such as "who dined with whom," "who was friends with whom," how particular marriages were arranged, and the like. The classic example of such a treatment is Sir Lewis Namier's work, as for example in The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929).


8. I would venture to suggest few other cases have been so vigorously and one-sidedly stereotyped as this one. This development has roots in a strong native historio-
graphical tradition associated with the Krakow school and the eminent eighteenth-
century thinker Stanislaw Staszic. Various scholars have argued that narratives of
national history have had an especially meaningful impact on Poles and on
contemporary Polish politics. See, for example, Adam Bromke, The Meaning and
Uses of Polish History (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1987); and Andrzej
Kaminski, "Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its Citizens: Was the Common-
wealth a Stepmother for Cossacks and Ruthenians?" in Poland and Ukraine Past
and Present, ed. Peter J. Potichnyj (Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of
Ukrainian Studies, 1980), 47-48. For a classic statement of the stereotyping of
historical narratives, see Hayden White, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in
Nineteenth Century Europe (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University

9. For example, see Anderson, Lineages of the Absolutist State, 288, where Sarmatism
is called "a morbid mythomania"; Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-
System II (New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1980), 144, where it is called "a cultural
stagnation and an atrophy of creative intellectual activity"; and Gieysztor et al.,
History of Poland, 215, where it is seen as oblivious to "any appearances of truth."
The Orientalization of Eastern Europe, including Poland, is extensively discussed
in Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of
the Enlightenment (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). I discuss various
scholarly views of Sarmatism and specific uses made of it in efforts at political
mobilization and communication between factional leaders at greater length in
Paul D. McLean, "Networks, Culture, and Political Mobilization in Eighteenth
Century Poland," Rutgers University, unpublished manuscript.

10. For a comprehensive treatment, see S.N. Eisenstadt and Louis Roniger, Patrons,
Clients and Friends: Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society

11. For a few empirical examinations of the linkage between networks and careers in
the generation of institutional change, see Harrison C. White and Cynthia A.
White, Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World
(New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965); Robert R. Faulkner, Music on
Demand: Composers and Careers in the Hollywood Film Industry (New Brunswick,
NJ: Transaction Books, 1982); and Wayne E. Baker and Robert R. Faulkner, "Role
as Resource in the Hollywood Film Industry," American Journal of Sociology 97/2

12. For programmatic statements of this approach, see Harrison C. White, Identity and
Control (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Mustafa Emirbayer and
Jeff Goodwin, "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency," American
Journal of Sociology 99/6 (1994): 1411-1454. For further statements and other
examples of empirical research based on it, see Harrison C. White, "Network
Switchings and Bayesian Forks: Reconstructing the Social and Behavioral
"Between Conversation and Situation: Public Switching Dynamics across Network
Duquenne, "The Duality of Culture and Practice: Poverty Relief in New York City,
Frame Analysis of Favor-Seeking in the Renaissance: Agency, Networks, and
Political Culture," American Journal of Sociology 104/1 (1998): 51-91; Christopher
K. Ansell, Schism and Solidarity in Social Movements: The Politics of Labor in the
French Third Republic (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ann


14. The various contributors to Mary Brinton and Victor Nee’s The New Institutionalism in Sociology (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998) make a compelling case for the need to study institutions as the background (or even constitutive) rules, beliefs, and norms that enable various arenas of social action to operate. Yet institutions are conceived by a number of these authors in very general terms, with insufficient attention to local variation and to the planicy with which actors apply multiple and diverse institutional materials. An exception is Rosemary Hopcroft’s essay, “The Importance of the Local: Rural Institutions and Economic Change in Preindustrial England,” The New Institutionalism in Sociology, 277–304.

15. This idea has been thoughtfully examined inside the social movements literature. See David Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford, “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization and Movement Participation,” American Sociological Review 51 (1986): 464–481; Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, editors, Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).


17. On the topic of mechanisms, see Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg, Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Jon Elster, Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Also consider the use of the term in the debate between Margaret R. Somers (“‘We’re No Angels’: Realism, Rational Choice, and Relationality in Social Science,” American Journal of Sociology 104/3 (1998): 722–784) and Edgar Kiser and Michael Hechter (“The Debate on Historical Sociology: Rational Choice Theory and Its Critics,” American Journal of Sociology 104/3(1998): 785–816). Goldstone argues that similar conditions can lead to revolution or not depending on timing and on variable ecological factors such as levels of social and economic stress (Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion, 145). Here one set of general factors can be plausibly distinguished from a set of accidental or coincidental factors. The spirit of this comment, to my mind, is that it is possible to develop generalized narratives, or at least components of stories, that can be applied, mutatis mutandis, across cases.


20. When external forces threatened Polish territory, but more commonly when groups of nobles felt their vaunted freedom was threatened by centralizing monarchs, the
nobility could legally form into armed gatherings known as rokoszy (uprisings) or confederacje (confederations).

20. One may compare Stone's description of the English case offered in his Crisis of the Aristocracy, 28ff.

21. Some extensive collection of occupants' names at the level of national offices may be possible, although such a collection effort would probably result in a markedly incomplete sample. Such offices would include podkomorz, starosta, sedzia, stolnik, podczas, pisarz, podsedek, and a variety of others, typically for each palatinate of the Commonwealth.

22. The liberum veto gave any deputy to the Sejm the right to reject legislation of which he or his sejmik did not approve and thereby to terminate the proceedings of the parliament, thus effectively entailing a requirement of unanimity for any legislation to pass. This voting procedure more or less completely paralyzed the national parliament for over one hundred years.

23. Kasper Niesiecki, Herbary Polski (Lipsk: Breitkopf & Haertel, 1839; reprint edition, Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1979). Volumes two through ten of Niesiecki's work contain an alphabetical listing of family histories, providing information on heraldic insignias, biographical sketches — sometimes voluminous and sometimes sparse — of various family luminaries, and occasionally additional information on offices held by, or marriages contracted by, members of each family. I hope eventually to code these textually embedded data.

24. Also included in the coding were a few offices not technically entailing membership in the Senate but useful for comparative purposes, notably the leaders of non-Roman Catholic religious denominations and the marshals (speakers) of the chamber of deputies and of royal tribunals. As will become clear, by "office," I mean the combination of a particular rank with a particular province or region represented.

25. The office of hetman was the highest military office in the country, held by its occupant for life: In fact, there were four such offices — grand and field hetman for each of Poland and Lithuania — an arrangement designed to keep any one of these officials from having an irresistibly formidable power.


27. Because it focuses on a subset of elite families, Dworaczek's work constitutes a biased sample and almost certainly overstates the centrality of the selected families in the marital network. It is also skewed towards oversampling in the sixteenth century compared to the seventeenth and eighteenth: for example, the median year of marriage in his genealogical tables for the entire 1500–1795 period is 1634, slightly earlier than the halfway point of 1647–48. Furthermore, as Table 7 indicates, the share of senatorial offices held by his elites declines significantly over time, dropping considerably in the second half of the eighteenth century, again suggesting a sampling bias towards the sixteenth century.

29. One needs to be careful here. Palatinates and castellanies are integrated into a single hierarchy of ranked offices; hence, for example, although palatinates in general are of higher prestige than castellanies, the castellany of Kraków exceeds all palatinates in prestige, while those of Wilno and Trock exceed most palatinates in prestige, and Niesztecki ranks them accordingly. I thus treat them often as a single system in the balance of the article. Somewhat differently, the prestige of bishoprics cannot be compared to the prestige of political offices in any straightforward way, although their occupants are known to have exercised considerable political power. As these offices are listed first in Niesztecki, I assigned them lower (i.e., higher ranked) numbers than the territorial offices, but this coding decision is largely moot, since there is no overlap in membership between the clerical and territorial office-holding groups. They are different systems of advancement (reinforced, of course, by the fact that clerics take no part in the elite marriage market). The same, however, is not true for the major ministerial offices. Niesztecki lists the occupants of these offices subsequent to the list of minor castellanies, and accordingly they have high numbers in my coding scheme, but it would be wrong to assume these offices are of less prestige; in fact, they are quite prestigious. Moreover, the ministerial offices were often (though not always) occupied by persons who concurrently held offices in the territorial system. Accordingly, we must consider the ministerial offices as having some significant additive value to the prestige their occupants enjoy in the overall office-holding system. This is a difficult quantitative issue to deal with, which I will turn to in subsequent research. It would be fascinating to assess empirically the relative status of such positions based on the typical moment at which such positions were interjected into political careers. Some links between the two systems are clear: for example, it is common to find the same person simultaneously Grand Hetman of the Crown and castellan of Kraków, respectively the preeminent military and political offices in the Commonwealth.

30. Niesztecki’s wording in some instances effectively codes steps that could be considered retrograde, or perhaps more commonly, merely lateral: he notes sometimes, for example, that an occupant of a given office “wzícul” (took) a different office, rather than being promoted to it.

31. This pattern is also reflected in the fact that tenure in any particular office was, on average, significantly shorter for those who would go on to higher positions than for those whose senatorial career was composed of only one position. This should be more or less obvious if we assume all careers to be more or less equal in length, but substantively it does indicate that those who advanced were not just outliving their peers, but were moving up in preference over them.

32. Among these were Jan Gniński in the late 1600s, Stanisław Potocki in the mid 1600s, and Otto z Chodzca in the early 1500s, each of whom held four different
palatinates. Gninski's career is in fact one of the unusual cases of retrograde or ambiguously lateral moves among titularly identical offices.

33. Dąmbski was the most noteworthy victim of the logic of "vacancy chains," whereby office-holders are blocked from promotion not so much by the paucity of their own skills as by the occupancy of all higher-ranked offices by men with some longevity of life ahead of them. On the notion of vacancy chains, see Harrison C. White, *Chains of Opportunity: System Models of Mobility in Organizations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

34. The difference in average tenure between palatines and castellans is significant at better than a .01 level, and the difference between bishops and castellans is significant at a .001 level.


36. The notable exceptions to this trend are 1633 (not a year in which a new reign began), 1737, and 1783. It is a puzzle that 1737 and 1783, on the face of it so similar in profile in terms of the group of new appointees, should be so different in terms of their actual character. The former marked the nadir in the strength of the Polish crown: Augustus III ruled as an absentee king, dispensing sinecures for the increase of his personal revenue, not political influence. The latter marked an infusion of new monarchist blood into the elite and a demographic shift catalyzing the development of a movement for administrative reform and an enlightened reform of Polish republicanism. As a result, analysis of patterns of flow into senatorial ranks can only go so far in explaining outcomes, since we also need to understand the spirit in which those recruitment efforts were undertaken. Increasing dispensation of offices may just as easily signify the extension of patrimonialist rule, as forestall or counteract it. Ertman makes this point for the case of early modern France. See his *Birth of the Leviathan*, 127ff.

37. When we calculate this average difference using only those cases for which firm year-of-entry data are provided by both Dworzaczk and Niesiecki, the mean difference is 9.82 years, but because precise and complete data are available almost exclusively for super-elite males, this figure cannot be taken as representative of the difference for the population of males as a whole.

38. Here I would simply underline Adams's argument that the logic of acquiring political power and the logic of securing the family patrimony were tightly connected in early modern Europe, with prospects or successes in one being tied logically to prospects or successes in the other, in part through nepotism, and in part through the "politics of marriage." Adams, "The Familial State," 505, 509.

39. Palatinate and castellania were assigned office "numbers" 37 through 161 in the original coding of the data. The actual numbers reported here for average rank are based on this 37 through 161, highest through lowest, coding scheme.

40. We can also compare the types of promotion the super-elite enjoyed compared to
the others. As noted earlier, two basic logics obtained for career advancement: moving within ranks between provinces, or moving across ranks within a province. Over the entire 1500–1795 time period, the super-elite were significantly more likely to obtain advancement through the first, more incremental logic than the second. Their upward mobility was accordingly not as dramatic as for select members of the non-elite, but of course they also more typically started from higher positions.


45. For a remarkable exploration of elite marriage strategies in one rich context, see Anthony Molho, Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

46. Table 5 documents the percentage of intermarriage for all cases with date of marriage and the male's year of entry into senatorial ranks estimable. Table 9 documents the percentage of intermarriage for all persons with estimable dates of marriage and coded region of residence regardless of reliable estimation of date of entry into senatorial ranks.

47. Compare the findings of Padgett for the case of Florentine magnates in the fourteenth century. John F. Padgett, "Marriage and Elite Structure in Renaissance Florence, 1282–1500," paper presented at the 1994 Social Science History Association meetings, Atlanta, GA.

48. Hypogamy is typically used to refer to marriage across categories of wealth. I adopt it here to consider marriage across status categories, recognizing that the magnate versus ordinary noble distinction in Poland was not a formally recognized or codified distinction. See Maćzak, "The Structure of Power in the Commonwealth of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," for one of many statements to this effect. In more extensive writings, however, Maćzak insists that interpersonal behaviors that were formally permissible, such as clients referring to themselves as friends (przyjaciele) of their magnate patron, were not in fact practiced; for a client to refer to himself as a "friend" or "brother" (panie bracie, literally "Sir Brother") of his patron would be seen as an offense. Maćzak, Klientela, 257, 266. Maćzak’s discussion (249–284) of the language and cognitive landscape of Polish patronage—a political arena divided into "friends" and "enemies" (przyjaciele i nieprzyjaciele), two-tiered political followings composed of "friends" and "servants" (przyjaciele i słudzy); also see Pospiech and Tygielski, "The Social Role of Magnates’ Courts in Poland," for details on this dual hierarchical structure, letters from patrons that feature both ritual expressions of gratitude towards clients and assertion of expectations of being well served by them—makes it clear how much it resembled other early modern European clientage systems. For comparisons in particular to the Florentine case, see Dale Kent, The Rise of the Medici: Faction in Florence, 1426–1434 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), especially 83–104; and McLean, "A Frame Analysis of Favor-Seeking in the Renaissance."

49. See, for example, Robin Fox, Kinship and Marriage: An Anthropological Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 239.

50. Discussion of this development is provided by many scholars, but one may in particular cite Daniel Stone’s brief article, "The Cultural Life of Conservative


52. Here I might note that I do not mean to ignore or refute the indisputable claim that non-noble intellectuals and members of the merchant class were important players on the political stage of the 1780s and 1790s. However, it would be a gross mistake to ignore the contributions of the Polish nobility to political consolidation and reform.


54. Łukowski suggests the evolution of the meaning of Polish national identity away from co-extensiveness with “the nobility” and towards “the inhabitants of the Polish-Lithuanian lands” had begun soon after the First Partition (1772) and before 1791, and certainly before the period of romantic nationalism of the nineteenth century. Liberty’s Folly, 234. See also Andrzej Walicki, The Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Nationhood: Polish Political Thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, trans. Emma Harris (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).


56. See Witold Kula, An Economic Theory of the Feudal System; Maczak, “Money and Society in Poland and Lithuania in the 16th and 17th Centuries.”

57. The term partia was understood in this period as signifying a personal following, or a cluster of families with such followings, rather than an organized political group. The king’s Mémoires refer to marriages as “alliances” and regard them as strategic in the construction of this partia. Stanislaw August Poniatowski, Mémoires (St. Petersburg: Imprimerie de l’Academie Imperiale des Sciences, 1914), vol. I, p. 19; vol. II, p. 270.


60. This finding is not statistically significant for any given period, but it is statistically significant in the aggregate. All periods feature the same pattern of higher than expected frequencies on the main diagonal.

61. So, while I agree with Adams that marriage strategies and office-holding strategies are tightly linked, the Polish case seems to document better than the Dutch case that marriage strategies can change, and do so in a way that is highly meaningful for the character of the state.