

Essays on Elite Persistence, Accountability, and
Representation

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PREVIEW

Abstract

This dissertation consists of three empirical chapters on elite persistence, accountability, and representation.

The first chapter examines the determinants of dynastic politicians in democracies. In the chapter I introduce a theoretical framework where parties face a trade-off between nominating strong but undisciplined dynastic politicians, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates. Under this framework, I predict that parties rely on dynasts only in districts where their organizations are weak. I test this prediction in the context of Victorian Britain, and show results broadly consistent with the theory. The main findings in the chapter suggest that party strength is key to explain the variation in the incidence of dynasties across time and countries.

In the second chapter, I examine how partisan alignment between politicians (co-partisanship) affects bureaucratic performance and policy outcomes. The chapter introduces a theory where only co-partisan legislators can credibly threaten to punish bureaucrats. I predict that co-partisan legislators are more likely to sponsor, and bureaucrats to approve, projects associated with higher rents. I also predict that legislators, anticipating a favorable disposition from bureaucrats, use more resources during periods of partisan alignment. I provide evidence supporting these predictions based on a unique dataset of works implemented under India's Member of Parliament Local Development Scheme.

Finally, in the third chapter, co-authored with Scott Abramson, we estimate the impact of personal power on stability and institutional development in autocracies. Following the literature of dynasties in democracies, we propose a leader's tenure as proxy for his political capital. We then exploit the random timing of natural deaths for a set of European monarchs, and show their successors were deposed less frequently and less likely to face parliamentary constraints. We also show that the effect of tenure on successor deposal is at least as large as the one associated with succession orders – an institution that has received recent attention in the literature. Our results are consistent with a theoretical account we develop

wherein leaders accumulate political power the longer they are in office which then determines patterns of succession, stability, and institutional development in autocracies.

PREVIEW

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Chapter 1

Political Dynasties and Party

Strength: Evidence from Victorian Britain

For a long time parties had no distinct life of their own save in Parliament; in the country they barely existed as moral entities independently of the personages or families which were an embodiment of them.

- Moisei Ostrogorski, 1902

(...) we owe our position in the country, and have always done, much more to local personal influence than to the popularity of our own political party.

- Walter Hume Long, MP, *Electoral Politics and Political Change in the East Midlands of England, 1918-1935*, P. R. Shorter, Cambridge, 1975) quoted by Cannadine (1990, 150)

1.1 Introduction

Dynasties represent a form of elite entrenchment and the unequal distribution of political power in democracies. From a Rawlsian perspective, one could justify this type of inequality if it improved the welfare of society at large. However, this seems hardly the case since there

is no evidence that dynastic politicians improve the welfare of citizens (Braganca, Ferraz and Ríos 2015) and the persistence of dynasts in power may simply lead to distortions in the accumulation of rents among their family members (Folke, Persson and Rickne 2015). Political dynasties also undermine the quality of representation in other ways. Often, for example, members of political dynasties represent the most privileged classes in their country. This violates the principle of descriptive representation (Pitkin 1967) because dynasts only give voice to a narrow set of interests in the legislative arena.

There is a wide cross-national and temporal variation in the persistence of political dynasties (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Van Coppenolle 2013, Smith 2012, Geys and Smith 2015). Among developing countries, for example, we find that 22 percent of national legislators in India are dynastic (Chandra Forthcoming). In the Philippines, the share of dynastic politicians in the legislature is close to 60 percent (Querubin 2010). There is also significant variation in the incidence of hereditary politicians across developed nations. For instance, in Japan dynasts account for 20 percent of legislators (Asako et al. 2015). In the US, although dynastic politicians accounted for no more than 6 percent of national representatives in the late 1990s, in the eve of the Civil War they held a fifth of seats in Congress (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009).

What accounts for the variation in the persistence of political dynasties across time and space? While existing studies have found that members of political dynasties enjoy an electoral advantage (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Rossi 2009, Querubin 2010, Feinstein 2010, Asako et al. 2015), they ignore the strategies of political parties to cope with dynasts and win elections. To fill this gap, I develop a theoretical framework in which parties decide to nominate either dynastic, or non-dynastic candidates to maximize the number of seats they hold in a legislature. Parties make this decision subject to maintaining a minimum level of discipline in parliament. Parties, however, face a trade-off in deciding which type of candidate to nominate. While dynastic candidates have an electoral advantage, this advantage allows them to be less disciplined in parliament, thereby weakening party brands.

Finally, parties have different levels of organizational strength across districts. Therefore, I predict that political parties are more likely to rely on dynastic candidates in places where their organizations are weak. Parties are willing to incur the loss in party discipline only when it is necessary to rely on dynastic politicians to guarantee their electoral success.

I test this theory by analyzing a novel data set of party strength in Victorian Britain, a country and period that represents the canonical case of the birth of mass party organizations. As evidence of the electoral advantage of dynasts, I show that dynastic politicians deterred political competition and enjoyed a larger personal vote. In terms of the strategies parties adopted to cope with dynasts, my analysis focuses on the two major parties of the period and shows that Liberal dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in districts where parties reported the presence of local organizations.¹ I also find that Liberal dynastic legislators dissented from the party line more frequently in highly partisan roll calls. These findings suggest dynastic politicians were more likely to run in places where parties were weak because of the trade-off parties face when nominating candidates. Among Conservatives, I find that party strength does predict the incidence of candidates with a dynastic background running for office. In addition, dynastic legislators in this party were less likely to dissent from the party line. The historical background of the period suggests that patterns observed among Conservatives are due in part to the absence of an intra-party conflict during the period. Together, my findings demonstrate that the strength of party organization is a key factor in explaining the cross-national and temporal variation in the persistence of political dynasties.

This chapter builds on the existing literature that explains the variation in the incidence of dynastic politicians. Existing studies have examined how the role of the party finance, the electoral system, a party's desire to promote loyalty, links to society, and nomination

¹The paper closest to my approach is Berlinski, Dewan and Van Coppenolle (2014) However, their study focuses on the impact of franchise expansion following the Second Reform Act on the incidence of *elected* politicians with an aristocratic or dynastic background. As I explain below, my approach focuses on the impact of party organizations on the incidence of dynastic *candidates*, and my analysis differentiates outcomes by the party affiliation of candidates.

procedures affect the incidence of dynasties. For example, Bohlken and Chandra (2014) find that parties are more likely to renominate dynastic legislators and suggest that a party's need to promote loyalty accounts for this finding. Smith (2012) shows that candidate-oriented electoral systems and a decentralized nomination procedure are associated with a higher incidence of dynastic politicians. Finally, Chhibber (2011) argues that a centralized party finance and weak party links with outside organizations are more likely to translate into dynastic succession in the party leadership.

Instead, my approach focuses on the organizational strength of parties, which has long been recognized as a key feature of modern political parties (Ostrogorski 1902, Panebianco 1988, Aldrich 1995, Tavits 2013). Focusing on this dimension and relying on the analytical approach I propose, allows us to explain the geographical, cross-national, and temporal distribution of dynasties. Existing approaches are limited in explaining the variation across these dimensions when the electoral system (or the nomination procedure of a party) within a given country remains fixed, but the geographic and temporal distribution of dynastic politicians does not.

The chapter also makes empirical contributions by providing a direct measure of party organizational strength. I rely on surveys parties carried out to record the presence of associations at the district level. These surveys allow me to measure party organizational strength at a low level of geographical aggregation independent from electoral outcomes and candidate characteristics. This contrasts with existing studies rely on measures endogenous to both party strength and candidate selection. Nooruddin and Chhibber (2007) and Keefer and Khemani (2009), for instance, rely on electoral volatility to measure party strength. A problem with this measure is that lack of volatility does not imply party strength: a consistently strong incumbent may win elections relying on his own resources. Tavits (2011, 2013) proposes the use of partisan control of local office as a proxy for the organizational strength of parties. However, it is unclear whether this is a good measure, as parties may be able to control local office because of the type of candidates they nominate for office.

Chhibber, Refsum Jensenius and Suryanarayan (2012) use qualitative knowledge of specific geographical units and time periods to ascertain the strength of parties. This approach constitutes an improvement, but the information required to construct party strength is available only at a high level of geographical aggregation (e.g., states).

More broadly, the chapter provides a framework for understanding the connection between the organizational strength of parties and personalistic politics. Existing work has shown, for example, that organizations increase party cohesion (Tavits 2013), but does not tell us about the implications of organizations for candidate selection. Other studies have shown that businessmen (Gehlbach, Sonin and Zhuravskaya 2010), criminals (Aidt, Golden and Tiwari 2011), and personalistic candidates (Keefer and Khemani 2009) run in places where there is low party strength, but do not shed light on the trade-offs parties face when relying on personalistic politicians. My theory and findings show that when parties invest in organizations, their reliance on personalistic candidates diminishes, thereby improving party discipline and strengthening party brands.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows. Section 1.2 introduces a theory of dynasties in a democracy. Section 1.3 provides a brief historical context of Victorian Britain. Section 1.4 describes the data used to test the theory. Section 1.5 demonstrates that dynastic politicians had an electoral advantage in the British context. Section 1.6 shows dynastic candidates were less likely to run in districts where parties had local organizations. Section 1.7 analyzes roll calls in the House of Commons and finds that dynastic Liberal Members of Parliament (MPs) dissented from the party line more frequently. Section 1.8 concludes.

1.2 Theory

In this section I introduce a theory to explain the prevalence of dynasties in a democracy. My theory relies on a framework where parties face a trade-off between nominating electorally strong but undisciplined dynastic candidates, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates.

The main prediction of my theory is that parties rely on dynastic politicians where their organizations are weak.

In my theory, parties care about maximizing the number of seats they hold in a legislature subject to the constraint of maintaining a certain level of discipline among its members. Parties need to ensure that they win the largest number of seats possible to pass legislation and maximize the share of rents they derive from office. In both Continental and Westminster systems, for instance, the party commanding a majority in parliament plays a dominant role in shaping the cabinet composition and setting the legislative agenda. However, capturing a large share of seats in parliament means nothing if a party cannot maintain a certain level of unity among its members. The inability to ensure discipline among its members undermines a party's efforts to push its legislative agenda through parliament, results in cabinet reshuffling (Kam and Indridason 2005), erodes party brands (Carey 2007), and ultimately hurts the electoral prospects of parties (Kam 2009*b*, Tavits 2013).

Parties face a trade-off between nominating electorally strong but undisciplined dynastic politicians, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates. This trade-off captures the essence of dynastic politicians (i.e., those who had a relative in power before they first ran for office). In terms of the electoral advantage, previous studies have found that dynastic politicians benefit from the political capital of their office-holding relatives to secure power (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Querubin 2010, Rossi 2009)², obtain higher votes shares, and are more likely to win office (Asako et al. 2015, Feinstein 2010). This advantage may stem from their family name, having a more established network of operatives, and/or their pecuniary resources.³

²One exception to this finding is Van Coppenolle (2013), who finds a null effect for the inter-generational incumbency advantage in the British House of Commons. One reason for the null finding is that staying in office required a significant investment on behalf of politicians (Rush 2001). As such, it may have been the case that politicians did not derive any additional benefits from holding office that could contribute towards the emergence and persistence of dynasties.

³One can think of dynasts as belonging to the general class of personalistic politicians. Members of this class enjoy an advantage in individual resources such as money, brand name, and/or network of operatives. The theory discussed in this section does not put a strong emphasis on which specific factor is the one that matters most. Rather, the argument introduced here relies on the assumption that dynastic politicians have an advantage across these dimensions over non-dynastic politicians. Other examples of personalistic politi-

At the same, the advantage of dynasts implies that they depend less on party resources to get elected; this allows them to be more independent in parliament. Kam (2009*b*) shows that parties rely on promotion within, and expulsion from, the party to induce discipline among their members. I argue that these tools are most effective among members who depend on party resources for their electoral success. Therefore, all else equal, dynastic legislators should be less disciplined in parliament relative to non-dynastic legislators.

Organizational strength is a fundamental feature of modern political parties (Panebianco 1988, Aldrich 1995) and a key electoral resource to their candidates. By party organizational strength, I specifically refer to one of the three dimensions considered in Tavits (2013): the extent of a party's local branches.⁴ As theorized, and shown in Tavits (2013), the presence of local party branches has a positive impact on the electoral performance of a party. Where local branches exist, parties can rely on a network of canvassers to mobilize supporters during an election, use their past experience in running elections, and enlist new members during non-election periods. However, parties have limited resources and may not be able to build strong organizations across all districts in a given polity.

Given this environment, I predict that parties are more likely to nominate dynastic candidates in districts with low levels of organizational strength. When local organizations are absent, a party needs to make up for its electoral deficiencies. Dynastic candidates are a solution to this problem. When parties are weak, they are willing to pay the cost in terms of a loss in parliamentary discipline to ensure an electoral victory.⁵

The theoretical framework introduced in this chapter builds on existing work that has

cians include movie stars, who by virtue of their profession have high name recognition, and businessmen, whose advantage may reside in their ability to fund their own campaigns.

⁴The other two dimensions are a party's membership and the professionalization of its leadership. The author claims that she separated these three dimensions for analytical purposes. However, she argues that each of these dimensions are likely to reinforce each other (Tavits 2013, p. 34-35). For the purposes of this section, I place special emphasis on local branches of parties, as this is the most proximate characteristic relevant for electoral competition at the local level, and party membership may be endogenous to it.

⁵The prediction of my theory does not rely on whether candidates have agency or mobility. Appendix A demonstrates that giving candidates bargaining power or mobility does not change the theory's main prediction. In addition, Figure 1.14 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that on average in a given election year about 20 percent of dynastic MPs in Victorian Britain represented a constituency not served by them or a member of their family in the past.

shown that parties are strategic in the selection of candidates and rely on high valence politicians in places where parties are weak. Galasso and Nannicini (2011), for example, show that in swing districts parties converge on candidates with more education. However, my contribution is to show that parties do not have to converge on high valence politicians. This simply follows from the fact that parties do not necessarily invest in local organization in the same districts. Keefer and Khemani (2009) show that legislators in districts with high party turnover spend more on pork. However, it is difficult to know whether a legislator's behavior is the result of his background or the incentives he faces in office. As I discuss below, I improve on this work by measuring party organizational strength in a direct manner and by focusing on a politician's background as the outcome.

My account shows that political dynasties occur not despite the goals of political parties, but because these organizations are built to win elections; dynastic candidates are sometimes the best alternative to accomplish this objective. The main insight of my theoretical framework is that the prevalence of dynasties is endogenous to the level of organizational strength of parties. Where parties are weak (in organizational terms), the incidence of dynasties will be high. This finding can give us leverage in understanding why certain regions within a given country have more dynasties than others, why some parties are more dynastic than others, and why there is variation in the incidence of political dynasties across time and countries.

1.3 Historical Context

This section discusses the historical context in Victorian Britain. The discussion of the historical case highlights three main patterns. First, the individual resources of candidates were key to guaranteeing electoral success during most of the period, and politicians used these resources to build dynasties. Second, the national leadership of parties had agency over the selection of candidates, and it was aware of the trade-offs involved when nominating well-

endowed candidates. Third, and finally, the discussion in this section shows that the Second Reform Act increased the importance of party organization at the expense of individual resources.

I focus on Victorian Britain because it represents one of the canonical cases for the birth of mass party organizations (Ostrogorski 1902). Studying this case is useful because it allows us to understand the impact that the emergence of party organizations had on the demand for dynastic politicians. Examining this case also allows us to understand the relationship between party development and dynastic persistence in other settings.

1.3.1 Candidate Resources and Elections

Scholars have referred to most of the period I examine as the “Plutocratic Era” (Pinto-Duschinsky 1981). Cannadine (1990, p. 16) notes that during most of the nineteenth century, “there was an exceptionally high correlation between wealth, status, and power for the very simple reason that they were all territorially determined and defined ...indeed, wealth, status, and power were so closely intertwined in the case of British patrician classes that it is virtually impossible to write about one without mentioning the others.”

Contributing to the correlation between wealth and power was the fact that members of parliament were unpaid, and wealth was a key ingredient to getting elected and staying in office (Rush 2001). Candidates had to cover all expenses associated with running for office. These included keeping the electors registry up to date, setting up polling stations, covering the fees of return officers, transporting voters to the polls, and entertaining them on election day, among others (Gash 1953, Hanham 1959). This required considerable expense on behalf of candidates, with the cost being higher in counties than in boroughs (Hanham 1959, Pinto-Duschinsky 1981).⁶ Particularly before the Second Reform Act, parties could provide little help because their level of organization outside parliament was rudimentary

⁶As discussed in Section 1.11, the cost of elections was higher in counties because of their larger size, the number of paid agents needed, and the transportation costs required to bring voters to the polls.

(Ostrogorski 1902, Herrick 1945, McKenzie 1951, Bulmer-Thomas 1965, Cox 1987).⁷

The preeminence of resources in determining electoral success during this period may be one of the reasons why Van Coppenolle (2013) finds a null effect of office on the probability of a legislator having a relative hold a future seat in the House of Commons. In other contexts, holding office has been found to be key in explaining the emergence of dynastic politicians (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Rossi 2009, Querubin 2010). But in a setting where pecuniary resources are key to guaranteeing electoral success, office-holders may not gain additional advantages that they can transfer to their relatives.

Patrons played a particularly important role in the emergence and perpetuation of political dynasties in Britain. A patron was a property owner (of land or capital), who used his influence and coercion to select candidates and/or secure votes for his preferred electoral candidate (Gash 1953, p. 175). Constituencies in their control came to be referred to as proprietary (or nomination) boroughs, and within them, patrons usually selected family members to hold a seat in the House of Commons.⁸ Gash's eloquence on this point is worth quoting in full:

“The predominant impression to be gained from an examination of the proprietary boroughs in this period is that they were used mainly to secure the return to parliament of members of the proprietor's family. Younger sons or retired uncles were provided with an interesting and not unimportant career in which their status as M.P. could lend distinction and influence to their relatives.” (Gash 1953, p. 215-216)

⁷As an example of the importance of resources, one can refer to James Lowther, a conservative MP, who, recalling a race for his seat in the House of Commons noted: “The election was the last held under the old system ... and in accordance with the electioneering practices which were then in vogue, my agent began operations by chartering every available conveyance for taking electors to the poll and by communicating with all out-voters and sending them return tickets to Oakham. One gentleman eventually came all the way from the south of France to vote - at my expense.” (Viscount Ullswater, *A Speaker's Commentaries*, Edward Arnold, London, 1925, Vol. 1, 154) quoted by Rush (2001, 85)

⁸Gash (1953, p. 193) also discusses the existence of family boroughs. In distinguishing family from proprietary boroughs he notes: “in the one [family boroughs] it was the candidate [popularity, local feeling, respect for the family connection], in the other [proprietary boroughs] it was the influence [a patron's property] behind the candidate, that was the dominant aspect.” Hanham (1959, p. 42) echoes this distinction. Empirically, however, as Gash (1953) acknowledges, it is not feasible to distinguish between the two. Further, my theory does not require determining which element is more important in giving rise to a dynastic politician. All that it matters is that they have an advantage across at least one of these dimensions (e.g., charisma, pecuniary resources, etc.).

Indeed, in appendix D, I focus on the two major parties during the period and show that 61 percent of Liberal and 73 percent of Conservative dynastic MPs serving in proprietary constituencies were related to the patron.

Finally, according to Gash (1953, p. 202), owing to their resources, MPs backed by patrons had influence over the party agenda and were independent in their parliamentary behavior. And as noted in Hanham (1959), the role of patrons was not restricted to boroughs. Several counties saw landowners using their influence to have a member of their family elected to office.

1.3.2 Candidate Selection and Trade-Offs

The national leadership of parties played an important role in the selection of candidates. This was particularly the case in the latter half of the nineteenth century. From the 1850's onwards, Liberals and Conservatives created the position of a national agent. The national agent was in charge of taking care of the business associated with election petitions throughout the country, finding candidates, and drawing candidate lists (Hanham 1959, Bulmer-Thomas 1965, p. 108).

Local party organizations may have played a role in the process of candidate selection as well (Hanham 1959). However, local organizations had less influence among Conservatives because they were brought together under the umbrella of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations to provide mobilizing support at the time of the election, and not to set policy (Ostrogorski 1902, McKenzie 1951).⁹

Parties did not necessarily rely on local candidates. There are several instances where constituencies imported candidates from other areas because they had the necessary resources needed to secure office. For example, in cases where no class or group was dominant, Hanham (1959, p. 66) notes that “local party leaders would approach the party headquarters for lists

⁹H. Cecil Raikes, the first president of the National Union, declared famously: “The Union has been organized rather as a handmaid to the party than to usurp the functions of party leadership.” (*Report of the Proceedings at the Seventh Annual Conference*, p. 10) quoted by Ostrogorski (1902, 119)

of rich men and selected the richest of them as their candidate if he were not otherwise unsuitable.” In other cases, patrons owned property in several constituencies, allowing their preferred candidates some degree of mobility. For example, Cannadine (1990, p. 10) mentions the Buccleuchs, Derbys, Devonshires, and Bedfords, as examples of families who owned properties across several counties.

There is also evidence that political actors and party leaders at the time were aware of the trade-off involved in relying on well-endowed candidates to secure seats in the House of Commons. For example, in the 1880’s leftist commentators complained that the Liberal leadership had not disturbed some members despite the fact that they had opposed the leadership’s foreign policy, all for the sake of party unity.¹⁰ Similarly, among Liberal MPs there were complaints that the whips (i.e. the party officials in charge of making sure that MPs voted according to the party line) chose wealthy candidates at the expense of “sound” liberals (Hanham 1959, p. 355).

1.3.3 Franchise Expansion and Party Organizations

The expansion of the franchise associated with the Second Reform Act of 1867 diminished the role that individual resources played in determining electoral outcomes and gave parties an incentive to invest in local organizations. After the reform, parties faced a strong incentive to enlist the support of newly enfranchised voters via organizations outside parliament (Ostrogorski 1902, Herrick 1945, McKenzie 1951). Indeed, Ostrogorski (1902, p. 76) notes:

“People still continued ... to rely more on direct personal influence than on principles and programmes. Only, owing to the increase in the number of voters, it was necessary ... to have an organization. The Registration Societies supplied the framework of it.”

Further, a party’s organization became indispensable to winning elections. Ostrogorski (1902, p. 213) notes that “it [organization] can obtain the victory for a candidate who

¹⁰Hanham (1959, p. 354) cites the example of the *British Quarterly Review*, a Nonconformist publication, making this complaint.

is personally little known and a poor speaker over a candidate who is a man of mark, a good platform orator, a pillar of the party, etc.” Local organizations provided a permanent body of workers that could canvass and mobilize voters at election time, thereby rendering personal resources superfluous. On this point Ostrogorski (1902, p. 213) makes the following remark: “the possibility or impossibility of using a corps of canvassers settles the fate of his candidature beforehand, and here lies the second reason ... which prevents an independent candidate from having any chance of success: if he were to come forward in opposition to the nominee of the Caucus, he would not get any canvassers outside his personal friends.”

1.3.4 Other Institutional Features of the Period

Races for seats in the House of Commons were determined by simple plurality. MPs could represent county or borough constituencies. The former had a rural character and the latter represented towns and industrial centers. Counties were also more populous than boroughs, and required higher property qualifications for voting throughout the period (Seymour 1915, O’Leary 1962). District magnitude also varied across constituencies, with the number of seats ranging from 1 to 4. Differences in magnitude were the result of the First (1832) and Second Reform Acts (1867), which besides lowering voting property qualifications, redistributed seats across constituencies with the aim of abating corruption (often unsuccessfully), increasing the representation of specific classes (e.g., rising manufacturing sector), and making apportionment of seats congruent with population (Seymour 1915, ch. 3 and 11).

The period I examine coincides with the development of strong parties in parliament. In his seminal work, Cox (1987) shows that institutional changes in parliament and structural changes across constituencies led to the emergence of disciplined parties in parliament. Finally, in the last quarter of the of century the country experienced a fast pace of reform, with the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, the introduction of spending limits in campaigns and heavy penalties for corruption under the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883, further expansion of the franchise under the Third Reform Act, and the adoption of

single members districts across the overwhelming majority of constituencies in the country under the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885.

1.4 Data

The primary challenge to test the theory on political dynasties introduced in this chapter is identifying the dynastic background of candidates, and measuring the organizational strength of parties at the local level. British scholars and political actors have kept detailed records on both fronts that have allowed me to overcome this problem. In addition, I complement this information with the data on electoral returns and MP activity in the House of Commons that Eggers and Spirling (2014) assembled. This section describes the specific sources of the data analyzed in the chapter and pertinent coding schemes.

Dynastic Politicians I rely on Stenton (1976) and Stenton and Lees (1978) to measure the incidence of dynastic politicians. These volumes contain the biographical profile of every MP who served in the House of Commons during the period 1832-1885. Each of these profiles includes the names of a MP's close and (or) prominent relatives, along with information on whether they served in parliament and any titles they held. I use this information to determine the dynastic status of MPs. In particular, a legislator was coded as dynastic if at least one of his relatives (e.g., father, uncle, grandfather, in-law, brother, cousin) served in the House of Commons before he was elected.^{11 12}

The left panel of Figure 1.8 in the Supplementary Appendix plots the proportion of dynastic MPs by political party. The figure shows that the share of dynastic legislators was

¹¹I focus only the House of Commons because it is the main elected assembly in Britain. This focus allows me to be consistent with previous studies on political dynasties (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Querubin 2010, Van Coppenolle 2013).

¹²Often, when an MP's relative was a peer, Stenton (1976) and Stenton and Lees (1978) fail to include information on whether the person served in the House of Commons. Thus, when a relative was listed as a peer I checked in <http://www.leighrayment.com> to determine whether he had served as MP. Clark (2014) used this source to compile the names of members of the House of Commons to study historical patterns of social mobility in Britain.

fairly similar across both parties in the first half of the period of interest, with the proportion increasing from around 30% in the aftermath of the First Reform Act to close to 45% in 1859. Thereafter, the proportion of dynastic MPs among Liberals declines, reaching a low of 18% by the end of the period. Among Conservatives, the share of dynastic legislators remained around 48% for most of the post-1859 period, and only declined after 1880 to reach a period low close to 28% percent. Figure 1.9 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that, with the exception of the last year in the series, dynastic legislators were on average younger than their non-dynastic counterparts.

Testing my argument requires identifying the dynastic background of all candidates running for office, not only the winners. To do this, I traced the electoral history of every politician (i.e., the instances when they lost and won) who served in the post-1867 period. However, this process still leaves a subset of candidates who never won office, and for whom there are no background characteristics available. To address this concern, I report the results of my analysis relying on the sample that includes all races, and on the sample that includes only races where the background of all candidates is known.

Party Strength A key element of the theory I introduce is the organizational strength of parties. Measuring the organizational strength of parties has been proven to be a particularly difficult problem in the literature due to a lack of data availability (Tavits 2011, 2013). In this chapter, I exploit surveys of the two major parties that document the presence of local party organizations across the country in the post-1868 period. For the Conservatives, I rely on the 1874 “Conservative Agents and Associations in the Counties and Boroughs of England and Wales” survey (Conservative Central Office 1874). This document contains information on the name and number of associations and agents in England and Wales during this particular year. For the Liberals, I rely on the National Liberal Federation (NLF) Annual Reports and Proceedings (Barker 1880). This source provides information on constituencies affiliated to the federation. I specifically rely on the 1880 issue, as this is the first one to