



European University Institute

Department of Political and Social Sciences

From public offices to the cultural or economic sector. How Dutch nobility kept its elite positions during the 20th century.

Jaap Dronkers & Huibert Schijf

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Jaap Dronkers, European University Institute, Department of Political and Social Sciences, Via dei Roccettini 9, I-50016 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI), Italy. E-mail: jaap.dronkers@iue.it. Send all correspondence to this author.
Huibert Schijf, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 185, 1012 DK Amsterdam, E-mail: schijf@pscw.uva.nl.

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Abstract

Dutch noble families have held more elite positions than high bourgeois families during the 20th century, and this relative advantage hardly changed over several generations. In this paper we test on of the possible explanations of this ‘constant noble advantage hypothesis’, using a sample of members of noble and high bourgeois families born in the 20th century. We assume that Dutch nobility made a strategic shift from the public sector (diplomacy, local government) towards to the private sector (financial or service sector).. The analyses confirm a move by the successive generations of Dutch nobility away from public elite positions towards more elite positions in the cultural and business sector. Although this move into elite position in other sectors does not fully compensate for the decline of elite positions in the public sector, it highlights an important part of the explanation of the ‘constant noble advantage’. Dutch high bourgeoisie did not made this move outside the public sector during the same period.

Introduction

A central theme of research on the elite is whether members are able to transfer elite positions to the next generation. Classical theorists on the elite, like Pareto and Mosca, who emphasized decline, competition among the old elite and the rise of the new elite, tended to underestimate the potential of the elite to remain on top by adapting to new conditions in society. For instance, recent research shows that Dutch noble families held more elite positions than high bourgeois families during the 20th century, and that this relative advantage hardly changed over several generations (Dronkers, 2003; Schijf, Dronkers & Van den Broeke-George, 2004; Dronkers & Schijf, 2004b). We have called this phenomenon the ‘constant noble advantage hypothesis’ and we have added a comparable sample of Dutch high bourgeois families to look at this hypothesis in a comparative perspective. The combined database has been used by Schijf, Dronkers & Van den Broeke-George (2004) and Dronkers & Schijf (2004b) to test the ‘constant noble advantage’ hypothesis. The outcome challenges the modernization theory, which assumes that the benefits from anachronistic ascriptive characteristics, like noble titles, have become negligible in modern European societies. In addition the nobility offers a good example for investigating how a certain elite is able to adapt in various ways to new conditions in a changing and modernizing society. However, from the beginning it should be clear that the elite positions of children are rarely the same as those of their fathers. Only in very few cases might we speak of dynasties where children follow in the footsteps of their parents.

The relative advantage of the Dutch nobility can partly be explained by its rather high marriage homogamy (Dronkers & Schijf, 2004a). The noble title of mothers and parents-in-law, both for members of noble and patrician families, are other important factors both for marriage choices

among the next generation and for the likelihood of obtaining an elite position by that next generation. There are also clear indications that this tendency to marry within the nobility and high bourgeoisie still exists, and that it is also less prominent among the younger generation. The continuing importance of a noble title for mothers and parents-in-law in obtaining elite positions is an indication that this type of marriage remains relevant.

This article focuses on another aspect of how the Dutch nobility has maintained its social advantage in obtaining elite positions during the 20th century. Over the twentieth century we see a strategic shift from the public towards to the private sector. At the start of the 20th century the Dutch nobility still held many elite positions in the public sector (diplomacy, local government) as a reminder of their hold on these elite positions during the 19th century. But during the 20th century the Dutch nobility moved their occupational activities to the private sector (financial or service sector). This move was partly forced by the decline of the importance of diplomacy and local government but also by the increasing openness of these public sectors to non-noble citizens. This move can be illustrated by the careers of the younger generation of one of the oldest noble families of Holland: van Wassenaer. The two brothers Maurits and Floris chose a career as entrepreneurs. Many of their own children (and their partners) are now working in the business sector or in the media, following an academic education. This reflects a development within the whole family in the 20th century: a reorientation by giving both sons and daughters more academic education and a striving for jobs in the business sector, banking, trade and free professions (Kuiper, 2000: 228). The nobility's move to the private financial and service sectors was made possible by the conversion of its social and cultural capital, which turned out to be very useful in the financial and service sectors. In both sectors trust is of great importance and the symbolic value of a noble title offered just that. Here we will analyze whether this move from public offices to the financial and service sectors can partly explain the 'constant advantage of Dutch nobility hypothesis'. Again, we use the members of the high bourgeoisie families born in the same century as a control group.

Although there are a few indications that this 'constant noble advantage' is also true for the nobility of other European societies (de Saint-Martin, 1993 for France), the evidence is mostly scarce and restricted to the pre-1945 period (Conze, 2000 for a German exception). Moreover, one can argue that this 'constant noble advantage' of the Dutch nobility is exceptional, due to their non-feudal and bourgeoisie background and also due to the lack of revolutions, major wars and/or forced-migration, which hit the Austrian, British, French, German nobility during the 20th century. However, a reanalysis of the data of German engineers, jurists and economists who received a doctor's degree after 1955 (Hartmann & Kopp, 2001), showed that a noble title has a stronger positive effect on the odds of entrance into the German business elite than being from high bourgeois and middle class families (personal communication to the first author). For this reasons we would argue that this analysis of the Dutch nobility is relevant for the other European nobilities (Dronkers, 2005).

Dutch nobility and high bourgeoisie

From the beginning of the 19th century the nobility in the Netherlands has predominantly been a civil (noblesse de robe) rather than a military (noblesse d'épée) or a landed one, whereas in Belgium, Germany, France and the United Kingdom the military and landed nobility dominated (Kuiper 1993, Schmidt 1986). During the era of the Dutch Republic, the predecessor of the present Kingdom of the Netherlands, between 1580 and 1795, new appointments or additions to the domestic nobility were impossible (Israel 1995: 337-341). Members of the Dutch military nobility were few and far between, as officers were usually recruited from abroad. Many noble families extinguished. This policy regarded the nobility in the new Kingdom of the Netherlands in the 1820s and 1830s (Bruin 1992: 125) and was designed to disentangle the legacy of late 18th century

political disputes between the Orangists (supporters of Oranje-Nassau, the new royal family) and the Patriots (republican citizens; Schama 1977). It tried to secure the loyalty from the urban Regents (rich merchant and banker families who ruled many cities throughout the Netherlands) by raising them to the status of aristocrats. New grants of Dutch noble titles have become extremely rare since the early 20th century and since 1994 new grants of nobility (even through acknowledgement or inclusion) have been made virtually impossible by law, because the Dutch parliament believed that nobility is an historical relict and thus saw any new addition as undesirable. Life peers (noble titles, only valid for the lifetime of the raised person) have never existed in the Netherlands, contrary to the United Kingdom and Belgium. Finally, sons or daughters can inherit a noble title from their father, but a mother cannot pass on her noble title to her children.

As a result of the policy of the first Kings of the newly founded Kingdom, members of ruling families from cities in the Province of Holland were more often awarded a knighthood or Baronetcy, whereas nobles from the rural provinces more frequently secured a peerage. Thus almost all the Regent families from Amsterdam in our sample have a Baronetcy. In contrast to other European societies, this does not automatically make a knighthood or Baronetcy an indication of a lower social status than a peerage. Moreover, one of the major consequences was that many people owed their membership of the nobility to governmental or economic abilities over some generations rather than to an aristocratic past or culture. Accordingly, the Dutch nobility reflects a strong civil bias. This may explain why references to the Dutch nobility in, for instance, the study by Lieven (1992) are missing. The rules of the Dutch nobility have a much stronger resemblance to those in Germany and France than to the rules of the British nobility. Dutch noble titles and the way to inherit them (both older and younger branches of a noble family) are in line with the German and French procedures. This resemblance is reflected in the fact that descendants from the British nobility will less likely be included in the Dutch nobility than members of continental nobility, due to the deviant nobility procedures in the UK.

Not all members of Dutch high society possess a noble title. At the end of the 19th century they still proudly called themselves patricians with a pedigree dating back to 16th century. Other families were members of this Patriciaat because they had the same socially recognized prestige as the nobility but for unclear reasons were never raised to a noble title. Even in the same family we can find separate lineages with and without a noble title. In general, the families who are nowadays registered as Patriciaat participated in prestigious councils, in governmental offices or in other meritorious public positions for at least three generations. However, there is one conspicuous difference between nobility and patricians. As we will see all members of the nobility are officially registered, whereas the registration of patrician families is to a certain extent arbitrary and biased (Bruin & Schmidt 1980). A consequence of the severe criteria (meritorious public position for at least three generations) the inclusion of families into the Nederland's Patriciaat, (especially families included after 1945) is biased towards having more elite positions by these high bourgeoisie families as compared to the noble families, because these criteria do not apply to the noble families for their registration in the Nederland's Adelsboek. Thus if we compare the Dutch nobility and high bourgeoisie families by using both official registrations, we have a conservative test of a noble advantage as a consequence of this bias.

Data

Information on the life course of all members of the Dutch nobility has been published by the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie in The Hague. In compiling the various editions of the Nederland's Adelsboek (the so-called Red Booklets), the Bureau uses all information available on the genealogies of Dutch noble families (see for the origins of the Adelsboek in 1903 Bruin & Schmidt 1980). The Bureau also invests considerable efforts in tracing all members of a particular family, even if emigration or social decline has reduced the need for listing them in the Nederland's Adelsboek. We believe that the Bureau's approach has yielded far more complete and

representative data for this group than even the best questionnaire or survey would have produced. The members of the nobility themselves, or their direct relatives, report their university degrees, occupation and circle of employment, public offices, memberships of major governmental councils, positions at the Royal Court, and memberships of knightly orders and those of their spouses. The Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie verifies much of this data from sources such as the Staatsalmanak [State Directory]. All parties involved are aware of the fact that the information they were asked is intended for publication. Therefore it is unlikely that they would provide unreliable information. Moreover, social pressure from the family will deter a member from reporting a university degree, which is not actually obtained, or public offices or other functions not truly held. Although people are obviously more inclined to report the peak of their careers, this practice will certainly not distort our analysis, which focuses on their elite positions. On the other hand, we have also observed less honourable places of employment and offices in the Nederland's Adelsboek. For instance, nearly all members from one of the oldest noble families in our sample born in the 20th century are farmers, blue-collar workers or low-level employees with no connection to their noble past.

From our sources we have selected a research population that consists of all persons born after 1900 and who belong to a family whose name starts with a letter between the letters 'G' and 'Na'. Only the genealogies of these lineages have been published in the volumes of the Nederland's Adelsboek that have appeared between 1993 and 2000. They provide the most recent and complete information on the life course of the sons and daughters. We have not included the royal family and its branches (including de Bourbon de Parma) because of their special status within Dutch society. We have not added or omitted any information to these easily available publications either. Because the first letter of the surname is not connected with any social characteristic, our research population can be seen as a random sample of all nobles who were born after 1900. However, the process of gathering data about the life courses did not end at the same moment for all persons: the gathering of information on individuals whose surname starts with a 'G' ended in 1992, while data on individuals whose surname begins with an 'M' was gathered until the year 1999.

We included all persons irrespective of where they were born, lived or died because a noble title (as a pre-modern characteristic) does not depend on nationality or place of birth. This might lead to some underestimation of the importance of the social and cultural capital of the nobility, because we do not exclude branches of families who have emigrated a long time ago and thus to a large extent have left behind their Dutch social network and lifestyle. The sample contains 113 noble families. In order to distinguish the persons included in the sample from their parents, we will call them sons or daughters (or children) and they are our units of analysis. We have used the same volumes again to collect information on the parents, the spouses, and the parents-in-law of the sons and daughters. By definition the data of the fathers is as complete as that of the children. The data on the mothers has nearly the same quality and comprehensiveness. The data on spouses offers the same information as on the mothers, albeit less complete. It is not always clear whether this is due to a lack of information or simply to the fact that children have remained unmarried. The data on the parents-in-law of the sons and daughters has the lowest comprehensiveness, because we have only their names, academic and noble titles. Therefore, it might well be that the titles of parents-in-law are underreported.

The Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie also publishes the Nederlands's Patriciaat (the so called Blue Booklets), our source of the High Bourgeoisie. The first four volumes appeared in the year 1910-1913 (Bruin & Schmidt 1980) and the independent policy by this Bureau to include a particular family has over time become somewhat more open than at the start. The way these volumes are compiled differs from the Nederland's Adelsboek, because there exists no clear-cut rule as to which families should be included in the publications. At the start Nederland's Patriciaat published genealogies of those families who were considered as 'ebenbürtig' (equally-born) to the Dutch nobility but who had no noble title. Nowadays inclusion partly follows tradition, but new meritocratic criteria have been introduced as well, based on particular elite positions attained by members of a particular family. Nevertheless, the fact that families are mentioned in the

Nederland's Patriciaat is still a reliable indication that they belong to the well-established and traditional high bourgeoisie in the Netherlands. However, some families with a high status in society might be missing, because they do not want to be included or they are not willing to contribute financially to the publication of 'their' volume. We have sampled families from volumes published between 1993 and 1999, which is about the same period as the consulted issues of the Nederland's Adelsboek. Each of the volumes lists the complete genealogy of a number of families in alphabetical order. The vast majority of the genealogies in these volumes are up-to-date revisions of genealogies of families published in earlier volumes. Our sample is thus not biased to newer patrician families. This sample contains 78 patrician families. Nothing in the way our source is compiled suggests a valid reason to believe that these families deviate from the entire population of patrician families. The comprehensiveness and quality of the information on each person in these volumes is entirely the same as in the Nederland's Adelsboek. Therefore, we are able to use wholly comparable variables for both groups of families in our analyses.

Unfortunately, neither the Nederland's Adelsboek nor the Nederland's Patriciaat gives any information, apart from the occupation, on the wealth of the families and its members. Nor does there exist any reliable sources on their wealth elsewhere in the Netherlands. But given the history and background of the Dutch nobility and Patriciaat there is no reason to believe that the wealth of the Dutch nobility is larger than that of high bourgeoisie.

The following variables will be used:

1. Ranking the son's family within the nobility or patriciaat. The ranking of a noble family within the nobility is more or less self-evident. We use the title, which runs from low to high: baronet; baron; count. With very few exceptions, which are not included in our sample, there exist no rankings higher than count outside the royal family. Due to the republican past of the Netherlands and the nobilisation of many families shortly after 1813, the year of nobilisation is not a useful distinction. The ranking of a patrician family is based on the changes in the policies of families included in the *Nederland's Patriciaat*. We made the following categories from low to high: New patrician (family included for the first time after 1940); Old patrician (family included for the first time after 1918 and before 1940); Quasi-nobility (family included for the first time before 1919). Dronkers & Schijf (2004a) shows that this ranking within and between the nobility and patriciaat is relevant, although the differences between nobility and patriciaat are more important than those within the two status groups.
2. Decade in which the son was born, which runs from the first decade (1900-1909) until the decade 1990-2000.
3. Tertiary education degree of the son, his spouse, both parents and parents-in-law. These variables reflect the university or other tertiary education degrees of the son, his partner, his parents and the combination of his parents-in-law. In the case of mothers, parents-in-law and to lesser degree spouses, these variables have to be derived from their academic titles, which might lead to an underestimation of the vocational college diplomas. We were able to use the profession or occupation, which gave additional information on vocational college diplomas, for a more precise coding of the acquired educational level of the sons or daughters and their father.
4. Ranking of the spouse and of the son's mother. We apply the same categories as for the son. If the non-noble family of the mother was not included in the Nederland's patriciaat that person got the ranking of citizen, a category below new patrician. The few noble titles higher than count are coded as count. Foreign noble titles are coded in the same way as Dutch noble titles.
5. Highest ranking of both parents-in-law of the son. Categories are equal to that of spouse. The highest ranking of both parents is used and a ranking within nobility is higher than in patriciaat.

6. Elite position within the household of son, or his parents. To establish whether the individual has an elite position involves his place of employment, public offices and the like. In this study we apply a combination of the restricted and broad description of the elite position concept. We also try several other operationalizations, but all produce analogous results. The restricted and broad description is the one already used by Dronkers and Hillege (1998), Dronkers (2003), Dronkers & Schijf (2004a, 2004b) and Schijf, Dronkers & Van den Broeke-George (2004). It comprises Governmental Ministers, Members of both Houses of Parliament and the Council of State, the highest ranking civil servants of governmental Departments, Commissioners of the King for a province, Majors of the provincial capitals and of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the most important Dutch ambassadors, members of the Royal Court, Managers of members of the Supervisory Boards of large companies, banks and industrial enterprises, the second highest ranking civil servants of Departments; members of the Provincial Executive; City Council members; majors; ambassadors at less important posts; high-ranking officials at international organizations; military officers holding at least the rank of general or vice admiral; professors; and senior managers of large companies or banks. Occupations and positions of which the social significance could not be established unambiguously have been omitted from the description of elite to avoid distorting the analyses. These include unspecified heads at departments and universities; managers of hardly known or small firms; unspecified entrepreneurs, merchants and bankers; advisors and self-employed individuals. Therefore, our list of elite positions is a conservative estimate of the elite positions possessed by the sons. We constructed the elite position in parental household variable and the in household of parents-in-law variable based on the combined elite position of both parents.
7. Sector of elite position of the son or father. Based upon the name of the occupation or office used to establish the elite position, we distinguish between three sectors: public, business and cultural. All elite occupations and offices in (local) government, administration, army and navy we coded as public, with jobs in education, culture and health being the exception which were coded as 'cultural'. All elite occupations and offices in business we coded as public, with jobs in the health sector as an exception. The coding was based upon the elite position itself, not on earlier occupations. If there were two elite positions in different sectors, the business coding had priority.

All these selections lead to a sample of 952 adult males from 113 Dutch noble families and 1478 adult males from 78 patrician families, all born between 1900 and 1951. For more information on this sample we refer to the earlier articles.

Analyses

Fathers and sons

Table 1A shows that the distribution of all noble and patrician sons with an elite position is more or less equal for the business and cultural sectors (less than 30%), but in the public sector fourteen percent higher. However, compared to the fathers (fathers with an elite position are not necessarily the fathers of sons with an elite position) the percentage of sons with an elite position in the public sector declined substantially. The table also shows that the considerable difference between fathers and sons is only true for the nobility and not for the patricians. While the distribution between the three sectors is more or less equal for patrician fathers and sons (and each sector an equal part), the distribution between the three sectors changed considerably between noble fathers and sons: from 83% for the fathers to 55% for the sons. This finding supports our hypothesis that elite positions of 20th century-born nobility were no longer concentrated in the more visible public sector, but were broadened towards less visible sectors. The elite positions within the business sector increased from

12% to 27%, whereas they increased within the cultural sector (mainly education, health and culture) from 5% to 18%.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1B provides information for both noble and patrician sons and fathers, based on the birth cohort of the sons. The results underline the decline of elite positions held by the nobility in the public sector. The vast majority of noble fathers of the generation born between 1900 and 1910, who had an elite position, had one in the public sector (94%), whereas only 70% of the noble fathers of the generation of sons born between 1940 and 1950 had a public elite position. Their fathers must have been born on average between 1900 and 1920. Noble sons, born between 1900 and 1920, who obtained an elite position, have a more or less comparable share in the public sector (65%; 73%). The share of public elite positions held by noble sons born between 1920 and 1950 is significantly lower: around 40%. These noble sons will have obtained their elite position mostly after the Second World War. Although there is also a decline in the share of public elite positions held by patrician fathers and sons, the most significant decline for this group is its share in business elite positions. 48% of the fathers of patrician sons born between 1900-1910, who obtained an elite position, have such in the business sector. This share decreases slowly to around 25% for the younger generation patricians, which is approximately the same share of business elite positions for the noble sons. Patrician sons and fathers seems to have an increasing share of elite positions in the cultural sector (education, health, culture), leaving the public and the business sectors more to the nobility.

The differences within nobility and patrician rankings is shown in Table 1C and it indicates that sector distinctions among the patrician and noble fathers were clear: the latter had predominantly public elite positions, while the former had a more or less equal share of elite positions in the three sectors. That distinction is still visible among the noble sons, especially among the barons, but less clear, especially for the baronets. Although the number of counts is low, the available evidence indicates that especially this category of nobles (the highest in the Dutch nobility outside the royal family) took a sharp turn (100% public elite positions among the fathers to 50/50 elite positions in the business and public sectors).

Table 1D shows a clear relationship between the educational level and sector of elite position. The patrician sons and fathers without a tertiary level of education obtained predominantly elite positions in the business sector (60 %) whereas the noble sons and fathers without a tertiary level of education have a higher chance of obtaining an elite position in the public sector. Among the noble and patrician sons with a tertiary level of education this difference between the sectors is less prominent: the difference is more prevalent between the public sector (nobility) and the cultural sector (patrician), but there is no longer a difference for the business sector. Among the noble fathers with a tertiary level of education the preference for the public sector is much more pronounced than the preference of the patrician fathers for the cultural sector.

Tables 2A and 2B show the intergenerational relationship in sector preferences by confronting the observed and expected numbers (if such a relationship did not exist). Both among the nobility and patricians an intergenerational relationship exists, not only for any elite position (the none/none combination), but also within the public sector for the nobility and within all sectors for the patricians. The difference in this intergenerational relationship in sector preferences between the nobility and patricians is caused by the lack of noble fathers with elite positions outside the public sector and the move of their noble sons into the business and cultural sectors. The patrician fathers were more equally spread out over the three sectors.

[Tables 2A and 2B about here]

In summary, the noble sons moved into elite positions outside the public sector, for which their fathers still had a strong preference and especially those sons born after 1930 (who all made their occupational career after the Second World War). A comparable strong move from the public sector into other sectors is not found among the patrician sons. This suggests that the hypothesis of a successful switch of the Dutch nobility away from the visible public offices into the less visible elite positions in other sectors is upheld by our data. This still needs a more sophisticated test because of the differential impact of education and of fathers' elite sector positions among the nobility and patricians, as could be seen in tables 1 and 2.

Is education an explanation?

Table 3 is the result of a multi-nominal analysis with an elite position in one of the three sectors compared to no elite position as a dependent variable. The independent variables are year of birth, being of nobility of the son, university education of the son, father and mother, father's elite position (and its eventual sector) and eventually the noble title of the mother and all possible interactions between year of birth and all other independent variables. Table 3 shows only those parameters that are significant.

The first result is that there is no significant interaction effect between year of birth and one of the other independent variables. This means, for instance, that the effect of a university education has not increased or decreased for those from the younger birth years, the effect of a noble title has not inclined for those from the younger birth cohort, nor the effect of the fathers' elite position. This underlines how small the changes in the mechanisms of selection into elite positions among the members of noble and patrician families are during the 20th century.

[Table 3 about here]

Table 3 reveals other interesting results. A noble title is only relevant for an elite position in the public sector, not for one in one of the other two sectors. In the latter two sectors a noble title does not increase the chance of obtaining an elite position. However a mother with a noble title increases the chances of her son obtaining an elite position in the business sector. A younger year of birth decreases the chance of obtaining an elite position in the public and the business sectors, but in the former more so than in the latter. A university degree increases the chances of obtaining an elite position in all three sectors, but far less so in the business sector than in the cultural sector. Finally, there is a clear intergenerational transmission of elite positions from father to sons within the sectors. This intergenerational transmission is clearly stronger in the business sector where family companies play a role.

This suggests that there is indeed a move of the nobility away from elite positions in the public sector, but that there is no clear move towards elite positions in the other two sectors, over and above changes of changes in their other background characteristics. The only result that upholds the hypothesis of the move of nobility into the business sector is the significant effect of the mother's noble title on the chances of an elite position in the business sector. Given that noble homogamy is one of the strongest indicators of nobility culture (Dronkers & Schijf, 2004a), one can argue that a mother's noble title is a better indicator of the noble cultural and social capital of a family than the noble titles of the sons. If this argument is correct, this positive effect upholds our hypothesis.

Is the marriage an explanation?

Table 4 also includes the characteristics of the spouse and parents-in-law, but as a consequence the results are only relevant for the married sons. The general conclusion, drawn from table 3, does not change by this more extended analysis. However, this table shows that the effect of the mother's noble title was considerable for the elite positions in the public and cultural sector, but that it decreased for those from the younger birth cohort (although only significantly for the elite positions in the cultural sector). On the contrary, the effect of the mother's noble title was absent for the

chances of obtaining a business elite position, but it increased for those from the younger cohorts to a positive effect.

[Table 4 about here]

Discussion

The results of our analyses clearly confirm the hypothesis stating a move by the successive generations of the Dutch nobility away from public elite positions towards more elite positions in the cultural and business sectors. Although this move does not fully compensate for the decline in the public sector, it highlights an important part of the 'constant noble advantage'. Moreover, this move away from the public sector is a trend brought about by changes in the characteristics of the nobility, for instance, the increased tertiary level of education in the nobility. The part of the hypothesis suggesting that the move from the public into the business sector is the most dominant one among the Dutch nobility is not correct. Elite positions in the cultural sector are also obtained by the nobles from younger generations, especially if they have a university degree. High bourgeoisie, indicated here as patricians, did not make this move outside the public sector during the same period. As far as the patricians changed their hold on the elite positions of various sectors of Dutch society, they are concentrated in the cultural sector and no longer in the public or business sectors. Despite their move out of the public sector the nobility still has an advantage in obtaining public elite positions above the patricians. We can therefore reformulate our hypothesis: the Dutch nobility has adapted itself successfully to modern times by no longer focusing on the public sector but by extending their opportunities and looking at the cultural and business sectors as well. This adaptation of the Dutch nobility is no less successful to that of the Dutch high bourgeoisie. The positive effect of having a noble mother for the chances of obtaining an elite position in the business sector indicates that the specific cultural capital of the Dutch nobility is still useful in this adaptation process. As the example of the Dutch nobility shows, one should not underestimate the ability of an 'outdated' elite to adapt themselves to new circumstances in society.

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Table 1: Sector of elite positions of both adult sons (born 1900 - 1950) and fathers for the nobility and high bourgeoisie (in percentages) by generation, birth cohort of sons, ranking and level of education

A. Generation

	Sons				Fathers			
	Public	Cultural	Business	N	Public	Cultural	Business	N
Total	43	29	28	340 (14)	56	20	24	452 (19)
Patrician	33	39	28	192 (13)	33	33	33	240 (16)
Nobility	55	18	27	148 (15)	83	5	12	212 (22)
B. Birth cohorts of the sons								
1900-1910								
Patrician	47	19	33	36 (13)	34	18	48	44 (16)
Nobility	65	6	29	34 (19)	94	3	3	35 (20)
1910-1920								
Patrician	33	41	26	51 (20)	29	31	40	35 (14)
Nobility	73	8	20	40 (22)	88	6	6	49 (27)
1920-1930								
Patrician	29	42	29	41 (16)	43	19	38	42 (16)
Nobility	40	24	36	25 (15)	88	3	9	32 (19)
1930-1940								
Patrician	42	32	26	31 (10)	44	22	34	41 (14)
Nobility	48	14	38	21 (12)	80	3	18	39 (23)
1940-1950								
Patrician	15	58	27	33 (10)	24	56	19	78 (20)
Nobility	39	43	18	28 (12)	70	9	21	57 (22)
C. Ranking within nobility and patrician								
New patrician	32	29	39	66 (12)	32	32	37	92 (17)
Old patrician	29	45	26	82 (16)	32	41	26	87 (17)
Quasi-nobility	43	41	16	44 (11)	38	25	38	61 (15)
Baronet	45	21	35	83 (14)	78	5	17	129 (21)
Baron	72	16	12	57 (19)	89	5	5	74 (24)
Count	50	0	50	8 (22)	100	0	0	9 (24)
D. Level of Education								
No tertiary								
Patrician	23	17	60	35 (4)	23	8	70	66 (7)
Nobility	54	10	36	59 (9)	85	3	12	105 (15)
Tertiary								
Patrician	36	43	21	157 (30)	37	43	20	174 (31)
Nobility	56	23	21	89 (33)	80	8	12	107 (39)

Table 2A: Intergenerational transmission of elite position among the nobility, born between 1900-1950: observed and expected numbers

Son elite position	Father Elite position				Total
	None	Public	Cultural	Business	
None	656/625	123/148	8/9	17/22	804
Public	40/64	38/15	1/1	3/2	82
Cultural	19/20	4/5	2/0	1/1	26
Business	25/31	10/7	0/1	5/1	40
Total	740	175	11	26	952

$X^2 = 77$; $df = 9$; $p < .000$

Table 2B: Intergenerational transmission of elite position among the high bourgeoisie, born between 1900-1950: observed and expected numbers

Son elite position	Father Elite position				Total
	None	Public	Cultural	Business	
None	1101/1077	57/70	65/70	63/70	1286
Public	46/54	14/4	2/4	2/4	64
Cultural	56/62	6/4	11/4	1/4	74
Business	35/45	3/3	2/3	14/3	54
Total	1238	80	80	80	1478

$X^2 = 99$; $df = 9$; $p < .000$

Table 3: A multi-nominal regression on sector of elite position versus no elite position and the significant parameters of year of birth, being of nobility of the son, university education of son, father and mother, father's elite position (and its eventual sector) and eventually noble title of the mother and the possible interactions between year of birth and the other independent variables (standard error between parentheses).

	Public elite ^a	Cultural elite ^a	Business elite ^a
Intercept ^b	-3.33 (.23)	-4.69 (.35)	-3.46
Nobility	.54 (.20)	-.31 (.26)	.16 (.24)
University education son	2.10 (.20)	2.99 (.31)	1.18 (.22)
Birth year	-.04 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Father public elite ^a	1.24 (.22)	-.06 (.37)	.28 (.34)
Father cultural elite ^a	-.23 (.62)	1.01 (.35)	-.27 (.74)
Father business elite ^a	-.09 (.49)	-1.02 (.74)	1.65 (.30)
Noble mother	.50 (.23)	.19 (.33)	.83 (.26)
N	2421		
Cox & Snell R ²	.18		
Degree of freedom	21		
-2 Log Likelihood	1718		

^a no elite position is a reference category. ^b the intercept is a patrician son born in 1900 without a university degree of its own, nor his father or mother, with a father without an elite position, and a mother without a noble title.

Table 4: A multi-nominal regression on sector of elite position versus no elite position and the significant parameters of year of birth, being of nobility of the son, university education of son, father, mother, spouse and parents-in-law, fathers' elite position (and its eventual sector) and eventually noble titles of mother and parents-in-law and the possible interactions between year of birth and the other independent variables (standard error between parentheses).

	Public elite ^a	Cultural elite ^a	Business elite ^a
Intercept ^b	-3.28 (.25)	-4.57 (.37)	-3.13 (.26)
Nobility	.46 (.21)	-.33 (.27)	.15 (.25)
University education son	1.95 (.21)	2.75 (.32)	1.05 (.23)
Birth year	-.04 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.03 (.01)
Father public elite ^a	1.30 (.23)	.08 (.38)	.35 (.34)
Father cultural elite ^a	-.20 (.63)	1.04 (.37)	-.18 (.74)
Father business elite ^a	-.31 (.54)	-.96 (.74)	1.52 (.31)
Noble mother	.86 (.39)	1.05 (.60)	-.17 (.54)
Birth year* Noble mother	-.02 (.02)	-.04 (.02)	.04 (.02)
Birth year*university parents-in-law	.02 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.00 (.01)
N	2127		
Cox & Snell R ²	.18		
Degree of freedom	27		
-2 Log Likelihood	1850		

^ano elite position is a reference category; ^b the intercept is a patrician son born in 1900 without a university degree of its own, nor his father, mother, spouse or parents-in-law, with a father without an elite position, and a mother and parents-in-law without a noble title.