PART I

DESCRIBING, MEASURING, AND COMPARING
THE TWO DIMENSIONS

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Dimensions of Party Nationalization: Static and Dynamic

US House Speaker Tip O'Neil famously proclaimed that "all politics is local." But politics is more local in some countries than others, and at some times than at others. Why? When, where, and how do local issues influence national elections or legislative politics more generally? How do we define and measure the degree of local influences in a manner that allows analysis across a broad range of countries? These are the questions that motivate this book.

To address these questions, I operationalize "local politics" as the inverse of party nationalization, which I measure across two dimensions, termed *static* and *dynamic*, using analyses of district-level data from legislative elections. A central thesis is that together the two dimensions provide a window into the relative importance to voters of local versus national concerns, and thus explain much about representation, legislative elections, party strategy and organization, and parliamentary politics. To explore this and subordinate theories, the book uses the data to detail the levels of localism across the world, explores sources of the variation, and evaluates the impacts on electoral accountability and collaboration among legislators.

Academic and press accounts of elections frequently, and sometimes explicitly, discuss the inverse relation of "local politics" and the "nationalization" of parties or elections. In the United States, for example, a recent theme has been whether changes to campaign finance laws have heightened the role of national politics in individual districts. Some evidence also points to the increasing partisan "waves" and a decreasing role of local factors in congressional elections. The growing importance of national advertising campaigns is also a part of the debate. The parties themselves apparently think in these terms; the Democratic Party, for example, reportedly discussed the risks involved of using the Tea Party movement to "nationalize" the 2010 midterm elections (Calmes and Shear 2010). Then, in

2016, as the Republicans were worrying about the effect on sub-national electoral contests of their party's leading presidential candidate, Donald Trump, the Washington Post cited a top aide to the Senate Majority Leader as saying: "If there are crosscurrents that are potentially harmful, the most important thing you can do is aggressively localize the race – the things that matter back home, the problems you're solving" (Gold and Kane, 2016).

The terms are also common in popular and academic discussions of elections in other countries. In Argentina, a candidate for governor in the province of Catamarca exclaimed that "luckily and by the grace of God the [gubernatorial] election has not been nationalized" (my translation; Infobae 2011). Two years later, the Argentine president worked in precisely the opposite way, centralizing the candidate selection process to name candidates who supported the "national project" (Poggi 2013). In India, news reports focus on the dominance of local issues in national elections (Sengupta 2009), and the Carnegie Endowment debated whether the 2009 election implied more of a "re-nationalization ... [or] regionalization of Indian politics" (Jaffrelot and Grare 2012). In Japan, Reed, Scheiner, and Thies (2012 p. 364) note that "Koizumi managed to nationalize the election around a single idea (reform) and to convince voters that a vote for the LDP [Liberal Democratic Party] nominee in their district was a vote for reform." Further examples come from other corners of the globe, as highlighted in the following titles: "Electoral Nationalisation, Dealignment and Realignment: Australia and the US, 1900–88" (Leithner 1997); "Elections and Nationalization of the Vote in Post-Communist Russian Politics: A Comparative Perspective" (Ishiyama 2002); and "A 'Nationalization' Process? Federal Politics and State Elections in West Germany" (Pridham 1973).

Analysts, parties, and voters raise these issues because the local–national balance dramatically changes the emphasis in campaigns and the political process. When campaigns are local, sub-national politicians (e.g. legislators or governors) can ignore mandates from their (national) political parties. Budgeting in such a scenario would emphasize district demands rather than national priorities. That production of the B-1 bomber has ties to more than 400 of the 435 US Congressional districts is a clear example of how localism overshadows concerns with efficiency (Summers p. X). On the other hand, where politics are nationalized, funds are likely to be centralized and parties can develop policies and campaigns without concern that politicians tied to a particular area will distort the broader message or block reform efforts. Large restructuring programs and other policies that yield regional shifts in economic advantages – as most do – are thus more feasible when there are low levels of local politics.

Because I am interested in the comparative study of local politics, I require precise definitions and statistically valid measures of local politics. I use a close

study of electoral data for these purposes. Such data can reveal at least two particular patterns that indicate when and where politics revolve around local rather than national affairs. First, electoral data can show whether a party is equally popular around the country or wins most support from particular regions. With a bit more coding, the data can also show whether parties have more success in a particular type of constituency, such as in urban areas. Second, they can also show whether (or the degree to which) voters in all localities respond in similar ways to national issues and debates. Where they do not, I will argue, local politics must come into the voters' calculus.

Descriptions for these two-party characteristics have been presented under many names. Some of these names, such as the personal vote or incumbency advantage, have stressed the local aspect. Alternatively, those that have measured and described "national forces" or the "party vote" have emphasized the issue from the opposite angle. The most general term applied to these concepts is "nationalization," but sometimes this term has been incautiously applied to both concepts. In this book I borrow this common word, but add adjectives that grow from the statistical operationalization of the concepts that I describe in Chapter 3. I use "static nationalization" (SN) to imply the degree of homogeneity in a party's vote across a country *at a particular point in time*. "Dynamic nationalization" (DN) captures the consistency in the change in a party's vote in each district *across time*. Throughout the book, then, I am careful to use these adjectives, including them in square brackets when quoting from other authors who omit the qualifying word.

The terms "static" and "dynamic" have statistical bases, and they highlight the independence of the concepts. Not only are these concepts (almost) theoretically independent, the empirical tests I provide in Chapter 4 show very weak empirical relations. For example, while neither the US nor the UK parties are statically nationalized, the change in the vote for most British MPs (i.e. the level of DN) is much more consistent than for US members of Congress.

The US–UK comparison gives a first hint at why considering just one dimension of party nationalization provides a misleading view of political geography, localism, and the nature of politics. When SN but not DN is low, the winds of change affect a party in all corners of a country in a similar manner, regardless of the relative strength of the party in those corners. But where DN is also low, improvements in one region would not foretell a national surge. For the United States, because of the high relevance of incumbency, a legislator's retirement can sometimes cause sharp changes in the vote in a district that are inconsistent with national trends. Some districts will also respond in unique ways due to their particular sociodemographics, economic engines, employment bases, or the quality of their candidates. To provide a second example, both Spain's People's Party (PP) and the Germany's Christian

Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) alliance have important variance in their regional support (low SN), but when there is a change in support, the two parties experience that change in sharply different manners, as the different levels of DN attest. As a result, when Spain's Socialists were thrown out of office in 2011 due to the county's financial debacle, the PP was unable to take full advantage because some regions chose alternative parties. By contrast, when Germany's ruling alliance, the CDU/CSU, grew by an average of 6 points in 2013, it reaped benefits in all but 6 of the 243 electoral districts where there had been no boundary changes, and in only 2 of those districts did it lose more than 1 percent. These types of contrasts are sometimes apparent within countries. Spain's Socialists had higher SN and DN than the PP, and thus the 2011 collapse affected the party everywhere. Moving to Latin America, the three major parties in Uruguay have high DN, but regional differences are much sharper for the Broad Front than the Reds, with the National Party (Whites) fitting between the two poles. Clearly, both types of nationalization affect how the parties view politics, and thus both are essential to political analyses.

While the two nationalization concepts are independent, each has been associated with similar causes, effects, and measurements. For example, studies tie institutional variables – such as whether a system employs a presidential or parliamentary system, different aspects of the electoral system, and federalism – to both types of nationalization. Other factors that affect party systems, such as ethnic heterogeneity and parties' roots in society, are also potential explanatory variables for one or both dimensions of nationalization. Chapters 5 and 6 delve into this conundrum of using similar factors to explain independent outcomes.

The book also studies these two phenomena together, because measurements of both derive from electoral data. While other operationalizations are possible, comparative analysis prescribes measuring SN as the distribution of a party's vote across a country, and DN as the change in the district-level vote. Again, while the distribution and its change are independent of one another, because both concepts are measured as derivatives of district-level electoral data, studies of one naturally belong with the other.

Armed with these more precise definitions and a methodology to measure the concepts, the book embarks on a comparative analysis that covers scores of parties in democracies from diverse corners of the world. The descriptive analysis is useful in and of itself, since while there have been multi-country statistical studies of volatility and what I term SN, the dynamic dimension of nationalization – which is perhaps the more novel and intriguing of the concepts – has generally avoided cross-national analysis. The book moves beyond description, however, in several ways. First, the project emphasizes the importance of and means to incorporate geography or nationalization into conceptualizations of parties. Second, the book uses empirical data to corroborate the theoretic claim about the limited relation between the two

aspects of nationalization. Third, the data generate criteria from which to classify parties, which, in turn, facilitate tests that can explain the source of variation. Finally, the book considers some of the consequences of the varying levels of both dimensions of nationalization. Together, these analyses provide ways to answer whether (or to what degree) party politics follow national trends rather than local issues, events, and personalities.

why study party nationalization?

Nationalization is central to the representative process, since it shows the geographic basis of a party's electoral support. As I illustrate later in this chapter, it does so in two ways: a) as the consistency in a party's support across a nation, and b) as the degree to which changes in that support are consistent in different regions. A party is nationalized, then, if support is similar everywhere and when changes in support in one region are reflected across the country. Nationalization is a relevant description of the first dimension, since it indicates the degree to which a nation's different regions are integrated. Strong variance on this dimension, by contrast, would indicate that local factors – perhaps heightened regional identities or economic interests – drive political loyalties. The second dimension also indicates an aspect of nationalization, because when a party's support in all geographic units changes by a similar magnitude, national events must have a similar effect on all parts of a country.[1] The reverse is even clearer: if the changes (swings) are inconsistent across regions, then local factors must play a role in elections.

The geographic basis of a party's support – nationalization – influences party politics and representation by determining a party's orientation toward distribution of public resources, support for region-specific interests, and the degree of unity or perhaps the sense of purpose with which a party addresses these and other policies. When policies affect voters from distinct regions in different ways, then the legislators who represent each region might be uncomfortable teammates. Will, for example, Democrats from the US South collaborate from those in the Northeast, given that gun policy, social issues, and views on trade and welfare have very different electoral consequences in the two regions? How do Canadian Conservatives from Quebec discuss the redistribution of tax resources among provinces with their colleagues from other parts of the country? Or how do Spanish PP legislators elected in Catalonia or the Basque Country view regional autonomy in comparison with those hailing from Madrid? In some cases, the coach (party leader) may have tools or enough influence to keep the team together, but in others it will be difficult for all the players to get behind a common strategy. In political terms, this might mean the difference between coherent policy proposals that the party

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[1] Below I reference and discuss Katz (1973a, b), who argues that national events can have dissimilar effects across regions (see section on "Why Study Dynamic Nationalization?").

can actively promote, and fragmented policy proposals with a lack of consensus that yields a bias toward minimal change or stagnation. Roberts (2014) concurs, explaining that internal divisions in a party "render[] the party's programmatic stance incoherent" (p. 55). Those interested in representation can then analyze whether stagnation is Pareto optimal, providing the greatest good without some players being hurt.

In spite of its clear relevance to politics and representation, political geography generally, or nationalization specifically, is mostly absent in theoretical descriptions of parties and party systems. It is not apt here to review in detail all of the conceptions of these institutions, but it is necessary to place nationalization within the context of other traits that define institutions. In this telling, even though the ideas are sometimes only implicit or lacking, I emphasize the role of geography in six classic analytical frameworks. In loose chronological order, these divide parties and party systems based on: class, the number of parties, whether they serve national rather than parochial interests, how they represent ethnic cleavages, organizational structures, and institutionalization. In this discussion I follow many other studies and move between discussions of parties and party systems. This is sometimes problematic, since some systems are composed of different types of parties. In the following section I use this reasoning to emphasize the importance of a focus on parties, but here I focus on the importance of nationalization in conceptualizing parties and the systems to which they belong.

The earliest classifications (e.g. Michels 1915) divided parties according to adjectives such as "oligarchical," "mass," and "catch all," and these terms are still prominent (e.g. Roberts 2014). These studies were concerned with the inauguration of representative democracy, and class was a more prominent concern than regionalism. The degree to which parties institutionalize (Panebianco 1988) or "integrate" potential factions (Duverger 1954) is another way theorists have classified parties, but even these well-known studies spend little time evaluating the size, shape, or influence of parties' regional bases.

The next prominent variable for classifying party systems, with clear implications for representation, is the number of parties. At one end of the scale, single party systems delineate the breach between democracy and autocracy. Among democracies, the number of parties speaks to the issues of representation through its implications for ideological diversity. The landmark studies of Duverger (1954) and Downs (1957) established the idea that two-party systems should tend to produce centrist politics, while more parties would produce a broader range of options (see also Cox 1990). Geography can enter into this discussion in several ways. First, wider ideological representation would facilitate the development of parties with a regional base. The concern, then, is with the relation among regions and their supporters. As Cox (1997) and Chhibber and Kollman (2004) ask, why and when is a single party able to

gain support across regions in some countries, while in others separate parties form to represent different regions? This literature, in sum, ties representation to the number of parties, and at least the more recent versions do have an explicit tie to political geography.

Different from those studies concerned with regional representation per se, another strand of literature divides parties or party systems according to whether they serve national or parochial interests. In these studies, parties and party systems divide based on the degree of personalism and clientelism – politics that takes a local focus – on one end of the scale and, on the other, the degree to which parties provide "clarity of responsibility" (Powell 2000) or "programmatic structuration" (Kitschelt et al., 2010). The large body of work on political parties in the United States centers on this debate. It is marked at one extreme by Mayhew's (1974a) work that highlighted legislators' independence from parties and personal ties to their constituencies. While not discounting legislators' interests in pursuing policies and organizational structures that would help them with their geographically bounded constituencies, the work on both US and other world legislatures spawned by Cox and McCubbins (1993) on parties as "cartels" marks a different pole in this debate, since it provides a rationale for parties to build a structure within the legislature that would help them to pursue national as well as parochial goals.

The fourth branch of literature about types of political parties and party systems does have an explicit concern with geography, as it focuses on prescriptions for dealing with ethnic and regional divisions. Lijphart's (1977) "consociational" prescription, for example, calls for empowering ethnic or regional parties and fostering inter-party cooperation that would necessarily cross geographic lines. Horowitz (1985) takes the opposing view, arguing that electoral systems and other rules should encourage coalitions that cross ethnic (which are frequently regional) divisions. Reilly's (2002) call for the alternative vote (in which voters provide preference rankings for their choices) fits into this camp, as well. These issues are of interest, since they explicitly consider regional parties and the ability of parties to gain support in different regions. They provide useful case studies to show how different countries have succeeded or failed due to different arrangements. What they have not done, however, is to provide a general framework to compare, contrast, and measure the role of regional support for parties.

Work on the organizational structure of parties has moved away from a focus on geography. For Panebianco (1988), among the factors that define a party's organizational structure is whether the party was built from national elites "penetrating" different territories, or regional elites banding together ("diffusion"). Geography is evident in this discussion, but the extensive literature on "institutionalization" which builds from organizational theory largely ignores this topic. Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) landmark study, for example, defines institutionalization of parties or systems based on

electoral volatility, roots in society, democratic legitimacy, and the stability of party rules and structures, but not (explicitly) geography.[2]

While the literature on party institutionalization largely omits discussions of geography, it does hint at the subject in discussing the importance of parties in organizing groups or, in the word of Filipov et al. (2004), "integration." These authors rationalize federalism from both economic and political perspectives. Within the political dimension, federalism allows representation of minorities, decentralization of conflicts, a means (perhaps a "payment" in exchange for autonomy) to maintain disparate regional groups within the national aegis, and a way to contain or resolve regional conflicts. They argue that parties play a central role in these processes – which can be positive or negative. Parties are motivated, they argue, by electoral systems and geography. Focusing on the latter, they continue that an ideal party in a federal system must integrate national and local elites and structures. Among other criteria for assessing integration, they query whether the party has an organizational structure at the national, local, and regional levels; whether there is a coattails effect between local and national elections; and how well the party's national platform is acceptable to the different regions. In a study of Argentina, Feierherd (2012) adds that "denationalization has weakened party integration" (p. 120; my translation).

Traditional variables have facilitated categorization and advanced our understanding of the parties and party systems that are the basis of representative democracy. But while geography and nationalization are definitional for the representative role of political parties, these traits are only implicit, if not ignored, in most theoretical discussions of party organization. The two dimensions of nationalization capture the geographic aspects of politics, and thus can add nuance to other means for categorizing parties. Studying these concepts, however, requires more precision. What is nationalization? How does it affect political parties and thereby relate to representation? A crucial first step in exploring these questions is justifying the analytical focus on parties rather than party systems.

A Focus on Parties before Party Systems

In the preceding discussion I moved back and forth between discussions of parties and party systems. This analytical laxity is sometimes problematic because, as the extensive study of rational choice and collective action has shown, components of a group do not always represent the group itself. Translating to this book, it is problematic to study party *systems* because there may be significant differences among the *parties* that comprise them.

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[2] Their study focuses on party systems, but the organizational focus applies to individual parties. See discussion in subsequent section "A Focus on Parties before Party Systems," citing Randall and Svasand (2002), who separate measures of institutionalization for parties and party systems.

A party system, for example, can mix old and new, hierarchical and disaggregated, radical and moderate, big and small. It can also mix parties with a national focus with others whose support is regional. Critics of the institutionalization literature have taken note of this problem, leading Randall and Svasand (2002), for example, to create a model to separately measure institutionalization of parties and that of the party system. In sum, understanding parties, and the politicians that comprise them, therefore, is a necessary precedent for discussing party systems. As a result, this book focuses on nationalization of parties, only discussing party systems as the interaction of the component parties.

In many countries the most prominent parties do follow similar trends, and thus country-level institutional variables are appropriate and statements about the party system are reasonable. Further, and regardless of their differences, the parties, of course, do interact, and thus it would also be incorrect to hermetically separate them. In Chapter 7, therefore, I explicitly discuss the interaction of nationally competitive parties with those that are only prominent in a particular region. But, for the countries where parties vary in terms of nationalization, system-level labels – unless they acknowledge the variance – will be misleading. For example, are systems such as those in Canada, the UK, or Spain nationalized or regionalized, given that some parties in these countries compete only in particular regions while others compete everywhere? Studying trends in these types of systems would necessarily have to focus on the individual parties. Further, understanding the forces that led to this particular form of a system, or the effects that that system has on the political process, would require attention to the individual parties. This idea implies that while hypotheses regarding the causes or effects of system nationalization would have implications for parties, the reverse may not be true. For example, some parties may form due to national movements, while others form, perhaps at different times, as the result of rising regional demands. In short, discussing a nationalized system suggests that all parties are similar, but in many cases this is inappropriate. An analytical focus at the party level, then, increases the precision of the analysis and encourages a discussion of the interaction among parties, while system-level analysis often ignores the intricacies of the components that make up the system.

Focusing at the party rather than the system level has other advantages. First, the statistical approach I develop provides distinct measures for parties. These values quantify the variance in a party's support across time and across space, and I show that some countries house a variety of party types. Because of this variance, in Chapter 3 I argue, with supporting empirical examples, that a weighted average of the party results can yield a party system score, but such summary statistics can be misleading. Several configurations of national and local parties, for example, can yield (weighted) averages that place the "system" near the center of the range.