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**From Pareto economics, to Pareto politics, to fascism:
A Rochambeau model of elite circulation**

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To start by the conclusion:

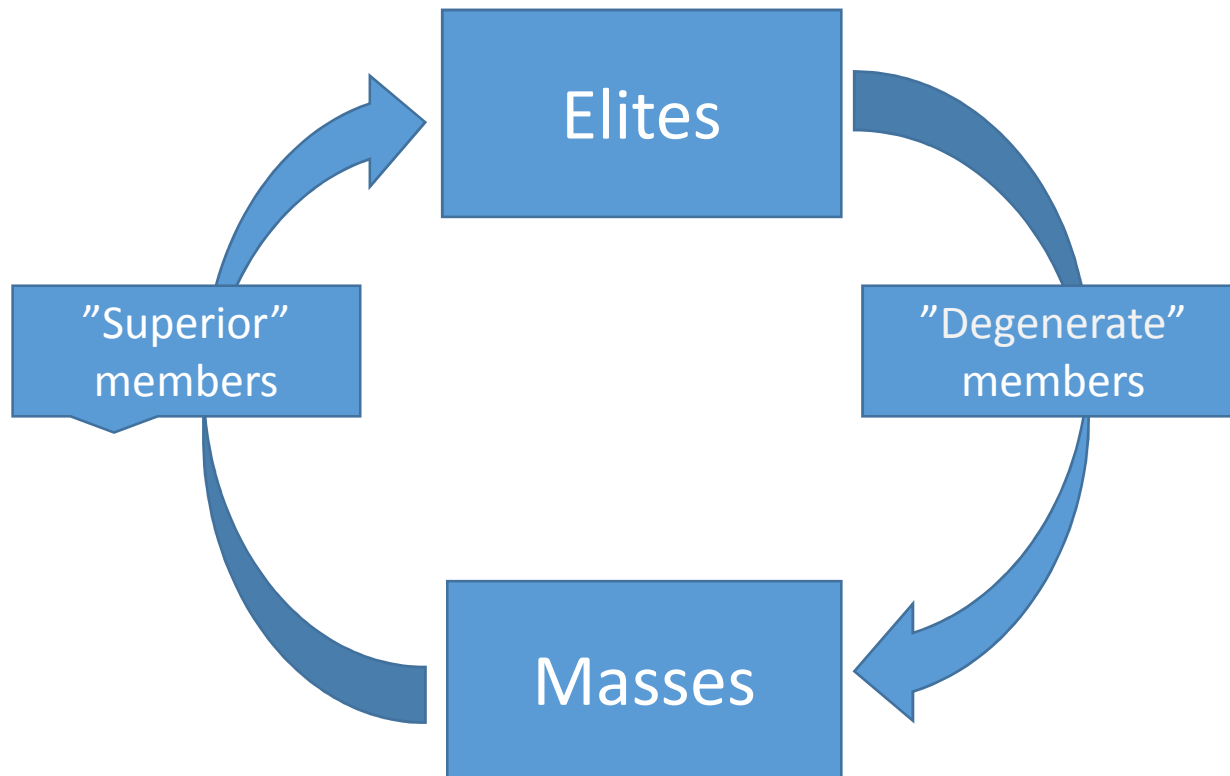
Nonelites of all countries, unite!

- National left-politics is not enough.
- Generalized national*ist* politics usually ends badly.

Why study Paretian elite theory

- Current ascent of nationalism, xenophobia and reactionary politics.
- Pareto's theory of the circulation of the elites: a protofascist theory of society.
- Increasing normalization of elite theories: see *World Development Report 2017*, The World Bank.

Pareto's elite theory



Elite theory, biological determinism, and racism

- *Social Darwinism* → elite theory.
- *Biologically determined* human inequality: "survival of the fittest".
- *Biological superiority* of the upper classes. Lower classes are *anthropologically inferior* (Robert Michels).

Racism and *Der rassenkampf*

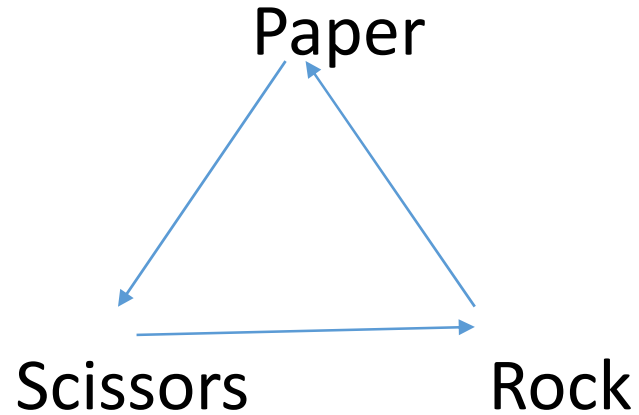
- In Michels's clear synthesis, "Only the strongest societies survive, and every people strives to dominate foreign groups. The need for national expansion underlies all logic and ethics. Only weak and unfree peoples feel a need to proclaim the ideals of justice, and fantasize about the benefits of international brotherly love."
- Pareto's view: "If the Negroes were stronger than the European, Europe would be partitioned by the Negroes and not Africa by the Europeans ... As long as the Europeans are stronger than the Chinese, they will impose their will on them; but if the Chinese should become stronger than the Europeans, then the role would be reversed."

Making (non)sense of elite theory, and drawing some relevant lessons on the way

- Elite theory: toxic after World War II.
- Rochambeau model of elite circulation: unveiling mechanisms and possible ways out.
- Solemn declaration: this use of game-theoretic argument is only ironic, metaphoric and parodic.
- Metaphor: heuristic function.
- *Castigat ridendo mores*: let's criticise with humor.

The Rochambeau, or Rock-Paper-Scissors game

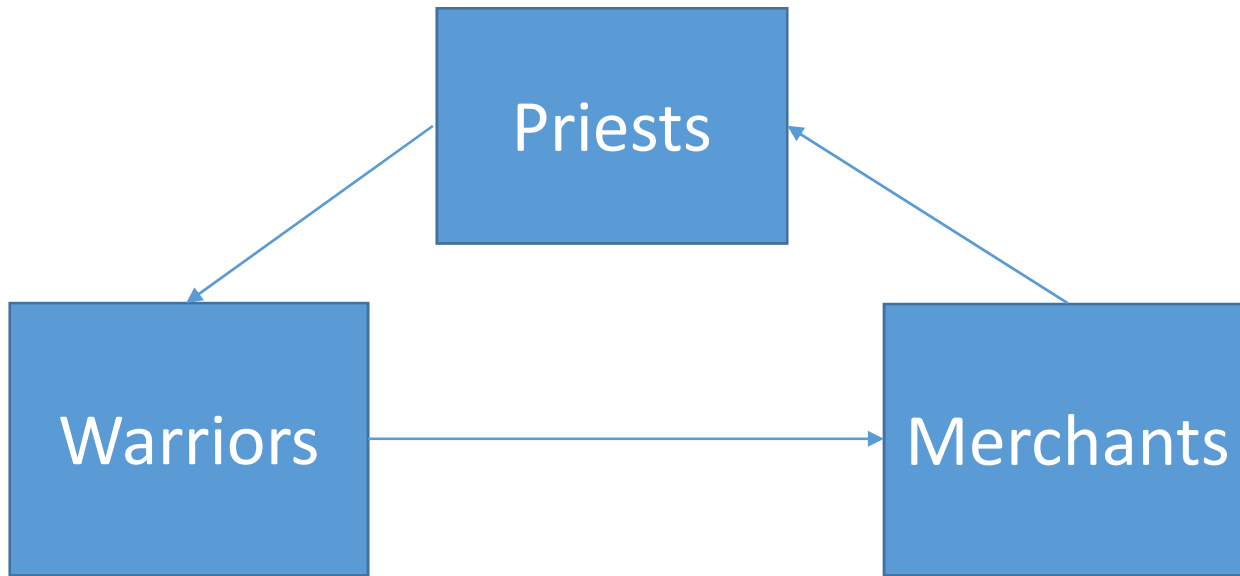
Cyclical dominance:



R-P-S in biology and in society

- Canonic R-P-S model in biology: Sinervo and Lively (1996) “The rock-paper-scissors game and the evolution of alternative male strategies,” *Nature*.
- Three recurrent pattern of dominating castes or classes in history: priests (the learned caste), warriors (the military caste), merchants (the money making caste). Quite naturally, we assign Paper to priests, Scissors to the military, and Rock to the merchants.

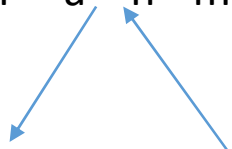
Succession rule for elite circulation



R-P-S elite circulation in history

- Hindu caste society

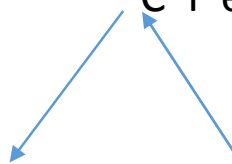
B r a h m a n s



K s h a t r i y a s V a i s y a s

- Medieval class society

C l e r g y



W a r r i o r s M e r c h a n t s

- Elite classes in capitalism

I n t e l l e c t u a l s



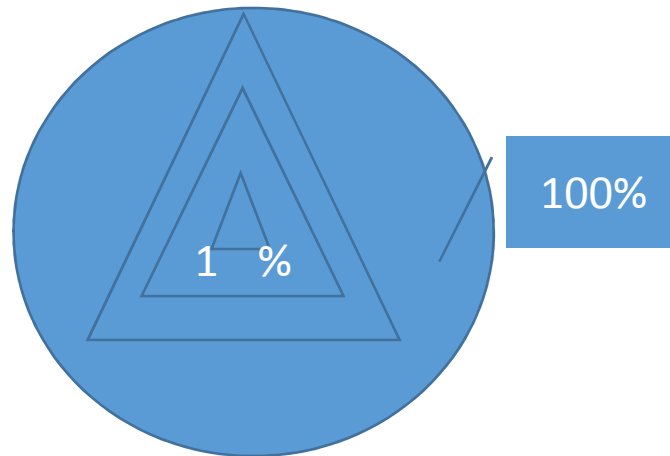
M i l i t a r y C a p i t a l i s t s



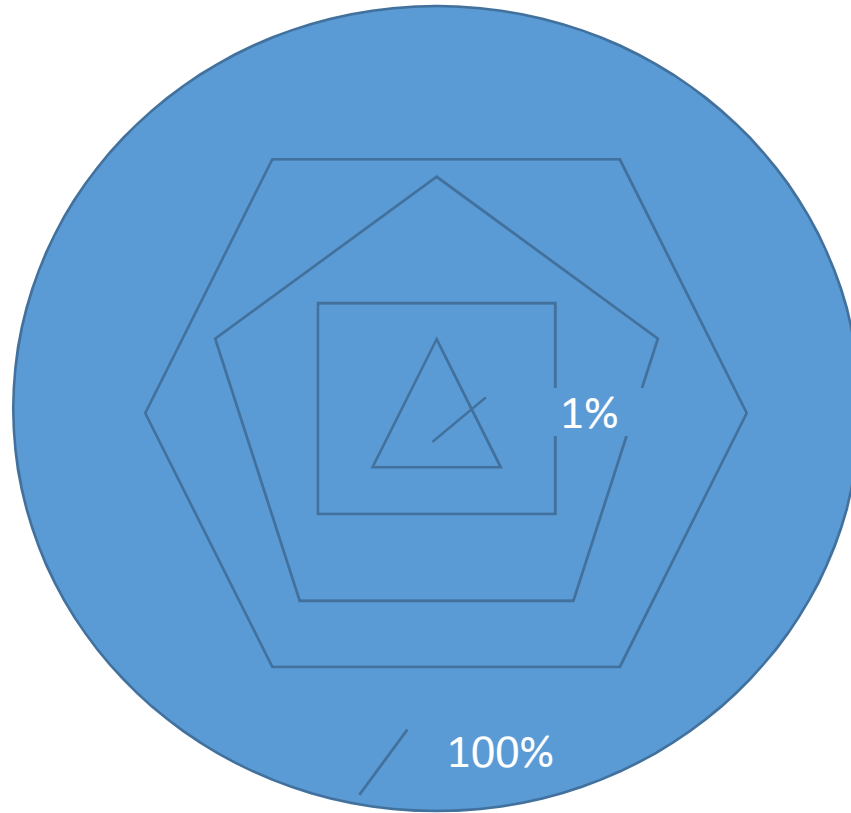
What is to be done?

Could the masses possibly free themselves from elite rule?

Increasing the economic, social, and political franchise of the nonelites, i.e. the working population. *Democratization*: effective political, social, and in particular, *economic democratization*.



Democratization, economic franchise,
increasing capabilities, dealienation



Problem: democratization in one country alone not possible

- Recall Stalin's "socialism in one country," that is, a long and tortuous way to (wild) capitalism
- Hobbesian competition among countries *requires* elites:
 - Capitalist elites: indispensable to accumulate, grow and "make our Nation great again"
 - Military: necessary to control the masses and wage war against other countries
 - Intellectual clergy (particularly the economics clergy): needed to convince the masses that all this is Pareto-optimal and in their best interest.

Conclusion

**Nonelites of all countries,
please unite!**

Or else...

Coda: A hopeful Rochambeau possibility

- Present system: a unitary global system.
- Dominating elite is clearly the global capitalist class.
- R-P-S succession: Capitalist rule will be replaced by Intellectual elite dominance.
- An enlightened Intellectual elite -- awakened to the grievous risks of the present evolution -- may search, in conjunction with the nonelites, for modes of democratization of the ruling global elite system.

A hopeful initiative

“We need an international progressive movement that mobilizes behind a vision of shared prosperity, security and dignity for all people, and that addresses the massive global inequality that exists, not only in wealth but in political power... Our job is to reach out to those in every corner of the world who share these values, and who are fighting for a better world.” *A new authoritarian axis demands an international progressive front.*
Bernie Sanders

“Let us begin today. More will follow us the moment when hatred and anger yield to rational hope.” *Our new international movement will fight rising fascism and globalists.* Yanis Varoufakis