Politics and democracy in microstates. A comparative analysis of the effects of size on contestation and inclusiveness

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Politics and Democracy in Microstates

A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Size on Contestation and Inclusiveness

Cover
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Front (bottom): Anse Source d'Argent, La Digue – Republic of Seychelles
Back (top): Friars Bay, St. Kitts – Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis
Back (bottom): La Rocca or Guaita, San Marino Città – Republic of San Marino

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A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Size on Contestation and Inclusiveness

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As a senior scholar in the field once told me, being a microstate researcher takes you to places most people can only dream about. The obvious downside of this is that it arouses the jealousy of colleagues, friends, and family members, who accused me of first having selected my cases for field research, and then fitting these into an appropriate research design. However, although it is true that I have very much enjoyed San Marino's food, St. Kitts and Nevis' rum cocktails, Seychelles' beaches, and Palau's diving and snorkeling sites, during field research I actually had to work much harder than at home.

I owe the fact that I managed to obtain the information I needed within the short period of time that was spent in each of the four microstates first and foremost to my interview respondents, who were with few exceptions very eager and enthusiastic to discuss the details and peculiarities of their countries' political systems with me. In this sense, a great advantage of the smallness of the microstates that I studied is the great accessibility of even the most high-ranking officials, whom I could invite for interviews while encountering them in pubs, supermarkets, petrol stations, or even on the beach.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Microstate-Paradox

Introduction

1. <u>What this Dissertation is About</u>

According to several recent publications, small states or microstates are comparatively more likely to have democratic systems of government than larger states (Diamond and Tsalik 1999; Anckar 2002b; Srebrnik 2004). Based on the data of aggregate indices of democracy such as Freedom House, these large-N quantitative analyses have disclosed a statistically significant negative correlation between population size and democracy. Although a satisfactory explanation of this pattern has not yet been found, the argument that a limited population size fosters good governance, republicanism, and democracy was already formulated by the ancient Greek philosophers, and is therefore one of the most ancient debates in political science. The finding that microstates from around the globe are exceptionally likely to develop and maintain democratic systems of government therefore appears to validate centuries-old theories about the political consequences of size. In addition, not only has the average population size of countries continuously been decreasing since the late 19th century (Lake and O'Mahony 2004), but more and more states have initiated programs of decentralization and devolution of powers and competences to smaller, sub-national units. This unmistakable trend towards smaller polities and administrations is buttressed by academic publications that emphasize the virtues and advantages of smallness (cf. Schumacher 1973; Katzenstein 1985; Weldon 2006).

Whereas the argument that 'small is democratic' (Ott 2000) hence now prevails in the literature, there are also studies that point in another direction. Relying less on formal political structures and large-N databases, the available case studies of small state-politics primarily highlight the intense personal rivalries, corruption, patron-client relationships, and social pressure and intimidation that supposedly undergird small state-politics. According to some of these studies the democratic institutions of microstates are largely a façade, beyond which a much harsher and less democratic - if not dictatorial - reality can be identified. In comparison, it is obvious that these case studies are basically

incompatible with the more dominant quantitative literature that was described before. In order to avoid the limited focus on formal structures as well as the idiosyncrasies and lack of generalizability that characterize case studies, this dissertation offers a small-N comparative approach that is based on in-depth analyses of four microstates around the globe. Using Dahl's twin dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness as a framework to conceptualize democracy (1971), on the basis of field research in San Marino, St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Palau the image that follows from the case study-literature is largely confirmed. Due to the fact that similar political patterns are identified in microstates that otherwise are as different as possible on virtually all background variables, many of the outcomes of the analysis can be viewed as (generalizable and universally applicable) political effects of size.

2. <u>The Exclusion of Microstates in the Broader Academic Literature</u>

In comparative political research, the smallest countries in the world are mostly excluded. Although there are significant differences with regard to the threshold that scholars apply to exclude small states, almost all publications in this field do employ a cut-off point that results in the elimination of microstates.[1] In Samuel Huntington's seminal work *The Third Wave*, for example, all countries with less than one million inhabitants are excluded (1991: 43), and in Arend Lijphart's *Patterns of Democracy* no countries with less than a quarter of a million people are analyzed (1999: 52). Even though the resulting number and proportion of excluded states may be quite high, many scholars do not provide any motivation or justification for their decision to leave out microstates. The academics that do give explanations for excluding small states often rely on somewhat questionable or unconvincing reasons. From a scientific perspective it seems hard to think of any persuasive reasons that would justify the omission of a large group of cases, especially in light of the broadly accepted view that all available observations (or a representative sample of this) should be analyzed in order to avoid selection bias. The generalizability and applicability of comparative political studies to small states can be questioned if no small states are included in these analyses in the first place.

A survey of the most well-known and renowned publications in the field of comparative politics and democracy demonstrates that a variety of reasons

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[1] There are different ideas about what a 'microstate' is. In the second chapter of this dissertation I motivate and defend my decision to apply the term to the (twenty-one) UN-member states with less than 250.000 inhabitants, and in the remainder of the book I refer to this group of states whenever I use the expression.

are applied to exclude microstates. Among the most recurrent and prominent motivations are:

1) that microstates represent only a tiny proportion of the world's population (e.g. Moore 1995: 7);
2) that microstates are not 'real' or fully independent states (e.g. Vanhanen 1997: 61);
3) that other authors in this academic field exclude microstates as well (e.g. Lijphart 1999: 52);
4) that there is a structural lack of data on microstates (e.g. Powell 1984: 4).

The first of these arguments alludes to the relative insignificance of microstates, and authors who refer to this reason often also mention the fact that microstates are unknown to the larger public. If the overall aim of comparative political research is however to derive knowledge from the comparison of different political systems, it is not clear why the number of people that a system serves should be a factor of significance. In terms of scientific value, each case, no matter how small, can derive new insights into the workings of politics. As a matter of fact, it could actually be argued that more knowledge can be acquired by studying the systems of contemporarily understudied nations, instead of those that we already know much about.

The second argument can be seen as an attempt to set microstates apart from other states, by denying them the classification as a state. The validity of this argument is dependent on the specific definition of a 'state' that is employed. On this point, microstates however relatively easily meet the most common criteria of statehood;[2] all of them have a certain territory and population, and all (being UN-members) are recognized as sovereign states by other states. According to Tatu Vanhanen, microstates are excluded in his study because "the nature of their political institutions may depend more on foreign support than on domestic factors" (Vanhanen 1997: 61). This hypothesis is however not subjected to any empirical test, and even if it were true the question remains whether this does not also go for many larger states, and why it would be a decisive factor in the first place.

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[2] As they were first codified in the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which is contemporarily still perceived to be the most adequate conceptualization.

The third and fourth arguments are related to each other, in the sense that the application of them actually contributes to the problem that the fourth motivation refers to. In his book, Lijphart for example argues that:

> "In comparative analyses of democracy, the smallest and least populous ministates are usually excluded; the cutoff point tends to vary between populations of one million and of a quarter of a million. Here, too, I opted to be inclusive by selecting the lower cutoff point" (Lijphart 1999: 52).

Although the initial reason for selecting any cutoff point is not made explicit in this reasoning, it is likely to result from a lack of data. In similar fashion, the lack of data-argument might elucidate Huntington's explanation that "[b]ecause of their small size they [microstates, WV] are, unless stated to the contrary, excluded from analyses of third wave countries in this study" (Huntington 1991: 43). Whereas it is true that there is a structural lack of data on microstates, it can be asserted that this is primarily a consequence of the fact that earlier studies and databases excluded these countries, and it appears that this pattern can only be reversed if future studies would decide to pay attention to this group of countries as well.

The exclusion of microstates potentially creates another problem: it can introduce biases in the existing analyses. In global comparative studies that exclude microstates, a regional bias can be identified due to the clustering of microstates in two world regions: the Caribbean and Oceania.[3] In addition however, precisely because so little is known about microstates, it is at present largely unclear to what extent their political systems differ from those of larger states. This may be especially problematic for studies that aim to assess worldwide patterns of democracy and democratization, since the results of these analyses could be distorted as a result of microstate-exclusion. Finally, perhaps the most serious downside of the fact that microstates are so under-researched is the lack of knowledge about the operation of politics on a small scale (at the national level at least). Precisely on this issue, there is however increasing evidence suggesting that microstates are different from larger states, in the sense that they appear significantly more likely to develop and maintain a democratic system of government.

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[3] This bias is reinforced by the fact that these regions *primarily* consist of microstates, with only a few larger states located here.

3. Statistics on Democracy in Microstates

As mentioned before, in recent years several publications have highlighted the statistical association between smallness and democracy (e.g. Hadenius 1992: 123-126; Diamond and Tsalik 1999: 117-119; Ott 2000: 115-121; Anckar 2002b: 377; Srebrnik 2004: 330-332).[4] In table 1.1 all UN-member states have been classified according to their population size[5] and Freedom House-ranking of 2011 (Freedom House 2012). Concerning population size, the countries have been grouped into progressively smaller categories, ranging from countries with less than five million inhabitants to countries with less than 100.000 people. In the table, the statistical association between population size and democracy is clearly visible; the smaller the population size category, the greater the proportion of 'free' countries. Whereas less than forty-five percent of all 193 UN-member states can be classified as free, this figure rises to almost sixty percent when only the eighty countries with less than five million people are examined. The scores rise further to over seventy percent for countries with less than one million inhabitants, and to over eighty-five percent for states with populations of less than half a million. Among the very smallest countries in the world, the percentage of free countries is over ninety percent, with only a slight difference between the twenty-one UN-members with less than a quarter of a million inhabitants and the twelve ones that only have less than a hundred thousand people.

In addition to the observation that the number of free countries rises progressively as the population size of a country decreases, the table also demonstrates that the proportion of outright authoritarian states (in the 'not free' category) is extremely small or even nonexistent among the very small states. Less than one quarter of the not free-states (eleven out of forty-eight) has a population size of less than five million, and among the twenty-nine countries with less than half a million inhabitants only one full-blown authoritarian state exists, which is the Sultanate of Brunei. Even though the simple categorization in the table speaks for itself and clearly confirms the existence of a pattern, this is

[4] It should be emphasized however, that all of these studies (except for Hadenius) use Freedom House-scores as a basis to measure democracy, which is a logical consequence of the fact that this is the only aggregate index of democracy that also takes microstates into account. Well-known alternatives to Freedom House such as the Polity scales and the Economist's Democracy Index exclude countries with less than half a million inhabitants, and are therefore inadequate when it comes to examining the statistical correlation between smallness and democracy. The fact that almost all of the analyses on size and democracy rely on Freedom House-scores is important to underline, since it implies that the validity of these findings largely depends on the accuracy of Freedom House's methodology and scoring mechanisms.

[5] Population size figures have been retrieved from the CIA World Factbook, which has a July 2011-estimate for every country (CIA World Factbook 2011).

substantiated by the chi-square and Spearman's rho-values that have been presented at the bottom of the table. Both statistics demonstrate that the relationship between the two variables is significant at the 0.001-level, with the Spearman's rho-value of 0.31 indicating that there is a moderately strong relationship between the variables, which is positive in the sense that as population size increases, the chance of a less free political system increases as well.[6]

Table 1.1: Freedom House-Rankings (2011) and the Population Size of Countries

		Not Free		Partly Free		Free	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
All countries	193	48	24.9	59	30.6	86	44.6
< 5 million inhabitants	80	11	13.8	22	27.5	47	58.8
< 1 million inhabitants	40	4	10.0	7	17.5	29	72.5
< 500.000 inhabitants	29	1	3.7	3	10.3	25	86.2
< 250.000 inhabitants	21	-	-	2	9.5	19	90.5
< 100.000 inhabitants	12	-	-	1	8.3	10	91.7
χ^2 28.600, p = 0.001							
Spearman's rho: 0.31, p < 0.001							

4. <u>Research Question</u>

The statistics presented in table 1.1 confirm the conclusions that have been reached in earlier studies. Whereas microstates are persistently excluded from analyses of comparative democracy, statistics indicate that these countries constitute the most democratic group of states in the world; a situation I would like to refer to as the microstate-paradox. Although it is unquestionably clear that a statistically significant association between population size and Freedom House-scores exists, contemporary research has been surprisingly unsuccessful in finding a satisfactory explanation for this pattern (Srebrnik 2004: 339). Over the lengthy period of time that the scholarly debate about the issue has been going on, many suppositions, assumptions, ideas, and hypotheses with regard to the relationship between size and democracy have been formulated and presented, but so far none of these have been embraced as universally valid. In this light, it should be noted that most of the existing research is quantitative and statistical in nature, and has not progressed much beyond the point of revealing and explicating the statistically significant correlation between the variables.

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[6] In the dataset, countries have been classified according to population size category (with value '1' for countries with less than 100.000 inhabitants ranging up to value '6' for countries with more than five million) and according to Freedom House-ranking (with value '1' for 'free' countries and value '3' for 'not free' countries). As the value of the population size category increases, the proportion of 'partly free' and 'not free' countries increases correspondingly; hence the positive relationship between the variables.

Often, the lack of information and knowledge on microstates which results from a lack of (scholarly) attention is cited as a justification for this quantitative bias. As a consequence however, more in-depth, qualitative and comparative analyses of microstate-democracy are exceptionally rare, and the very few that do exist do not examine the very smallest countries in the world.

The current study aims to fill this gap in academic understanding by employing a more comprehensive, qualitative approach to the question of how politics and democracy are affected by a small population size. Specifically, in the present analysis the more quantitative Freedom House-based material and data is left aside, to make room for a more rigorous, in-depth investigation of the practical consequences of smallness for a political system. Whereas the findings of the analysis may shed light on the long-standing question why size and democracy appear to be related, this study recognizes that answers to this question cannot be found as long as the specific political effects of size are insufficiently understood. In order to fully assess the consequences of size for the functioning and performance of democracy, as will be explained in detail in chapter four this latter concept is defined along the lines of Dahl's dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness (1971). As a consequence, the research question that this study aims to address can be formulated as follows:

"What are the consequences of a small population size for the nature of democratic contestation and inclusiveness?"

It is important to underline that the lack of data has compelled earlier studies (e.g. Dahl and Tufte 1973) to address this question from a more theoretical perspective, the present analysis is (one of) the first to make an attempt to find empirical answers, by conducting an in-depth qualitative analysis of four microstates around the globe.

5. <u>Scientific and Societal Relevance of the Study</u>

As mentioned above, small states are usually excluded from comparative political research. As a consequence of the lack of academic attention, not much is known about this group of cases, and especially not from a comparative political perspective. The few case studies of individual small states that have emerged in recent decades do shed some light on the political systems of these states, but this information is not extrapolated to the broader notion of the influence of smallness on democracy. In terms of the scientific relevance of this research project, therefore, the inherent value of comparative qualitative research on a

group of relatively unknown and unstudied cases must be emphasized. In this respect, the findings of the analysis can also be compared to the scarce material that already exists on small states (e.g. Freedom House-scores), in order to function as an extra check on the reliability and accuracy of these publications. In addition, the results of the present study could provide extra incentives to other scholars to include microstates in their samples, which would be a development of which the entire field of research on comparative politics and democracy could benefit.

In addition to the importance of examining an unfamiliar group of countries, the apparent proclivity of small states to democratic forms of government is scientifically appealing. Whereas the establishment of democracy in developing countries has been quite a challenge, small states appear to constitute a major exception to this pattern. Moreover, small states also appear to contradict some of the variables that have emerged from the democratization-literature as democracy-stimulating. For example, there is a broad strand of literature with identifies economic development as one of the strongest stimulators of democratic development; an assumption that is also known under the label of modernization theory (cf. Lipset 1959; Przeworski et al. 1996). However, many small, democratic states in the Pacific or Africa are among the least developed countries in the world, yet continue to produce democratically elected governments. In addition, these small states also constitute a falsification of the belief that democracy can only exist in 'Western' settings (Huntington 1996). Smallness thus appears to have the capacity to overcome the otherwise supposedly democracy-undermining aspects of poverty and a non-Western cultural and societal background, and one potential conclusion of the present research may be that smallness should be added to the existing list of democracy-stimulating variables.

From a more societal or practical political point of view, the relevance of the project is to be found in its contribution to the already-existing discussion on decentralization and devolution. In recent years, the notion of subsidiarity and politics-of-scale has gained prominence not only in academia (e.g. Weldon 2006) but also in politics, and the current study could contribute to this discussion by examining how smallness affects the political system at the national level. If it turns out that smallness is found to stimulate the development of a democratic political system with perhaps a higher quality of representation, the study could provide an extra impetus to the arguments in favor of decentralization. In addition, as Diamond and Tsalik (1999) note, for newly democratizing countries the advantages of smallness can be simulated by bringing democracy closer to

the people, as a consequence of which the chances of successful democratization may potentially be enhanced.

By analyzing the political systems of microstates, it may not only be discovered how their smallness has affected the conduct of politics and democracy in these countries, but also how these countries have structured their political systems. In this regard, the democratic microstates may potentially serve as guiding examples for other new democracies. On the other hand, it is possible that negative effects of smallness with concern to democracy or politics in general are identified in the research; particularly if these phenomena can be observed across various and multiple small states. Depending on the nature of these potential shortcomings, the study could also shed light on possible strategies that small states can pursue in order to cope with or circumvent the challenges that they are facing. Since this analysis is in some ways the first comparative, qualitative study of small state-politics, the likelihood that as of yet unknown patterns will be found is relatively high.

6. <u>Outline of the Dissertation</u>

The research puzzle outlined in section three is addressed in the following seven chapters of this dissertation. In the second chapter, an historical and chronological overview of the existing literature on the influence of state size on politics and democracy is offered, which ranges from the ancient Greek philosophers to the present. On the basis of this overview, a number of potential effects of smallness may be listed, which can be employed as expectations in the analytical part of the dissertation. The third chapter of the dissertation focuses on the existing literature on small states, paying attention to the major political features that emerge from the relatively rich case study-literature on microstates. Although quite a number of remarkable political features can be extrapolated from the analyses of these small states, the findings of these publications are mostly not connected to the debate on the effects of smallness, which is therefore the principal aim of the third chapter. Chapter four briefly summarizes the main issues and expectations that follow from the two theoretical chapters, after which a theoretical model for the current study is outlined and presented, and a number of expectations are formulated. Additionally, in this chapter extensive attention is paid to methodological issues such as case selection.

In chapters five to eight, the findings of the field research and in-depth analysis of the four cases that have been selected for comparison is presented and discussed. After discussing the influence of size on the political systems of

the Republic of San Marino and the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis in chapters five and six, attention is paid to those of the Republic of Seychelles and the Republic of Palau in chapters seven and eight. Each of these chapters concludes with an assessment of the influence of size on these countries' political systems and democracy. Chapter nine, finally, is a concluding chapter in which the findings of the four case studies are compared and contrasted, in order to find out on which aspects these countries are politically similar, and where the differences between them can be observed. In addition, in this conclusion some suggestions for future research are offered.

As mentioned before, in the chapters to come it appears that many comparable patterns and findings emerge from the in-depth analyses of the political systems of the four microstates. In all four of them, political contestation is basically driven by interpersonal rivalries rather than ideological and programmatic differences. In addition, to a greater or lesser extent the politics of all four microstates are characterized by the dominant position of the government vis-à-vis other institutions, which can impede on the functioning of the legislature and the political opposition, the judiciary, the media, and the civil service. Regarding inclusiveness and participation, it is found that the closeness between citizens and politicians primarily serves to enhance particularistic tendencies, which is demonstrated by the predominance of patron-client relationships in all four cases. Although electoral participation figures are found to be comparatively high, it also appears that voting behavior and turnout can chiefly be explained by the particularistic considerations that are at the root of them. In summary therefore, it can not only be ascertained that size does have a major impact on the conduct of politics and the specific nature of democracy in microstates, but also that smallness in some ways seems to weaken or undermine rather than to strengthen the development of democracy.

CHAPTER TWO

From Plato to the Present

The Theoretical Debate on Size and Democracy

1. Introduction: the Influence of Geographical Factors on Politics

The notion that geographical factors have an influence on societies and cultures is broadly accepted in the social sciences. The presence or absence of water, mountains, deserts, forests, and rivers affects the way people live, as does for example the climate zone in which a particular society or civilization evolves. In an article on the sociological impact of insularity, David Pitt for example highlights how geographical boundaries and physical remoteness and isolation influence social dynamics and identities (1980: 1054).[1] The extent to which these factors also affect politics is another issue however, and is the subject of an extensive and ongoing debate. Matters of this sort have generally been dismissed or have not found their way into mainstream political science, perhaps because of the deterministic character of their presumptions and the fact that geographical circumstances are 'fixed', in the sense that they do now allow for human modification (Ott 2000: 18-19).

Out of the many geographical factors that can be supposed to impinge on politics, a lot of scholarly attention has been directed toward geographical isolation or remoteness. Although isolation can also result from geographical factors such as mountains and deserts, the geographical barriers caused by water have figured most prominently in the literature, in which insularity (or 'islandness') has occasionally and repeatedly been proposed as a feature that affects politics (Dommen 1980; Selwyn 1980; Anckar and Anckar 1995; Clague et al. 2001; Srebrnik 2004). Due to the fact that many of the world's smallest states are island nations and vice versa, the variable of insularity is often linked to state size, rendering it sometimes hard to disentangle the separate effects of the two variables (Anckar 2008a: 436-437; Gerring and Zarecki 2011: 12). The primary independent variable of the present analysis is state size, but many of the microstates that are investigated in the remainder of this dissertation are indeed

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[1] In this article, Pitt point specifically to 'social islands', as opposed to natural or geographical islands. In particular, attention is paid to social boundaries on islands, which leads to ethnocentric attitudes and stronger feelings of collectiveness, even though many islands are vulnerable and dependent on external actors (Pitt 1980: 1056).

also island nations.[2] Furthermore, the political effects of both variables are supposed to be of a largely similar nature, since both political and oceanic boundaries create the social and psychological isolation that is hypothesized to affect politics. Even though the focus of the present analysis is on smallness and not on insularity, it should therefore be kept in mind that the two variables are closely related and interconnected.[3]

In addition to its influence on politics and - more specifically - democracy, state size has also been hypothesized to explain variations in for example economic development or foreign policy and international relations. Whereas these phenomena are obviously linked to politics and democracy, in the present chapter I will only occasionally touch upon them and focus primarily on the direct political consequences of state size as they are supposed to affect the likelihood and quality of democratic governance. In the next chapter, where the academic literature on the different characteristics of microstate-politics and -democracy is discussed, more attention will be paid to some of the economic, historical, international political and sociological features of this particular group of countries, even though the focus remains explicitly on the political consequences of size.

Although state size is currently not regarded as a major explanatory factor of democracy, the philosophical and academic debate about the relation between the two variables has been going on for centuries, if not millennia. In the present chapter, a largely chronological overview is given of this theoretical debate, which ranges all the way from the ancient Greek philosophers to the present. As this outline reveals, academic thinking about size has been marked by major fluctuations over time. Whereas smallness was broadly deemed to be an asset in some centuries, at other times it was perceived to be a disadvantage or even a threat. Each of the sections in this chapter covers one of such periods, and all sections conclude with a summary of the main theories and expectations that follow from the literature of that time, and their implications for the nature of microstate-democracy. Weather implicitly or explicitly, a large part of the

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[2] Exceptions are the four European microstates (Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, and San Marino).
[3] In several publications in which the effects of both insularity and size on democracy are examined, the interconnectedness of these variables is further confirmed (Hadenius 1992; Clague et al. 2001; Congdon Fors 2007). However much the variables are overlapping in terms of either their political effects or the classification of countries, from an analytical and theoretical perspective it however appears practical to keep them separated, especially since large island states or small continental and landlocked countries (i.e. cases in which only one of the two variables is present) might score markedly different from the other cases. In this context, the present study is explicitly focused on state size, and therefore only examines island states that fall within the parameters of the analysis.

literature that is discussed in the current chapter departs from a certain conceptualization and operationalization of the size-variable. In chapter 4, which deals with conceptual and methodological issues, the specific definition of state size that is employed in the present study is outlined and motivated.

2.   Small is Good: from Plato to Rousseau

The debate about the influence of state size on politics and government goes all the way back to the ancient Greek philosophers.[4] Whereas the ancient Greek city-states (the *poleis*) had varying organizational structures, their relative smallness and geographical proximity to each other allowed the Greek thinkers to accurately estimate and theorize about the political effects of size. In light of the ubiquity of small city-states, it is perhaps unsurprising that essentially all sources from this time emphasize the benefits of smallness for the quality of politics. In their writings, Plato and Aristotle highlight the virtues of smallness with regard to effective and high-quality government, and statesmen like Pericles are known to have expressed more or less similar views. Whereas the ancient Greeks had differences of opinion with regard to the desirability of democracy, they generally did agree on the inherent advantages of smallness. In fact, a variety of arguments in favor of smallness can be observed in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, who primarily emphasize the significance of face-to-face contacts between citizens (Plato 1960: 771; Aristotle 1996: 1326b). Plato refers to the presence of "mutual intimate acquaintance and social intercourse of all kinds" as the major advantage of smallness, whereas Aristotle stresses that citizens "must know each other's characters" in order to judge and to distribute offices by merit (ibid.). According to Aristotle, the election to offices and the decision of lawsuits will go wrong if citizens do not have knowledge of each other, because then these will be settled haphazardly (Aristotle 1996: 1326b).[5]

In the fifth and sixth books of Plato's renowned dialogue *(The) Laws*, several notions with regard to the size of the *polis* are being presented, which according to Plato should be adhered to in order to prevent for an "excessive glut of population" (Plato 1960: 740). With regard to the size of the territory of the state, Plato argues that it should be large enough for the satisfactory conservation of a certain number of men, but not larger (Plato 1960: 737). The adequate population size of a state is, according to Plato, dependent on the territorial size of

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[4] For an extensive discussion of the writings of various philosophers on state size, cf. Dahl and Tufte (1973); chapter one.

[5] This argument is interesting because, as becomes clear later on, one of the later objections to smallness focuses exactly on the fact that public officials of small states know many citizens in person, as a consequence of which multiple-role relations and conflicts of interest evolve.

a state, and on the characteristics of the neighbors of the state (ibid.). However, Plato mentions the (quite specific) number of 5.040 citizens as an optimal population size.[6] In any case, he argues, the population should not become too large and should be kept constant; as an ultimate solution to disproportionate population growth Plato proposes the transportation of citizens to colonies (Plato 1960: 737).

In Aristotle's *Politics*, it becomes clear that this philosopher has similar ideas about the proper size of a state as his tutor, since he notes that "experience shows that a very populous city can rarely, if ever, be well governed" (Aristotle 1996: 1326a). Hence, according to Aristotle, there must be an upper limit to the number of inhabitants of a state (or city). Unlike Plato, Aristotle does not mention a specific number as the maximum ceiling of population size, but he does argue that a state must be large enough to be self-sufficient, yet small enough to be capable of constitutional government (Aristotle 1996: 1326b). Aristotle furthermore warns for the risk that strangers and foreigners could acquire the rights of citizens, seeing that in large states, nobody would identify them as strangers (ibid.). The philosopher not only discusses the appropriate population size of a state, but also the size of its territory. In this regard, it is being emphasized that the state must be large enough to be self-sufficient, but also that it must be large enough to "enable the inhabitants to live at once temperately and liberally in the enjoyment of leisure" (Aristotle 1996: 1326b). On the other hand, Aristotle however argues that the territory and the citizens "should be taken in at a single view", because a small and succinct country is easier to defend than a larger and less well-organized one (ibid.).

The emphasis of Plato and Aristotle on the desirability of intimate, face-to-face relations between citizens has remained one of the most prominent arguments in the theoretical literature on smallness, and even contemporary authors refer to this advantage in explaining the association between smallness and democracy. Regarding (representative) democracy, in addition to intimate and personal relations between citizens themselves, the opportunity of face-to-face contacts between citizens and public officials is of obvious significance. According to contemporary advocates of smallness, the proximity between

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[6] The main reason Plato has for selecting this specific number is that 5.040 can be divided by all other numbers from 1 to 12, except 11 (Plato 1960: 771). Hence, the citizens and the land of the state could be adequately subdivided into smaller parts. It should be kept in mind that the figure of 5.040 corresponds to the number of heads of households, and that females, slaves, and foreigners are not included in this figure. The number of 5.040 households would correspond to a number of around 50.000 people in the state (Knack and Azfar 2003: 4).

citizens and their representatives generates increased levels of political efficacy, awareness, participation, and, eventually, legitimacy, which in one way or another are all supposed to contribute to democratic government (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 65, 87-88). Furthermore, contemporary analyses on the sub-national level demonstrate that smaller polities and municipalities are indeed marked by higher levels of attitudinal homogeneity (Black 1974; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Wilson 1986). At the same time however, as will be discussed later on, intimate face-to-face contacts and homogeneity of attitudes are currently not exclusively regarded as a positive quality, as various scholars now primarily tend to emphasize the democracy-undermining effects of such relationships.

The belief that small state size is a virtue when it comes to the quality of government remained widely embraced well after the ancient Greeks, and is also expressed in the publications of for example Montesquieu and Rousseau. However much politics had changed since the Classic times, city-states were still common political systems in the European Renaissance and Enlightenment-eras, meaning that the advantages and disadvantages of smallness could easily be witnessed and examined in reality. As the main alternative to small city-states, the map of Europe was comprised of several large empires, which without exceptions were ruled as autocracies or monarchies. In addition to reiterating the emphasis of the Greek philosophers on face-to-face contacts, and by contrasting small city-states with some of these larger empires, in their writings Montesquieu and Rousseau add the arguments that smallness fosters liberal government (in which individual rights and liberties are respected), and generates increased political involvement and efficacy of citizens. Moreover, these thinkers emphasize that the limited distance between citizens and their representatives also results in amplified feelings of emotional attachment to the public interest among citizens (Rousseau 1995: II, 101). In light of their significance in relation to politics and democratic governance, it is no wonder that these lines of argument still figure prominently in the literature on the political consequences of size.

In Montesquieu's *De l'Esprit des Lois* it is being argued that a republic, in contrast to a monarchy or a despotic government, has to be small in order to survive (Montesquieu 1949: VIII, 16). The theoretical basis for this supposition is that only in a small republic, citizens will have a good overview and attachment to the public good; in greater republics interests become "particularized" (ibid.). According to Montesquieu, "in a small one [republic, WV], the interest of the public is more obvious, better understood, and more within the reach of every citizen; abuses have been less extent, and, of course, are less protected"

(Montesquieu 1949: VIII, 16).[7] However, not only is a republic only able to survive when it is small, but smallness also unavoidably leads to a decrease in authoritarianism; a small monarchical state would eventually transform itself into a republic (Montesquieu 1949: VIII, 17). For Montesquieu, the size of the state is therefore directly and inevitably related to the nature of its regime; small states are naturally governed as republics, whereas "a large empire supposes a despotic authority in the person who governs" (1949: VII, 19).

In Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social*, Montesquieu's view that the size of the state is inextricably connected to the nature of its government is confirmed. According to Rousseau, "democratic government suits small states, aristocratic government those of middle size, and monarchy great ones" (Rousseau 1995: II, 108). Just as there is an appropriate size for a human being, there too is a 'natural' size for a state, Rousseau argues. In fact, he reiterates Aristotle's argument that the state must be large enough in order to be sustainable, yet small enough to be adequately governed (Rousseau 1995: II, 88). Additionally, the argument of emotional detachment is introduced, as Rousseau argues that in large states, "the people have less affection for their rulers, whom they never see, for their country, which, to their eyes, seems like the world, and for their fellow-citizens, most of whom are unknown to them" (ibid.). Hence, Rousseau emphasizes that in a democracy citizens should have access to their political leaders, and they should be able to communicate with each other.

Another argument in favor of a small-sized state that Rousseau introduces relates to the extent of influence of individual citizens; in a state with a small number of inhabitants, the political influence of one person is much larger than in a state with a large number of inhabitants (Rousseau 1995: II, 100-101). For Rousseau influence is directly related to freedom, since a small state in which citizens have more influence will also be characterized by a greater degree of liberty (ibid.). Population size is thus invariably associated with liberty, attachment to the public interest, and the nature of government: Rousseau argues that "the less relation the particular wills have to the general will (…), the more should the repressive force be increased. The government, then, to be good, should be proportionately stronger as the size of the population increases"

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[7] Montesquieu specifically discourages large republics, and envisages that people in large states will lose sight of the public interest: "[i]n an extensive republic there are men of large fortunes, and consequently of less moderation; there are trusts too considerable to be placed in any single subject; he has interests of his own; he soon begins to think that he may be happy and glorious, by oppressing his fellow-citizens; and that he may raise himself to grandeur on the ruins of his country. (…) In an extensive republic, the public good is sacrificed to a thousand private views; it is subordinate to exceptions, and depends on accidents" (Montesquieu 1949: VIII: 16).

(Rousseau 1995: II, 101). As a final point, Rousseau also distinguishes between the population size and the territorial size of the state. For a state to be successful the two must be in harmony with each other, which means that the territory can maintain all inhabitants, and that there are as many inhabitants as the territory can provide for (Rousseau 1995: II, 90).

Table 2.1: The Effects of Size According to the Classic Literature

Argument:	Expressed By:	Expectation for Microstates:
Smallness creates increased community cohesion due to face-to-face contacts and intimate personal relations	Plato, Aristotle	Increased cohesiveness and social intimacy among citizens
In small states, citizens have a better notion of the public interest, and are more emotionally attached to it due to direct contact with their leaders	Montesquieu, Rousseau	Increased political awareness and attachment among citizens
Small states are more likely to be governed in a republican, liberal, or democratic manner than larger states, because citizens have greater political influence	Aristotle, Rousseau	Increased liberty, political influence, efficacy, and participation among citizens

The advantages of smallness as they are outlined by Montesquieu and Rousseau can be seen as additions to the points made by Plato and Aristotle. The notion that smallness generates increased attachment to the public good and higher levels of citizen involvement still figures prominently in the more modern academic literature, and the argument that it fosters more liberal forms of government is endorsed by many contemporary scholars as well. It can thus be seen that well into the 18th century, the dominant belief in political thought with regard to state size remained that smallness was to be valued. In table 2.1, the three principal arguments that emerge from this classic literature have been presented, combined with the names of the thinkers that have expressed them. In the third column, the expectations with regard to the characteristics of small states that follow from this literature are summarized.

3. <u>Small is Bad: Nationalism and the Founding Fathers</u>

Whereas the Enlightenment-philosophers still vigorously advocated a limited state size, this position rapidly became less fashionable over the course of the 19th century, as various thinkers now started to emphasize the benefits of largeness. This transformation in political thought was partly a consequence of new ideas and suppositions, but was also in large part fueled by real-life political events. City-states remained common political organizations throughout the Middle-Ages, Renaissance, and Enlightenment, even though larger empires and monarchies existed in these periods as well. Present-day Germany, the Low Countries, Switzerland, and most notably Northern Italy used to be carved up in numerous city-states, principalities, and other petty states, which varied extensively in the extent to which they allowed for the participation of citizens in political affairs. In large part, the writings of especially Rousseau were based on real-time observations in small states like Venice, Corsica, and of course his own birthplace of Geneva.

However, as the French Revolution unfolded and the political ideology of nationalism spread across Europe, many city-states were absorbed into larger political units, culminating in the Italian and German unifications of 1861 and 1871 respectively. On the other side of the Atlantic, the American Revolution and Declaration of Independence had already in 1776 resulted in the creation of a very large, yet republican and liberal state, thereby demonstrating the fallaciousness of the assumption that republicanism and liberty could only exist in small polities. As Lake and O'Mahony demonstrate, the average size of states increased from 1815 onwards, and reached a peak in the late 19th century (2004: 701-703). Around 1880 small city-states had all but disappeared from the European political scene, and among the very few ones that lingered are the contemporary European microstates of San Marino, Monaco, and Liechtenstein.[8]

In conjunction with the practical vanishing of small states, a new theoretical perspective on state size emerged in this period, emphasizing the advantages of largeness instead of smallness. Among the first thinkers to express this new line of opinion were the U.S. Founding Fathers Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, whose views on size are among others articulated in the Federalist Papers. At the American Constitutional Convention in 1787, state size and decentralization were actually among the most hotly debated issues, and several Founding Fathers closely reappraised and reexamined

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[8] Andorra is also a European microstate, but never was an independent city-state. Instead, it used to be a suzerainty jointly ruled by the President of France and the Bishop of Urgell, and until the adoption and enforcement of a new constitution in 1993 its political status was largely undefined.

Montesquieu's and Rousseau's ideas on this issue. In the Federalist Papers, Hamilton and Madison discuss some of the notions of Montesquieu and Rousseau regarding size, but arrive at rather different conclusions. For example, in *The Federalist* number 9, Hamilton sketches a pretty grim picture of the consequences of applying Montesquieu's ideas about state size to the United States;

> "If we therefore take his [Montesquieu's, WV] ideas on this point as the criterion of truth, we shall be driven to the alternative either of taking refuge at once in the arms of monarchy, or of splitting ourselves into an infinity of little, jealous, clashing, tumultuous commonwealths, the wretched nurseries of unceasing discord and the miserable objects of universal pity or contempt" (Hamilton 2008: IX, 45-46).

Hamilton's negative interpretation of Montesquieu's arguments seems to relate primarily to stability and peace; small states are deemed more likely to generate conflict and turmoil. According to Hamilton, the advantages of small size and large size can be combined by creating a confederation of states (Hamilton 2008: IX, 46-47). In such a political system, the security of the states would be guaranteed by their (military) cooperation, whereas the states would still be allowed to govern themselves.

In *The Federalist* number 10, James Madison discusses Montesquieu's assertion that smallness leads to less particularized and more homogenous interests and a stronger appreciation of the public good among citizens. Contrary to Montesquieu however, Madison believes that republicanism is enhanced when the interests of the population diverge;

> "The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or is such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength and to act in unison with each other" (Madison 2008: X, 54).

Whereas Madison thus supports Montesquieu's idea that smallness leads to more homogenous interests, he argues that this is actually a *disadvantage* for a republic, because Madison believes that pluralism will create the conditions for liberalism.[9] If there are many different interests and factions within society, according to Madison the danger that one faction will attempt to dominate other factions is reduced, since the other factions can join forces to counterbalance the dominating

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[9] In this light, Madison's argument can be translated into the existence of more and stronger checks and balances on executive power, which not only consists of the presence of a political opposition, but also the existence of autonomous institutions like parliament, the judiciary, and the media.

faction. Furthermore, whereas it would be possible that a faction acquires supremacy in one state of the confederation, this influence is according to Madison very unlikely to extend to the other states in the union.

In line with Hamilton and Madison, Thomas Jefferson also advocates a large rather than a small republic, and especially emphasizes the virtues of representative democracy as opposed to direct democracy (cf. Dahl and Tufte 1973: 9). Although Jefferson is especially known for advocating a weak central government in combination with strong state governments, he also believed that representative democracy enables the existence of republican government on a large scale, thereby rendering Montesquieu's reservations about a large state size basically obsolete. In various letters, Jefferson asserted that "democracy is the only pure republic, but impracticable beyond the limits of a town" (Jefferson 1893: 15: 65).[10] Instead of this 'pure' form of democracy, Jefferson believed that representation would be a next-best solution to organize politics in the United States with its vast dimensions.

Madison's and Jefferson's arguments on the advantages of largeness have been opposed by the Anti-Federalists, most notably in Clinton's *Cato*, number 3, where it is argued that a perfect union can never be established in a state with such vast dimensions (Storing 1981: chapter 3). However, the establishment of a democratic political system in the United States of America and its consolidation and achievements in the decennia that followed unmistakably revealed that a republic can exist in (very) large settings as well, albeit in a representative instead of a direct form. In combination with the rise of nationalism and the concept of the nation-state, this development principally led to the demise of the idea that democracy can only exist in small settings. The 19th-century views with regard to state size are also expressed in John Stuart Mill's *Representative Government:*

> "When the conditions exist for the formation of efficient and durable Federal Unions, the multiplication of them is always a benefit to the world. (…). By diminishing the number of those petty states which are not equal to their own defense, it weakens the temptations to an aggressive policy, whether working directly by arms, or through the prestige of superior power. It of course puts an end to war and diplomatic quarrels, and usually also to restrictions on commerce, between the States composing the Union; while, in reference to neighboring nations, the increased military strength

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[10] Specifically, in his letter to John Taylor Jefferson also wrote that "[i]t must be acknowledged that the term *republic* is of very vague application in every language. (…). Were I to assign to this term a precise and definite idea, it means a government by its citizens in mass, acting directly and personally according to rules established by the majority; and that every other government is more or less republican in proportion as it has in its composition more or less of this ingredient of direct action of the citizens. Such a government is evidently restrained to very narrow limits of space and population. I doubt if it would be practicable beyond the extent of a New England township."

conferred by it is of a kind to be almost exclusively available for defensive, scarcely at all for aggressive, purposes" (Mill 1975: XVII, 398).

Just like Hamilton and Madison, Mill thus also promotes a federation of small states instead of a large number of independent republics. The argument is different however; whereas Madison mainly addresses the benefits of diverging interests in a large state, in line with Hamilton's ideas Mill argues that large (federal) states will generally be less aggressive towards their neighbors, and the temptation to go to war will be diminished.

Table 2.2: The Effects of Size According to the Late 18th and 19th-Century Literature

Argument:	Expressed By:	Expectation for Microstates:
Smallness leads to more homogenous interests among the population	Madison	Increased attitudinal homogeneity among citizens
In small states, a majority of citizens can more easily oppress the minority, due to the decreased number of varying interests and factions	Madison	Decreased number of political alternatives, interests, and factions Decreased liberty for political minorities
Whereas direct democracy is suitable for small states, republicanism on a large scale is facilitated by representative democracy	Jefferson	Increased tendency to forms of direct democracy

Seeing that Hamilton's and Mill's objections to smallness are primarily related to international politics, Madison and Jefferson are the primary ones to challenge the domestic political arguments advanced by Montesquieu and Rousseau. Rather than contradicting their claims however, these Founding Fathers turn them upside down by arguing that face-to-face relations and homogenous interests (regardless of their relation to the public good) are a peril rather than an asset when it comes to liberal government, and by arguing that representative democracy facilitates republicanism on a large scale. Until at least the end of the First World War, when the German, Ottoman, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian Empires collapsed, the European trend with regard to state size was also towards larger instead of smaller countries. Whereas the appearance of many new, smaller states after 1918 may be interpreted as a reversal of this pattern, this phenomenon can be more adequately explained on the basis of the contemporary Wilsonian emphasis on popular self-determination and the nation-

state than as a renaissance in thinking about state size. The two main arguments with regard to the political effects of size that follow from the late 18th and 19th-century literature have been summarized in table 2.2.

4. <u>Small is Vulnerable: the Post-War Perspective</u>

After the two World Wars, academic theorizing about the consequences of state size and smallness shifted to the domain of foreign policy and international relations. Studies of small state-international behavior from the 1950s and 1960s reflect the pessimistic or realist view of international relations at the time, and primarily discuss strategies that small states can pursue in order to guarantee their survival (Fox 1959; Vandenbosch 1964; Rothstein 1966, 1968; Vital 1967; Sveics 1969). It should be noted however, that the small states described and analyzed in these publications would presently not be regarded as very small. In her analysis of small state-behavior during the Second World War, Annette Baker Fox examines the diplomatic strategies pursued by Turkey, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Spain, and finds that a policy of abstinence and neutrality may be successfully pursued if larger powers can be convinced of the advantages of the neutrality of these states (1959: 180-181). After having analyzed the cases of Czechoslovakia, Israel, and Finland, David Vital reaches similar conclusions, ominously emphasizing that "in an international conflict (...) there can be no simple and straightforward compensation for material weakness" (1967: 129). The best strategy for small state-survival, therefore, is based on cooperation in international organizations (Vital 1967: 129-131). Vital furthermore points to the fact that in small states, the link between domestic and foreign policy is more obvious than in large states.

Taking the lessons of Fox and Vital to the Cold War-context, Robert Rothstein argues that a position of non-alignment is sometimes tactically viable for small states, but only in the case of a bipolar power structure (Rothstein 1966: 404-405; 1968: 32-37). Rothstein further mentions the fact that small states are highly supportive of international organizations, and explains this by the fact that these organizations are generally based on equality between their member-states (Rothstein 1968: 39-41). This conclusion is shared by Amry Vandenbosch, who argues that the UN Security Council was actually created by large states because "their interests ran the risk of being swamped by the multiplicity of small states" (1964: 299). According to these authors, the UN can be seen as "a great boon" for small states, and the fear that they would dominate international organizations has been expressed by other contemporary scholars as well (Rapoport 1968; Mendelson 1972). Vilnis Sveics, finally, makes a link with domestic politics by

emphasizing that small states must rely on their socio-political strength resulting from the fact that they are close-knit communities (1969: 39). Small states can pursue a strategy of 'national resistance', which essentially entails resistance to the aggressor on the basis of 'the spiritual strength of the community' (Sveics 1969: 69). This argument traces back to the earlier mentioned ideas of Aristotle, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, as it relates to the increased community cohesion and attachment to the public interest among small state-citizens.

Whereas the military disadvantages of smallness were emphasized in later publications as well (Schou and Brundtland 1971; Plischke 1977; Harden 1985; Espíndola 1987), the pessimism of the early postwar period also gave way to thinking in terms of opportunities (East 1973; Warrington 1998; Ingebritsen et al. 2006; Oest and Wivel 2008). The most recent publications in the field, which are regularly less theoretical and more based on real-world observations, indicate that microstates can actually use their sovereignty as a bargaining tool in international relations (e.g. Carney 1989; Sutton and Payne 1993; Stringer 2006). As these authors argue, the earlier mentioned equal position of small states in international organizations can for example be exploited by exchanging one's vote for military and economic gains.[11] In any case, it should be emphasized that the literature on smallness in relation to international relations, security, and foreign policy practically always conceptualizes state size in terms of military capacity. This choice is most straightforwardly articulated by Vandenbosch, who answers the question how size should be defined as follows: "obviously size alone, whether of population or area, is not a conclusive test. (...) The test has been military power, both actual and potential" (1964: 293).

In addition to the consequences of smallness with regard to foreign policy, in the postwar decades many scholars began to examine the effect of state size on economic development and performance. Like the discussion on foreign policy, initially this strand of research generally entailed a fairly pessimistic view on small state-development, emphasizing the lack of natural and human resources, capital, and the inherently small domestic markets of microstates (Robinson 1960; Knox 1967; Selwyn 1975; Dolman 1985; Payne 1987). Furthermore, these studies have highlighted the dependence of small states on a single export commodity, as a result of which fluctuations in the world market can have detrimental effects on their economies (Benedict 1967a: 2-3; Knox 1967: 35-38; Khalaf 1976: 423-424; Payne 1987: 52-53). A comparative study by Simon

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[11] Carney and Sutton and Payne refer to this kind of small state-political behavior as 'international patron-client relationships', and more attention will be devoted to this term in the next chapter (# 3).

Kuznets demonstrates that the share of foreign trade in small state-economies is generally higher, and that many small states concentrate their trade on one larger state, resulting in what this author calls a "satellitic" position of small states vis-à-vis their larger neighbors (1960: 22-23). The literature on small state-economies also shares the deterministic outlook of the early authors on smallness and international relations, in stressing the fixed disadvantages of small states when it comes to economic development. According to Knox, the only advantage of small states vis-à-vis their larger counterparts is the fact that their greater levels of social cohesiveness allows for swift economic readjustments if these are necessary (1967: 44). In terms of its relevance for small state (domestic) politics, the notions that follow from this literature are therefore again to be found in greater attachment to the public good, increased levels of social cohesion, and vulnerability and dependency on external actors.

Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, the negativity with concern to small-state development gave way to a more ambiguous view, in which both advantages and disadvantages of smallness were highlighted. This transformation was primarily due to real-world observations, according to which small states were found to perform no worse, or even better than larger states in terms of economic development (Schumacher 1973; Khalaf 1976, 1979; Kohr 1977; Katzenstein 1985; Baldacchino 1993; Streeten 1993; Armstrong et al. 1998; Armstrong and Read 2000, 2003; Easterly and Kraay 2000; Alesina and Spolaore 2005). In his renowned book with the indicative title *Small Is Beautiful*, economist Ernest Schumacher argues that small size may be an advantage to economic development, as "there is a tremendous longing and striving to profit, if at all possible, from the convenience, humanity, and manageability of smallness" (Schumacher 1973: 59). According to Schumacher, the contemporary "idolatry of gigantism" is unjustifiable, since "man is small, and therefore, small is beautiful" (1973: 61).

Later publications have found empirical support for Schumacher's arguments, and among the most prominent of these is Peter Katzenstein's *Small States in World Markets* (1985), in which the economic success of smaller European states is explained on the basis of their corporatist political and economic arrangements. According to Katzenstein, small European states have been marked by greater degrees of consensus, proportional representation, centralization, and cohesion (1985: 87-94). These political factors are hypothesized to result from the vulnerability associated with smallness, which creates "an ideology of social partnership" (Katzenstein 2003: 11). Although these observations are only made for Western European small states like the

Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland, and Austria, Katzenstein emphasizes that the political arrangements of these countries are in large part the result of their size, which suggests that the arguments should also be valid for other small states (Katzenstein 1985: 80).

In line with Katzenstein's observations, the most recent scholarly works on the issue tend to find that small state size may actually be an advantage when it comes to economic growth. Easterly and Kraay, for example, find that per capita income levels are higher in small states than in large states, even though economic volatility and trade shocks are also more pervasive (2000: 15). According to these authors, the main economic advantage of small states is that their economies are generally more open, as a consequence of which they have much higher trade shares (Easterly and Kraay 2000: 8-10). In various publications, Harvey Armstrong and his colleagues argue that the group of microstates is too diverse to draw any universally valid conclusions about the influence of size on economic performance (Armstrong et al. 1998: 654; Armstrong and Read 2000). Differences in economic performance are found to be principally related to region, natural resources, and opportunities for the development of a tourism-industry.

Another study that reaches more neutral conclusions about state size and economic development is Alesina and Spolaore's *The Size of Nations* (2005). The main argument of these authors is that the association between size and economic growth is marked by a trade-off between the benefits of largeness and the costs of heterogeneity (Alesina and Spolaore 2005: 6-7, 217). Whereas a larger population size implies a greater market and better conditions for trade, it also implies a more heterogeneous and less harmonious population, and less favorable conditions for democracy. Furthermore, the authors find that economic success is primarily related to the nature of the trade regime, in the sense that small states generally fare better in a free-market environment, whereas trade restrictions seriously hamper their opportunities for economic growth (Alesina and Spolaore 2005: 172-173). Scholars studying the association between state size and economic performance generally conceptualize size according to population figures. The limited domestic market and workforce of microstates, which many scholars believe to obstruct economic development, are of course directly related to population, and not to for example territorial or military size. The economic flexibility which according to for example Knox and Alesina and Spolaore results from amplified social cohesion in microstates, is also principally connected with population size.

Although the postwar literature is primarily oriented towards the international political and economic consequences of size, either implicitly or

explicitly most of these analyses do express a number of assumptions and suppositions with regard to the (domestic) political effects of smallness. Whereas some of these theories are in line with the views that were expressed by earlier thinkers, others are new, and are more often based on real-world evidence and observations. In any case, it is remarkable that whereas this literature generally regards smallness as an obstacle to economic and military capacities, its expectations with regard to politics are much more positive. The supposed homogeneity of interests in smaller settings is assumed to prevent internal divisions and conflicts, which in turn is believed to benefit the efficiency, flexibility, and stability of government. Since the average state size had been declining again since at least the First World War (Lake and O'Mahony 2004: 703), these expectations could often be buttressed by empirical observations. In table 2.3, the main arguments and theories that follow from the postwar literature on the effects of state size have been summarized.

Table 2.3: The Effects of Size According to the Post-War Literature

Argument:	Expressed By:	Expectation for Microstates:
External threats pressures entail that small state-societies are necessarily more cohesive and close-knit	Sveics, Knox, Katzenstein	Increased social cohesion among citizens
Due to vulnerability, small states are marked by greater degrees of centralization, which stimulates democratic development	Sveics, Knox, Katzenstein, Alesina and Spolaore	Increased political consensus and uniformity
Small states have greater levels of homogeneity and consensus, increasing the chance of democracy	Alesina and Spolaore	Increased homogeneity of interests Increased chance of democratic government

5. <u>Small is Personal: Sociological Consequences of Smallness</u>

Whereas international relations and economic development thus take the spotlight in the postwar small-state literature, scholarly interest in *domestic* political and societal characteristics of microstates resurfaced in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This new academic attention and curiosity can be linked to the momentous process of decolonization that had already started in the early postwar years in Asia, but culminated in the early 1960s in Africa. As a

consequence of decolonization, the number of small states in the world rose rapidly, especially after many Caribbean, African, and Pacific island states gained independence over the course of the 1970s and 1980s. As a direct outcome of this development, on behalf of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Burton Benedict and others published the edited volume *Problems of Smaller Territories* (1967a), in which attention is paid to demographic, political, economic, and sociological aspects of small states.[12] Whereas the negative and pessimistic tone of the early postwar publications on smallness is certainly reiterated in the volume, a number of new insights that deserve further discussion come up as well.

In addition to the problems associated with economy and foreign policy, Benedict and his coauthors identify small state-obstacles in the fields of public administration, ethnic diversity, emigration, and multiple-role relationships (Benedict 1967a: 6-9).[13] In a chapter on political aspects and consequences of smallness, D.P.J. Wood repeats the problems of small territories related to economy and foreign policy, but eventually affirms that "perhaps the gravest disadvantage of being small lies in the field of human relations" (Wood 1967: 33). According to Wood, in small societies roles of kinship are unavoidably ensnared with roles of office, and personal relationship therefore have a profound influence on public affairs; "the political decisions are left squarely with those who have known each other since childhood" (Wood 1967: 34). As a result, Wood argues, "[p]rivate roles of kinship and obligation are entangled with public roles of office", with conflicts of interest as the obvious consequence (1967: 33). Whereas the development of intimate personal relationships and an increased sense of community has constituted one of the main arguments of the in favor of small societies from the ancient Greeks until the 1960s, for Wood the consequences of smallness in relation to personal relationships are chiefly negative.

In the fourth chapter of the volume, which deals with some sociological aspects of smallness, Benedict discusses the question whether community cohesion, which was until then always seen as one of the major assets of small states, is an advantage or a disadvantage for a society. The answer is largely negative; the author emphasizes that the outcome of social cohesiveness is not necessarily constructive, since evidence suggests that small communities

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[12] In addition, four chapters are devoted to case studies on Honduras, Luxembourg, Polynesia, and Swaziland.

[13] Specifically, Benedict argues that in small territories, the costs of administration will absorb a relatively great proportion of the national income, ethnic heterogeneity will cause greater political problems than in larger territories, citizens are more likely to emigrate due to a lack of economical and educational opportunities (resulting in a brain drain), and problems of patronage and clientelism that stem from multiple-role relationships. The latter pattern is also hypothesized to limit the impartiality and neutrality of the judiciary and the civil service (Benedict 1967a: 3-8).

sometimes experience deep personal antagonisms and animosity between different persons or social groups, which certainly do not benefit the political system (Benedict 1967b: 49). A second political aspect of smallness that Benedict describes is the omnipresence and omnipotence of government (Benedict 1967b: 53-54). Since the society of small states is so diminutive, the political elite is likely to dominate and be active in every section of the community, and the pervasiveness of government is assumed to result in clientelism and social dependency (ibid.). As a consequence, Benedict concludes, the development of a political opposition in small societies is likely to be undermined. The belief that smallness fosters particularistic relations between citizens and their representatives was earlier articulated in *The Social System* by the renowned sociologist Talcott Parsons (1951). In the volume, Parsons argues that "[s]maller and simpler organizations are typically managed with a high degree of particularism in the relations of persons in authority to their subordinates" (1951: 508).

The issue of government supremacy is also discussed in the last chapter of the volume, which deals with executive-legislative relations in small territories. The author of the chapter, A.W. Singham, observes that at least for the British West Indian territories, legislatures are habitually subordinate to the executive (Singham 1967: 135). Additionally, it is found that "small societies (…) present real difficulties in the development of harmonious relationships between the political executive and the civil service" (Singham 1967: 148). In small societies, Singham concludes, the executive, the legislature, and the administration do not cooperate on the basis of an equal relationship, but instead the executive dominates the other two institutions. Regarding the public administration, Singham finally notes that its costs are likely to constitute an excessive burden on the budgets of small states. In addition, it is noted that the civil service of small states is often highly politicized as a consequence of particularism, and that changes in government often coincide with large turnovers in the public administration, thereby undermining the quality and experience of the civil service (Singham 1967: 137-139).

The edited volume *States, Microstates, and Islands* by Edward Dommen and Philippe Hein (1985) constitutes a second publication in which sociological consequences of smallness are highlighted. Of particular interest is François Doumenge's chapter on the viability of small tropical islands, in which a range of issues leading from climatologic and geological characteristics to anthropological and political features are discussed. In terms of sociology, Doumenge highlights ethnic and linguistic fragmentation and heterogeneity as major threats to stability

in island states, since insularity increases attitudes of group identity (1985: 87-90, 102-103). According to the author, "[i]slanders are never happier with their insularity than when asserting that they are completely different from their neighbors", which augments the risks of fragmentation and ethnic tensions (Doumenge 1985: 102, 113). In short, Doumenge not only challenges the conventional idea that small states have more homogenous and consensus-oriented societies, but also asserts that heterogeneity may present additional risks and setbacks for small island states.

Many of the issues discussed in *Problems of Smaller Territories* and *States, Microstates, and Islands* resurface in the edited volume *Politics, Security, and Development in Small States* (1987) that is published by Colin Clarke and Anthony Payne. In addition to eight case studies,[14] several chapters in this volume devote attention to political, social, economic, and security issues in small states. Scholarly interest in the effects of smallness was reinvigorated in the 1980s not only as a consequence of the emergence of many new, sovereign microstates, but also due to the 1983-US invasion of Grenada (Operation *Urgent Fury*). In a first chapter on the political aspects of smallness, Paul Sutton examines a number of factors in both the domestic and the international contexts of small states. On the domestic level, Sutton distinguishes five political characteristics that he believes to be related to small population size; 1) institutional fidelity, 2) governmental pervasiveness, 3) exaggerated personalism, 4) concerted political harmony, and 5) pragmatic conservatism (Sutton 1987: 8).

With regard to the political institutions of small states, Sutton demonstrates how many small states that are former British colonies (which represent the bulk of small states) have retained the Westminster-Whitehall system of government after gaining independence (Sutton 1987: 9-12). As an explanation for this pattern, Sutton points to the relatively increased length and intensity of colonization in microstates, as a result of which the people in this former colonies have come to regard these political institutions as autochthonous (Sutton 1987: 8-9). As the second and third points, Sutton points to the phenomena of governmental pervasiveness and exaggerated personalism in small settings. According to Sutton, in small states,

> "[g]overnment is said to dominate, since it seeks on the one hand to duplicate the range of services offered in the larger states, and on the other is subject to fewer constraints from countervailing sectors, pressure groups, or non-governmental institutional activity" (Sutton 1987: 12).

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[14] Of Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, Fiji, Mauritius, the Gambia, Swaziland, Malta, and Cyprus.

Just like Benedict and Singham, Sutton also highlights the consequences of governmental dominance for the impartiality of the civil service and the judiciary. With regard to the increased personalism of small-state politics, Sutton points out that smallness may generate negative effects such as a greater concentration of power in the hands of a few individuals, decreased functional specialization, and a tendency towards authoritarianism or even dictatorship (Sutton 1987: 15-16). Political leaders of small states are also found to be in office for comparatively longer periods of time than leaders of other, larger states.

On the issue of political harmony, Sutton finds that small states are on the whole more liberal, more democratic, and less instable than larger states (Sutton 1987: 17). This increased stability is mainly attributed to increased attitudinal homogeneity among the inhabitants of smaller states, which creates better foundations for the implementation of representative democracy, and is also assumed to foster political participation. On average, smallness is furthermore linked to political centrism or conservatism, which is according to Sutton an effect of the homogeneity of interests in small states, and results in the absence of a strong political opposition. In a later publication with largely the same content, Sutton emphasizes that "government patronage is (…) an important and ubiquitous part of the political system" in small states (2007a: 203). Furthermore, it is being argued that the influence of the civil society is generally less important than in larger states, and that there is a tendency to confuse local interests with national interests (a phenomenon that is labeled as 'parochialism'; Sutton 2007a: 211).

Regarding sociological aspects, which constitute the main topic of the second chapter, David Lowenthal notes tendencies towards 1) conservatism and tradition, 2) intimacy, and 3) "obsessive" autonomism. The natural propensity towards conservatism and tradition in small states stems from the fragile and vulnerable nature of these states, in which small changes can have very strong consequences (Lowenthal 1987: 36). Especially with regard to demographic, economic, and ecological features, small states are highly vulnerable, and "any major change comes at the risk of catastrophic loss" (Lowenthal 1987: 37). In line with many earlier studies, Lowenthal points to the high degree of intimacy and personal contact in small states. Whether or not they like each other, inhabitants of small states will generally know each other very well, and will have to deal with each other in multiple occasions and while fulfilling different societal roles (Lowenthal 1987: 38-39). If a society is very small, there is a great chance that bonds of family will also have an influence on public affairs, thereby increasing the likelihood of nepotism. Moreover, in line with Doumenge Lowenthal argues that

smallness may serve to reinforce ethnic tensions, which tend to be more stringent and more likely to result in violence in smaller states (Lowenthal 1987: 40-41).

Table 2.4: The Effects of Size According to the Sociological Literature

Argument:	Expressed By:	Expectations for Microstates:
Smallness leads to more intimate societies in which people combine societal roles, as a result of which conflicts of interest emerge	Wood, Lowenthal, Farrugia	Increased tendency to the development of multiple-role relations and conflicts of interests
Small-state politics is driven by personal relations, and social cohesion can generate intense personal antagonisms and feuds, especially in the case of ethnic tensions	Benedict, Sutton, Doumenge, Lowenthal, Farrugia, Baldacchino	Predisposition toward personalistic forms of contestation and person-oriented polarization
Smallness leads to the absence or weakness of counterbalancing institutions, as a result of which government occupies a supremely powerful position in small states, leading to particularism and a weak political opposition	Benedict, Singham, Sutton, Sutton and Payne, Baldacchino	Increased tendency to executive dominance versus other institutions Increased likelihood of particularism
Political leaders of small states remain in office for a comparatively longer period of time	Sutton, Sutton and Payne	Decrease in the frequency of government alternation
As a consequence of the fact that small states are comparatively prone to lengthy and intensive colonization, they are more likely to maintain the institutions of their former colonizers	Sutton, Farrugia	Inclination to retain (democratic) political structure of colonizer
Small state-politics are marked by conservatism and democracy, due to the vulnerable nature of these states	Sutton, Lowenthal	Increased likelihood of democratic government; tendency to political centrism & conservatism
Due to homogeneity, small states are more harmonious and liberal than large states, and offer greater opportunities for the participation of citizens	Sutton	Increased liberty and harmony Increased political participation

In more recent publications on small state-societies, the aforementioned effects of smallness are confirmed and further examined (Farrugia 1993; Sutton and Payne 1993; Sutton 2007a; Baldacchino 2012). In an article that essentially focuses on foreign policy and security features of small states, Sutton and Payne also underscore a number of negative sociological and political consequences of smallness, such as patron-client relations, the lack of a political opposition, the personalization of politics, and the domination of the system by a handful of individuals (Sutton and Payne 1993: 587).[15] These findings are confirmed in a publication of Charles Farrugia on the challenges of administration in small states, in which the blurring of institutional boundaries due to multiple-role relations is emphasized (Farrugia 1993: 224). In addition, Farrugia points to the sharp personal polarization that can beset small state-politics, and it is highlighted that the interference of public and private roles creates problems in the policy-making process (Farrugia 1993: 223). In a recent publication by Godfrey Baldacchino, the authoritarian and personalistic tendencies of small-state politics are reconfirmed (2012). In table 2.4, the main arguments with regard to the effects of size that follow from the late 20th-century sociological literature are summarized.

6. Small is Democratic: Optimism Rediscovered

After economic, international, and sociological small-state features had been examined in the 1950s and 1960s, Robert Dahl and Edward Tufte's seminal work *Size and Democracy* (1973) represents a primary and pioneering attempt to empirically investigate the relation between smallness and democracy. Regarding their conception of size, it can be noted that the authors look at population, territory, population density, and socio-economic characteristics, and conclude by saying that each variable may influence democracy, which means that they will all be employed in the study (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 17-20). With regard to democracy, the authors distinguish two main criteria: *citizen effectiveness* and

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[15] Specifically, the authors argue that "[i]n small states the role of the individual takes on great significance. Politics can and usually does focus on personality. Political mobilization is organized around the individual so that factions and patron-client networks abound. In the hands of assertive or charismatic leaders, these platforms can easily be transformed into mechanisms for the domination of the political system. This is especially worrying when the pervasiveness of politics in small states is taken into account. (…). Would-be dictators, in short, have little to stop them once they are in office. The public service can easily be intimidated or corrupted and the opposition silenced or cowed. Power becomes centered in one person (and his or her immediate circle) who come to regard any challenge to their position as a threat to the security of the state. Change from within becomes almost impossible to organize openly or peacefully. In such circumstances, a temptation to resort to assassination, coup, or invasion almost naturally follows" (Sutton and Payne 1993: 587).

system capacity (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 29). Whereas citizen effectiveness refers to the opportunities of citizens to participate in their political system, system capacity alludes to the capacity of states to respond to the preferences of their citizens. Dahl and Tufte assume that there is a trade-off between the two criteria; in small polities citizen effectiveness and participation should be high, but system capacity can be expected to be low. Conversely, in a larger polity citizen effectiveness should be lower, and system capacity is hypothesized to be higher (1973: 23-24).

A first test that the authors carry out reveals that the policy-making process in small states is much less complex than in larger states, which is primarily caused by the greater number of social organizations and groups in larger states (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 40). Regarding political efficacy and participation, the authors test two contrasting hypotheses; one posits one the basis of Rousseau's theories that levels of efficacy and participation are higher in small polities due to the amplified political influence of single citizens in small societies (cf. Riker and Ordeshook 1968), but the other one expects diminished efficacy and participation due to the scarcity of differing political viewpoints, factions, and political alternatives (which relates to Madison's arguments). On the basis of existing data on political participation in smaller and larger European democracies and the United States, Dahl and Tufte find that "political participation and sense of effectiveness among citizens do not depend to any significant degree on the size of a country" (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 65).

In the fifth chapter of their volume, Dahl and Tufte examine the opportunities for communication between leaders and citizens, and the various mechanisms of citizen control of government in small and large democracies. With regard to communication between leaders and citizens, Dahl and Tufte find some notable differences between small and large democracies; in smaller settings direct, reciprocal communication between leaders and citizens is possible and occurs frequently, which results in a better perception of the preferences of citizens among leaders, which in turn enhances the prospects and quality of responsiveness (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 87). In addition to improved communication between politicians and citizens, Dahl and Tufte also observe that communication between political leaders occurs more frequently and more directly in small societies. Finally, the notion of Benedict and Wood with regard to multiple-role relationships is confirmed by Dahl and Tufte, who argue that political leaders of small states are generally less specialized, and often perform other professions or roles in addition to their political function (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 87).

The subsequent chapter in the volume deals with the extent to which smallness affects political competition and political conflict. With regard to this subject, the authors depart from the hypothesis that political competition is stronger in large settings, due to the presence of more diverse interests. As an effect, the likelihood of the existence of a formal opposition in large states is greater, and mechanisms for dealing with political conflict are expected to be more institutionalized (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 92-93). Furthermore, in small states the authors expect less conflict between political groups, but when they occur, group conflicts are assumed to be more personal, more explosive, and more likely to polarize every part of society (ibid.). On the basis of data from Swedish and Dutch communities and Swiss cantons, Dahl and Tufte are able to accept most of their hypotheses.

As the findings and conclusions from the chapters on participation, communication, and competition are combined, the authors are able to construct a model in which they detect a trade-off between the *costs of participation* and the *costs of dissent*; in societies with small numbers of inhabitants it is more difficult to oppose the majority view because it will be less easy to find allies and there will be less opportunities to participate in institutions that do not concur with the dominant political ideas (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 108). On the other hand, in societies with more inhabitants, the possibility of reciprocal communication between leaders and citizens diminishes, and citizens will be less inclined to participate in politics because the effects of participation are reduced. With regard to the aspect of citizen effectiveness, therefore, the authors conclude that there is no 'optimal' size of a polity. The final two chapters of *Size and Democracy* deal with Dahl and Tufte's other aspect of democracy: system capacity. By comparing small and large democracies on the occurrence and frequency of internal conflict, economic capacities, cultural capacities, and the capacity for independence and autonomy, the authors find that small countries are more dependent on international trade and imports, but that with regard to the other three features, no significant differences exist between large and small countries.

As a whole, the study of Dahl and Tufte is very much hampered by data deficiencies, as a consequence of which many of the formulated hypotheses cannot be subjected to empirical testing. In addition, it is worth noting Dahl and Tufte's conceptualization of smallness; some of the countries they examine, such as Austria, Sweden, and the Netherlands, would not be classified as 'small' countries by most (contemporary) standards. As a final remark, it should be mentioned that the most interesting findings of the study are not obtained from comparisons at the national level, but at the local (or cantonal) level. The

generalizability of their findings to comparisons at the inter-national level is therefore in question.

Whereas Dahl and Tufte are by and large inconclusive about the relation between size and democracy, subsequent publications mainly highlight the positive effects of smallness with regard to democratic development. This is in large part due to a number of statistical analyses in which size is seemingly almost accidentally found to significantly affect levels of democracy, even though these analyses do not pay attention to the causal mechanism that could underpin this association (Hadenius 1992: 125; Stepan and Skach 1993: 11-13; Diamond and Tsalik 1999: 118-119; Clague et al. 2001: 26).[16] Already in advance to these publications however, Arend Lijphart examines the relationship between state size and his concept of consociational democracy, and notes that all European consociational democracies are in fact small countries (Lijphart 1977: 65). On the nature of this link, Lijphart argues:

> "What is the explanation of this strong empirical relationship? Small size has both *direct* and *indirect* effects on the probability that consociational democracy will be established and will be successful: it directly enhances a spirit of cooperativeness and accommodation, and it indirectly increases the chances of consociational democracy by reducing the burdens of decision-making and thus rendering the country easier to govern" (Lijphart 1977: 65).

Lijphart thus repeats Dahl and Tufte's idea of enhanced cooperation and communication in smaller societies, and argues that the people and the political elite will generally know each other better when the number of citizens is lower. In fact, Lijphart directly dismisses homogeneity as the reason for democratic success, which he contributes solely to "more closely linked elites" (1977: 66). The author also repeats Aristotle's argument of governability; he believes small states to be better governable because they are less complex, and "the number and variety of groups and individuals whose interests and attitudes have to be taken into consideration are fewer" (Lijphart 1977: 68). Moreover, since small states only seldom play a significant role internationally, they tend to refrain from developing an active foreign policy, which decreases the chance that they are

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[16] Axel Hadenius appears to be the first one to discover this statistical association, and reports that "it appears, if we consider the size of the population, that the real micro-states, with a population of less than 100,000, have surprisingly high values for democracy" (Hadenius 1992: 125). In similar fashion, Larry Diamond and Svetlana Tsalik find that: "[o]ne of the most striking features of the distribution of democracies (liberal and otherwise) around the world is also, curiously, one of its least discussed theoretically: its significantly greater incidence in very small countries, with populations of less than about one million inhabitants" (Diamond and Tsalik 1999: 117). While these scholars find evidence for the existence of a statistical relation, they do not really present any empirical explanations for this link.

involved in international conflicts, which in turn promotes the chances of democracy (Lijphart 1977: 69).

The most elaborate study on size and democracy that was written after *Size and Democracy* is most likely Dana Ott's *Small Is Democratic* (2000). The leading hypothesis of Ott's book, which is the published version of her doctoral dissertation, is that "small states are more likely to become democratic than large states", but in addition Ott also investigates the consequences of smallness for democratic consolidation, access to information, political instability, and political violence (Ott 2000: 111). In the analysis, Ott employs a composite measure of smallness that involves both population size (less than one and a half million inhabitants is regarded as small), and population density (Ott 2000: 18) In total, 237 countries[17] are included in the study, which is longitudinal in character and examines data that were collected for the period between 1973 and 1995 (Ott 2000: 109). In conceptualizing democracy, Ott makes use of the Freedom House scores and the Coppedge-Reinicke Polyarchy scale. After the statistical part of the study, Ott presents the results of her fieldwork in two small countries, the Gambia and Trinidad and Tobago,[18] in order to illustrate the effects of smallness on political systems in practice.

The results of Ott's analysis reveal that small states are much more likely to be democratic than larger states (Ott 2000: 118). The presentation of the descriptive statistics alone already demonstrates that small states have over the years always been more democratic than larger states:

> "In 1973, while 27% of large states received the rating "Free", 47.7% of small states received this ranking. In 1983, 27.3% of large states were considered democratic, while 44.4% of small states were so rated. In 1993, 28.7% of large states received the highest freedom ranking, while **67.4%** of small states received this ranking" (Ott 2000: 115).

These descriptive statistics are later on supported by a regression analysis, in which a dummy variable for small countries turns out to have a highly significant effect on the likelihood of a democratic political system (Ott 2000: 120). Furthermore, the relationship is found to be consistent when controlling for the effects of GDP per capita. In testing the influence of size on the preservation of democracy, Ott confirms the notion that small states are more likely to remain

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[17] This figure also includes a number of semi-independent territories, dependencies, and colonies.
[18] It may be remarked that the countries that Ott has selected for her field research are not very small; although both meet Ott's selection criteria for small states, both the Gambia and Trinidad and Tobago have more than one million inhabitants, and it is unclear whether the effects of size on politics in these states are representative for the microstates that are examined in this dissertation.

democratic than large states, seeing that "[w]hile large states were democratic for 27.3% of the period where Freedom House data was reported, 55.9% of small states were democratic for this period" (Ott 2000: 121-122).

The qualitative part of Ott's study, in which the outcomes of case studies in the Gambia and Trinidad and Tobago are reported, largely supports the findings of the quantitative analysis. In both countries, the existence of multiple-role relationships, easy and open access to political leaders, increased opportunities for political participation, and the continuing support of the political elite for the democratic political system have according to Ott contributed to the development of democracy, even though democracy was abolished in the Gambia after a military coup in 1994. In Ott's view, the size of the population has thus had a profound impact on the politics of these two states, and the effects of size have been largely positive. However, in the conclusion the author points out, in rather vague terms, that smallness does not inevitably generate democracy, but that it creates "an environment in which positive developments may or may not occur" (Ott 2000: 188-190).

Whereas Ott succeeds in demonstrating the association between smallness and democracy, unfortunately the analysis largely falls short in explaining this connection. On closer inspection the two case studies could equally well be used as evidence for a *negative* relation between smallness and democracy. For example, Ott asserts that most citizens of the Gambia believe that there is only a very weak political opposition in this country (Ott 2000: 141-142, 153-154). In addition, Ott points to the increased power of political elites in small states, and argues that in the Gambia, there is a lack of alternative sources of information since the only noteworthy newspaper is owned by the government (Ott 2000: 144-145, 149). Finally, Ott describes how the main political party of the Gambia (which has been in government since independence) dominates the bureaucracy and uses state resources in election campaigns (Ott 2000: 155). Whereas the situation concerning access to diverse information is better in Trinidad and Tobago, here the government has used state resources in election campaigns as well (Ott 2000: 181). Moreover, "in both the Gambia and Trinidad and Tobago, opposition has proved to be a difficult endeavor" (Ott 2000: 182). The differences can in part be explained by the procedural and formalistic definition of democracy that is employed in the statistical part of the book, as a consequence of which more informal aspects of politics are largely left out of the large-N analysis.

Subsequent to Ott's analysis, research on politics and democracy in microstates has primarily been conducted by Dag and Carsten Anckar. In a series

of publications, these authors study small-state parliaments (1996), political parties (1997; 2000), popular heterogeneity (1999), direct democracy instruments (2004a), and the statistical association between smallness, insularity, and democracy in general (1995; 2002a, 2002b, 2006; 2008a; 2008b). On the issue of homogeneity, in several papers it is found that there is little evidence for increased categorical homogeneity in small settings, whereas levels of attitudinal homogeneity are indeed found to be higher (Anckar 1999: 42-43). Regarding direct democracy mechanisms, it is found that despite the facilitating environment that is created by size, instruments of direct democracy are not more often used in microstates than in other states (Anckar 2004a: 386-387). Finally, in a more recent article Anckar finds that microstates are especially prone to majoritarian democracy, but that they often adopt consensus-oriented features within this framework (Anckar 2008c: 81-82).

Whereas the plethora of published articles by the Anckars are valuable in the sense that they provide information and data on (previously unstudied) microstate-political institutions, just like Ott's book they are less successful when it comes to accounting for the relation between smallness and democracy. Although several hypotheses with regard to this relation are rejected, and others are presented and formulated, the analyses do not result in a convincing argument or theory on microstate-democracy (Diamond and Tsalik 1999: 117-118; cf. Srebrnik 2004: 339). In a reviewing article, Anckar arrives at the conclusion that, despite the many publications in the last decades, "the mechanisms that link small size and democracy remain under-researched" (Anckar 2008b: 81). Whereas it can be concluded that a large variety of suppositions and hypotheses with regard to the link between smallness and democracy have been formulated over time, the contemporary academic literature largely fails to uncover or empirically test their significance.

Although the wide majority of publications confirm the negative association between size and democracy, some scholars have found evidence against this relationship (Barro 1999; Gerring and Zarecki 2011). According to Gerring and Zarecki, democracy works better in larger settings due to 1) dispersal of power among a larger number of institutions, 2) better opportunities for conflict mitigation, 3) stronger democracy-supporting institutions, and 4) more institutionalized procedures of rule (2011: 8-10). Whereas the absence of these circumstances in small states was also noted in part of the sociological literature on smallness (e.g. Benedict 1967b; Lowenthal 1987), Gerring and Zarecki explicitly link them to the functioning of democracy. In this respect, the authors essentially build upon Madison's arguments against smallness, and also find

empirical evidence for their hypotheses in their subsequent quantitative analysis (Gerring and Zarecki 2011: 12-15).

Table 2.5: The Effects of Size According to the Size & Democracy Literature

Argument:	Expressed By:	Expectations for Microstates:
Policy-making in small states is less complex due to a decreased number of actors and potential veto-players involved	Dahl and Tufte	Increased executive dominance Decreased number of veto-players
In small states, reciprocal communication between citizens and politicians is possible and occurs frequently, leading to increased responsiveness	Dahl and Tufte Ott	Increased accessibility of politicians, and increased communication between citizens and politicians Increased political responsiveness
As a result of homogenous interests, there is less political competition in small states, which decreases the chance of a strong political opposition	Dahl and Tufte	Decreased political competition Decreased opposition
Smallness leads to a spirit of accommodation among the political elite, which increases the chances of democracy	Lijphart	Increased political consensus on elite-level Greater likelihood of democratic government
Small countries are more likely to be democratic due to increased opportunities for participation, and elite support for democracy	Ott	Increased political participation of citizens Increased support for democracy among elite
Small countries are less likely to be democratic due to the absence of strong institutions and institutionalized forms of rule	Gerring and Zarecki	Weak institutions; institutions ignored or circumvented

In table 2.5, the main theoretical arguments about the influence of size on politics - and in this case especially democracy – as they follow from the size and democracy-literature have been presented. Seeing that a large part of this

literature is positive about the consequences of smallness for democratic development, many of these arguments relate to those expressed by the Classic and Enlightenment-philosophers. The open access and reciprocal communication between politicians and citizens that are highlighted by Dahl and Tufte and Ott are for instance directly borrowed from earlier writings of Montesquieu and Rousseau, which indicates that this literature continues to be relevant. By contrast, the arguments of Gerring and Zarecki are closely connected to both Madison's arguments and the sociological literature on size, as these scholars essentially reiterate the arguments of Benedict, Lowenthal, Sutton, and Farrugia. This shows that the Classic ideas about the effects of size on politics have all but lost their appeal, and are – with some modifications and adjustments – still dominant in the literature. Now that the chronological overview of the literature on the political effects of size is completed, the main expectations and conclusions that follow from this literature are discussed in the conclusion.

7. Conclusion: the Expectations that Follow from the Literature

The global tendency towards smaller states that started after 1918 is at present still ongoing. In recent decades, large states like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have fragmented, separatist regions like Eritrea, Timor-Leste, and South Sudan have become autonomous states, and small dependencies and overseas territories like Palau have acquired independence and statehood.[19] Whereas presupposed economic and international political drawbacks used to be seen as major arguments against smallness, more recent empirical studies call these theories into question. By contrast, the sociological and socio-political literature on size remains rather discouraging, and the findings that follow from this literature can generally be interpreted as democracy-undermining. On the other hand, as can be seen in the introduction contemporary statistics appear to suggest the existence of a strong association between smallness and democracy, although satisfactory explanations for this pattern remain lacking. In short, due to these contradictory theories at present the effects of size on politics and democracy are largely uncertain and ambiguous, and in some ways a disparity between theories and empirics can be observed; whereas theorizing about the (socio-) political effects of smallness remains mostly pessimistic, in practice most empirical analyses do point to a greater incidence of democracy in small settings.

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[19] In addition, several of the remaining overseas territories and dependencies appear to be increasingly pursuing autonomy and statehood. In the Danish autonomous country of Greenland a 2008 referendum has opened the way for future independence, and the French overseas territory of New Caledonia will organize a referendum on independence within the next five years.

On the basis of the philosophical and academic literature on the relation between size and politics, a great number of expectations and theories can be listed. On closer inspection, many of the hypothesized positive and negative consequences of smallness can however be classified into four aspects or sub-dimensions of democracy.[20] In table 2.6, these four sub-dimensions have been listed in the first column, followed by the positive and negative expectations with regard to the presence and development of democracy in the second and third columns. In this way, it can be observed how the expectations with regard to the influence of smallness on the presence of political alternatives, the horizontal balance of power between institutions, the relations between citizens and politicians, and the extent of citizen participation diverge, which also illustrates the continuing indeterminacy of the academic debate.

Table 2.6: The Expected Consequences of Smallness for Democratic Development

Sub-dimension of democracy	Democracy-Stimulating Consequences of Smallness	Democracy-Undermining Consequences of Smallness
Presence of alternatives and an opposition	- Tendency to consensus, stability, and harmony - Increased liberty and republicanism - Greater homogeneity of interests	- Decreased number of factions and interests - Less political competition, weakened political opposition - Personalistic politics; strong person-based polarization
Horizontal balance of power between institutions	- More effective and efficient government	- Executive dominance in relation to other institutions - Infrequent alternation of power - Circumvention or ignorance of institutions
Relations between citizens and politicians	- Increased accessibility of politicians; more (direct) contact - Increased responsiveness - Increased social cohesion and attachment to the public good	- Conflicts of interest due to multiple-role relations - Prevalence of clientelism, patronage, and nepotism
Political participation of citizens	- Increased political efficacy - Increased political awareness - Increased political participation and involvement; more direct democracy	- Decreased political role for minorities and opposition (supporters)

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[20] These four sub-dimensions will be used as the conceptual framework of democracy on the basis of which the analytical part of this dissertation is conducted. For further discussion, see section 3 of chapter 4.

In academic publications that are not or only indirectly focused on small states, some of the characteristics and effects that are presented in table 2.6 have been confirmed. For example, the notion that smaller settings are more homogenous has been examined by comparing US municipalities of different sizes (Black 1974; Wilson 1986), and the idea that political participation is stronger in smaller settings has been analyzed by studies on turnout (Hansen et al. 1987; Blais and Carty 1990; Blais and Dobrzynska 1998: 242-243; Blais 2000: 24-29; Franklin 2002: 158-159; Gaarsted Frandsen 2002; Veenendaal 2009; Remmer 2010) and party membership (Mair and van Biezen 2001: 10; Weldon 2006). Most of these publications are not specifically focused on microstates however, which is probably at least partially an effect of data deficiencies. In this sense, the case study-analysis in chapters to come will shed more light on the applicability of these findings to this particular, under-researched set of cases.

The main conclusion that follows from this discussion of the theoretical literature on size is that the influence of smallness of politics as of yet remains largely unclear. Whereas various empirical studies have observed a statistical link between size and democracy, it has turned out to be very difficult to find theoretical explanations in support of this evidence. As a result, it appears that at this point, statistical analyses will not be able to offer new insights into this relationship, and instead a different, more qualitative approach now seems to be the most fruitful way forward. In this respect, a first step that could be taken is to examine the relatively extensive case study-literature on microstates, which remarkably until now has hardly ever been compared to the more theoretical literature. In the next chapter therefore, an overview is given of the more case-oriented, empirical literature on microstates. On the basis of this discussion, it can be examined in how far the theories and suppositions that follow from the present chapter materialize in the real-world practice.

CHAPTER THREE

Personalism, Executive Dominance, and Particularism

The Academic Literature on Microstates

1. Introduction: The *Polis* Revisited: the Re-Emergence of Microstates

Out of the twenty-one microstates that are analyzed in the current dissertation,[1] none was a member of the United Nations before 1974, when Grenada was the first of them to join. Whereas the autonomy of the European microstates was already recognized for centuries, none of them had joined the UN at its founding in 1945, due to the reluctance on the part of larger states to accept microstates as full members.[2] Of the four European microstates Andorra's political status was always somewhat indistinct, as the territory was jointly ruled by two Co-Princes that resided outside the Principality.[3] A process of political reform that started with the creation of representative political institutions in the early 1980s and culminated with the enactment of a new constitution in 1993 brought this situation to an end, and ascertained the complete sovereignty of Andorra, which was validated with UN-membership in that same year. The other three European microstates of Liechtenstein, Monaco, and San Marino joined the UN in the early 1990s as well, which marked the definite recognition of their statehood (Duursma 1996: 492-494).

Outside of Europe, the acquirement of United Nations-membership by microstates mostly coincided with the attainment of decolonization and independence. In this light, it can be pointed out that the decolonization of island microstates generally occurred at a later stage than decolonization in Asia and Africa, which entails that many microstates actually form part of Huntington's

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[1] This number results from the decision to apply a cut-off point of less than 250.000 inhabitants as a criterion for classification as a microstate. In addition, UN-membership is applied as a scope condition to exclude non-independent territories and dependencies. In the next chapter, more attention will be paid to the explanation and justification of these parameters.

[2] This was not so much a denial of the sovereignty of these microstates, but rather an unwillingness to bequeath microstates with all the rights that full UN-membership entails. Larger states were especially concerned that small states would form a majority and therefore dominate the General Assembly (Duursma 1996: 131-136).

[3] From 1278 onwards these used to be the Count of Foix and the Bishop or Urgell, but due to the transfer of the former's claims to France in 1607, the French President is the current second Co-Prince in addition to the Bishop.

third wave of democratization (1991).[4] In the Pacific Ocean, the island nations of Samoa,[5] Nauru, and Tonga became independent in 1962, 1968, and 1970 respectively, and as such emerged as the first independent microstates outside of Europe. In the Eastern Caribbean, Grenada was the first island microstate to be granted statehood in 1974, with the other five island states in this region following between 1978 and 1983. The 1974-Carnation Revolution in Portugal resulted in the decolonization of all of its colonies, one of which is the contemporary African microstate of São Tomé and Príncipe, which became independent in 1975. One year later, the Republic of Seychelles became the second independent African microstate. The Pacific microstates of Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Vanuatu acquired statehood in 1978, 1979, and 1980 respectively, and in this region the former US Trust Territories of the Marshall Islands (1986), the Federated States of Micronesia (1986), and Palau (1994) have become the world's youngest microstates.[6]

A remarkable aspect of the seventeen non-European microstates is that a wide majority of them is a former Anglo-American colony; ten of them used to be British colonies, and three were American Trust Territories. The remaining four were Australian (Nauru) and New Zealander (Samoa) trusteeships, a Portuguese colony (São Tomé and Príncipe), and a jointly ruled British-French condominium (Vanuatu). Whereas most of the larger former British islands in the Caribbean and the Pacific are now independent states,[7] larger French islands such as Martinique and Guadeloupe in the Caribbean, Mayotte and La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, and New Caledonia in the Pacific have not acquired independence. In general, the French have thus retained much more of their island colonies, and it is telling that the only ex-French colony among the contemporary independent microstates is Vanuatu, which was jointly ruled with the United Kingdom.[8] Since

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[4] Since Huntington excludes countries with less than one million inhabitants in his analysis, these cases are not examined in the volume. However, inclusion of these countries would have resulted in about twenty additional cases of third wave-democratization, which means that Huntington excludes about one third of available cases from his analysis.

[5] Until 1997 this microstate was known as Western Samoa (to distinguish it from American Samoa).

[6] As twenty-one microstates thus became member of the United Nations in the twenty-year period between 1974 and 1994, it is somewhat remarkable and perhaps revealing that since then no new ones have entered. In many dependencies and overseas territories independence movements continue to struggle for autonomy and self-government, but support for these movements seems to be fading rather than growing.

[7] Some of the smaller islands, such as Anguilla, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean, and the Pitcairn Islands in the Pacific, continue to be part of the United Kingdom.

[8] This is also demonstrated by the fact that the United Kingdom was a strong proponent of independence of Vanuatu (at that time still the New Hebrides), whereas France opposed it for a long time (Van Trease 2005: 299-300).

microstates are particularly prone to retain the political institutions that they inherited from their colonizer (Farrugia 1993: 223; Sutton 2007a: 202-203), it is no surprise that the Westminster majoritarian model of government predominates in this group of countries (Anckar 2008c: 75).

Table 3.1: List of Microstates by Population Size, Area Size, and Decolonization[9]

Country	People	Area in km²	State Since	Colonizer
Nauru	9.322	21	1968	Australia
Tuvalu	10.544	26	1978	UK
Palau	20.956	459	1994	USA
Monaco	30.539	2	*1297*	-
San Marino	31.817	61	*301*	-
Liechtenstein	35.236	160	*1866*	-
St. Kitts and Nevis	50.314	261	1983	UK
Marshall Islands	67.182	181	1986	USA
Dominica	72.969	751	1978	UK
Andorra	84.825	468	*1278/*	-
Antigua and Barbuda	87.884	443	1981	UK
Seychelles	89.188	455	1976	UK
Kiribati	100.743	811	1979	UK
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	103.869	389	1979	UK
Tonga	105.916	747	1970	UK
Federated States of Micronesia	106.836	702	1986	USA
Grenada	108.419	344	1974	UK
St. Lucia	161.557	616	1979	UK
São Tomé and Príncipe	179.506	964	1975	Portugal
Samoa	193.161	2.831	1962	N-Zealand
Vanuatu	224.564	12.189	1980	UK-France

In table 3.1, the twenty-one microstates that are at the heart of the current dissertation have been listed and ranked on the basis of their population size and territorial size. In addition, in the fourth and fifth columns the year in which the microstates gained independence and the former colonial powers who ruled the countries before this time have been presented. Despite the fact that they have been exceptionally understudied, in the last decades a small yet insightful body of literature on various political aspects of the microstates has emerged. Due to the fact that these countries are clustered in four regions of the

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[9] Data have been retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (2011), and area size has been presented in square kilometers. For the four European microstates no colonial powers have been listed, since these countries were never formally colonized. The years in which they gained statehood have been presented in italics, since these dates are not official, and because the autonomy of these microstates has regularly been in question even after the initial attainment of independence.

world, many of these publications however focus exclusively on the microstates in one region (e.g. the Eastern Caribbean microstates), or are case studies of only one microstate. However different the microstates may be, and however differing conclusions these various publications may draw, on the basis of these books and articles an image of the various political aspects that microstates share can be acquired.

Whereas an extensive overview of the theoretical debate on the political effects of size was offered in the previous chapter, the present chapter will discuss the more empirical case study-literature on the political characteristics of microstates, as it has appeared after their re-emergence on the international political scene in the 1960s and 1970s.[10] This case study-literature is not only different from the theoretical literature in the sense that it is more empirical and to a larger extent based on real-world observations and evidence, but also because it generally does not – or at least not explicitly – employ size as the major explanatory variable of political characteristics.[11] This is primarily a consequence of the fact that only one or a few cases are studied, as a result of which findings are often treated and explained as idiosyncrasies of the cases under scrutiny. As is shown in the current chapter however, many of these apparent idiosyncrasies are observable in microstates around the world, which suggests that they are in fact no idiosyncrasies at all, but rather can potentially be listed as political consequences of smallness.

In the present chapter, the nature and characteristics of microstate-democracy are discussed. This discussion is structured on the basis of Dahl's conceptualization of polyarchy, which identifies democracy as consisting of the two separate dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness (1971: 3-4). For reasons that are more comprehensively discussed in chapter 4, in the present study these dimensions are further subdivided into the following four sub-dimensions:

1) Contestation I: the presence of political alternatives and a political opposition;
2) Contestation II: the horizontal balance of power between institutions;
3) Inclusiveness I: the relations between citizens and politicians;
4) Inclusiveness II: the political participation of citizens.

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[10] Exceptions are the European microstates, on the politics of which a handful of earlier empirical studies exist.

[11] In this sense, whereas the literature discussed in the previous chapter was primarily *variable*-oriented, the publications that are examined in the current chapter are chiefly *case*-oriented (Ragin 1997).

In the current chapter, these four sub-dimensions provide structure to the discussion of the case study-literature on microstates, since the chapter offers a sequential outline of the ranking of microstates on each of the four sub-dimensions.

Whereas the literature discussed in the previous chapter assumes size to be the primary explanation of democracy and other political characteristics, this chapter commences by outlining a number of explanations of microstate-democracy that assume this phenomenon to be spurious in nature; i.e. that attempt to explain it by pointing to co-varying factors such as (colonial) history and geography.[12] The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth sections of the chapter delve into the case-study literature on four components of democracy in the microstates, which in sequence are the presence of political alternatives and political opposition (section # 3), the horizontal balance of power between institutions (# 4), the relations between citizens and politicians (# 5) and the political participation of citizens (# 6). In the conclusion of the chapter, the central notions and features that follow from the case study-literature are connected with the theoretical literature on size that was discussed in the preceding chapter.

2. <u>Explaining Democracy in Microstates: Spurious Correlations</u>

The theoretical literature on size and democracy that has been discussed in the previous chapter generally considers size to be the main explanatory variable of political (and economic and international) developments, and therefore also of democracy. By contrast, large-N studies on democracy that have added size as only one many independent variables, and that have discovered statistical correlations with democracy, mostly attempt to explain this effect by pointing to a co-variance between size and other variables (cf. Hadenius 1992; Stepan and Skach 1993; Barro 1999; Clague et al. 2001). In essence, these scholars therefore argue that the statistical correlation between size and democracy is spurious in nature, and that size is not at the root of this association. In addition to these quantitative large-N studies, a number of more theoretical publications also endorse this view. The primary variables to which size has been linked in order

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[12] According to some authors, the effect of size on politics can be seen as necessarily indirect, and therefore always depends on at least one intervening variable (Ott 2000: 129). However, whereas the theoretical literature on size that was discussed in the previous chapter generally adopts size as the primary explanatory factor of a certain political framework, many other authors have linked size to one of the more often-mentioned democracy-stimulating factors. The most noteworthy explanations of this latter kind are discussed in the third section of this chapter.

to explain democracy are religion, geography and insularity, colonial history, and international politics and foreign policy.

Culture and religion have occasionally been proposed as explanations of microstate-democracy, most notably by Axel Hadenius (1992: 126-127). After having discovered a statistical correlation between smallness, insularity, and levels of democracy, this author stresses that "it is more interesting to observe that island states are far more Protestant dominated than others" (Hadenius 1992: 126).[13] When Hadenius adds Protestantism to the model, the significance of the relationship between size and democracy disappears. According to Dag and Carsten Anckar however, who embark on a review of Hadenius' findings, these conclusions are erroneous, primarily because all Protestant nations in Hadenius' sample are actually island nations (Anckar and Anckar 1995: 215-216), which renders it impossible to control for causality. In addition, the Anckars argue that Protestantism may have a different meaning and different implications in different world regions, which makes it vulnerable to conceptual stretching (1995: 217). In Pacific island microstates for example, Protestantism was imported from outside and has been blended with traditional religions and customs, thus creating subtypes that are incomparable to the Western European type of Protestantism. When the religious characteristics of the twenty-one microstates are examined, it becomes clear that this group also includes a number of predominantly Catholic nations, which are no less democratic than the Protestant microstates.[14]

It was already noted in the previous chapter that the variable of size has often been linked to insularity, because most microstates (and all non-European ones) are island nations. According to a number of authors, insularity is actually at the basis of the ostensible statistical connection between size and democracy

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[13] This line of argument builds on Max Weber's (1958) thesis that Protestantism stimulates capitalism and individual responsibility. The notion that certain cultures and religions foster democratic development whereas others undermine it has been most prominently raised by Samuel Huntington (1984: 207-209; 1991: 72-73; 1996: 70), who argues that 'Western Christianity' is conducive to democracy whereas for example Islam and Confucianism are not. This argument has been confirmed by other authors (Bollen 1979: 582-583; Hadenius 1992: 118-121; Barro 1999: 175-177; Bruce 2004), but has also been strongly refuted by others (Sen 1999; Stepan 2000; Norris and Inglehart 2002). As the accuracy of the hypothesis thus remains unsure, the debate on it is highly contentious, with the recurring accusation of ethnocentrism being expressed (cf. Said 2004: 293).

[14] In addition to the four European microstates, São Tomé and Príncipe, Dominica, St. Lucia, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Seychelles all have Roman Catholic majorities (CIA World Factbook 2011). In fact, the only non-democracy among the microstates is a Protestant country; the Kingdom of Tonga. Although Protestantism is thus clearly not the driving factor of democracy in microstates, it should be noted that allegedly democracy-undermining religions and ideologies like Islam and Confucianism are not present in the microstates, as all of these countries have predominantly Christian populations.

(Stepan and Skach 1993: 11-13; Clague et al. 2001: 23; Baldacchino 2005: 35-36; Congdon Fors 2007; Anckar 2008a: 454-455). It is a common supposition in the literature that island countries are more likely to democratize than non-island states, primarily because of their geographical isolation and remoteness. From an external point of view, isolation implies that conflicts or turmoil in other countries cannot spillover to island nations, which therefore creates a much more stabile political environment. Internally, isolation is supposed to stimulate social cohesion and a sense of community, and in that sense island status can be supposed to further exacerbate the sociological consequences of smallness (Clague et al. 2001: 23; Anckar 2008a: 437).

Although the overlap between size and insularity renders it difficult to disentangle the separate effects of these variables on democracy, and both small countries and island countries display comparatively higher levels of democracy, it should be remarked that whereas the smallest countries (the twenty-one studied in this dissertation) are with one exception all democracies, the same cannot be said of all island states, since many larger island nations are non-democracies (e.g. Cuba, Fiji, Haiti, Madagascar, and Singapore). As a result, it appears that the positive effects of insularity primarily materialize in the case of small islands, which would mean that the democracy-stimulating effect of size surpasses that of insularity.

In addition to the geographical factor of insularity, some authors have argued that their geographical location rather than size renders microstates to be democratic. In an article by Carlo Masala (2004), various hypotheses that aim to explain the link between smallness and democracy are tested for significance, but these are all rejected as the author comes to the conclusion that the association between the variables is an accidental result of the fact that many small island states are located in the proximity and sphere of influence of larger, democratic states, since "[a]ll micro-islands studied here are located in areas that should be classified as belonging to the indirect sphere of influence of the United States or democratic regional powers (like Australia)" (Masala 2004: 252).[15] Moreover, Masala argues that both the US and Australia actively promote democratic governance in the Caribbean and Pacific island states, respectively, which can fulfill the function of a "rim and buffer" (Masala 2004: 254).[16] In line

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[15] Translation by author from original German text: "*[a]lle hier untersuchten Mikroinseln befinden sich in Gebieten, die dem mittelbaren Einflussgebiet der USA oder demokratischer Regionalhegemone (wie Australien) zugeordnet werden müssen*".

[16] Specifically, Masala argues that "*Beide Staaten, sowohl die USA als auch Australien, agieren aus ihren eigenen Interessen heraus als aktive Unterstützer (…) demokratischer Staatsformen in den karibischen und südpazifischen Mikroinseln*" (2004: 254). (Translation [WV]: "Both states, the US

with these ideas, other scholars have argued that the geographical clustering of microstates increases the spread of democracy due to demonstration effects.[17] According to Benjamin Reilly, for example, the Caribbean and Pacific regions are the most democratic areas in the developing world, primarily as a result of the presence of so many democratic microstates (Reilly 2002: 355-356).

The prevalence of democracy in microstates has also repeatedly been explained on the basis of their (colonial) historical characteristics (Caldwell et al. 1980: 954, 960; Baldacchino 1993: 31-34; Payne 1993a: 58-60; Sutton 1999: 68-69; Srebrnik 2004: 333). In the literature, it is repeatedly pointed out that most microstates are former British (or Anglo-American) colonies, experienced longer and more intense periods of colonial rule, and mostly acquired independence by means of a relatively tranquil and skillfully managed process of decolonization. Furthermore, several authors emphasize the tendency of microstates to stick to the type of government they inherited from their former colonial rulers (Sutton and Payne 1993: 586-587; Anckar 2004b: 215-217; Sutton 2007a: 202-203).[18]

Regarding the length and intensity of colonialism, the argument has often been made that microstates, being island nations, were among the first countries to be colonized. Furthermore, due to their small dimensions, the impact of colonization in small island nations is hypothesized to be amplified. Both the increased length and intensity of colonization are supposed to engender a better socialization in democratic values and traditions among the populations of microstates, which in turn creates a better environment for the development of democracy after independence.[19] In addition to the intensity and durability of

as well as Australia, out of their own interests act as active supporters (…) of democratic forms of government in the Caribbean and South Pacific micro-islands").

[17] In the academic literature on the causes of democratization, regional and demonstration effects have repeatedly been heralded as a major explanatory variable in accounting for the spread of democracy (Starr 1991: 371-377; Gasiorowski 1995: 893; Gasiorowski and Power 1998: 744-745, 764-765; Doorenspleet 2004: 318).

[18] Although the notion that their Anglo-American colonial background can explain democracy in microstates has been contradicted by several authors (Diamond and Tsalik 1999: 118-119; Anckar 2002b: 384-385), the correlation between the variables of size and colonial heritage is certainly remarkable (Clague et al. 2001: 27, 31). According to Anckar and Diamond and Tsalik however, there is strong evidence for an inverted relationship, in the sense that ex-British colonies are in general more likely to be democratic *because* many of them are so small. This argument is buttressed by the observation that among all states in the world, only less than half of the former British colonies is now a democracy (Anckar 2002b: 384-385).

[19] According to Godfrey Baldacchino, colonialism played a particularly influential role in microstates due to the fact that most of these islands had a very weak native population that was rapidly annihilated by the colonizers, or had no native population to begin with (1993: 31). As a consequence, many microstate-societies were actually *created* by colonial powers, which had ample opportunities to politically educate the subdued native or imported slave population. According to Caldwell and others, the extended colonial ties have made microstate-populations more 'westernized' than other third-world societies, in large part because they were part of the European maritime system already before colonization started elsewhere (1980: 560).

colonization, the smooth transition to independence of microstates has been cited as beneficial to the establishment of democracy. As Baldacchino argues, "few [microstates] actually *struggled* for independence; for many, the process was undramatic, somewhat haphazard, or even sudden" (1993: 31; italics in original).[20] Finally, multiple scholars emphasize that due to the propensity of microstates to preserve the institutional structure of their former colonizers, it is evidently plausible that the maintenance of democratic norms and procedures can be explained on this basis as well (Sutton 1987: 8-12).

A final variable with which size has been linked in order to explain democracy is the element of international relations and foreign policy, which in the case of microstates primarily entails vulnerability and dependence. According to various scholars, the foreign policy of microstates can be understood in terms of the model of international patron-client relations (Carney 1989; Sutton and Payne 1993: 589; Seibert 1999: 12).[21] As Masala points out, democratic governance in microstates can be explained on the basis of these clientelistic international relations, in which American and European patrons demand adherence to democratic norms and procedures in exchange for economic and military support (2004: 254).[22] In a seminal article, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way argue that *linkage* to (Western) democratic countries generally provides a greater stimulus to democratization than *leverage* from the West (2005: 21). Linkage may exist on different terrains, such as economics,

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[20] The gradualist decolonization of microstates has also been referred to in other publications, where attention is also paid to the fact that the process of decolonization occurred on the basis of extensive negotiations and consensus between colonial authorities and microstate-representatives (Ott 2000: 70; Srebrnik 2004: 333). In fact, the progress towards independence was often initiated and fueled by the authorities in London rather than by local grassroots groups, and self-government was actually frequently opposed by large segments of the microstate-societies. The progress towards independence was mostly also stringently controlled by the colonial powers, which had the competence to postpone the attainment of independence if for example no adequate constitution could be decided upon (cf. Ghai 1988: 4-6 for the Pacific microstates). In some microstates (e.g. St. Kitts and Nevis, Vanuatu, and Kiribati), independence was delayed due to lingering tensions between various islands, which had to be resolved before London would permit self-rule.

[21] According to Christopher Carney, who has developed a conceptual framework to apply patron-client relations to international relations, this type of relationship should be distinguished from plain dependency-relationships, primarily on the grounds that the patron-client relationship is voluntary and based on a certain degree of affection and solidarity (1989: 46-47). In international politics, the role of the client state is to deliver 'intangible goods' such as ideological convergence, international solidarity, and strategic advantage to the patron state, in exchange for material goods such as financial, economic, or military support. In order to keep receiving material support, the client state needs to display continuing international solidarity and loyalty to the patron state, for example by voting according to the interests of the patron state in the UN General Assembly.

[22] The provision of aid and other forms of external investments has often been linked to democratization in the academic literature (Wright 2009), although this finding has been contradicted by other scholars (Bräutigam and Knack 2004; Knack 2004).

geopolitics, and socio-cultural aspects, but the authors argue that geographical proximity is the most imperative factor (ibid.: 23). Furthermore, and of interest to the present study, the authors point out that the effects of linkage are augmented in the case of small, economically and militarily weak states.[23]

Whereas the global re-emergence of microstates after the 1970s has resulted in the recurrent observation of a statistical link between smallness and democracy, many scholars hence do not accept explanations of this phenomenon on the basis of the classical theoretical literature on size that was discussed in the previous chapter. When it comes to analyzing the effects of size on politics and democracy in microstates, which is the aim of this dissertation, the theories debated in this section have to be taken into account, since findings that appear to be caused by size might actually result from factors with which size correlates. This does not only pertain to the incidence of democratic government in microstates, but might apply to other political features of these countries as well. Now that the concept of democracy has been somewhat further explicated and a number of alternative explanations of microstate-democracy have been presented, the following four sections will discuss the findings of the case study-literature on microstates with regard to the four sub-dimensions of democracy. Since the (case study literature on the) political systems of the cases that have been selected for in-depth analysis are extensively discussed in chapters to come, the discussion in this chapter focuses on literature on the other seventeen microstates.

3. <u>Contestation in Microstates: Political Alternatives and Opposition</u>

Seeing that out of the twenty-one microstates in the world, only one is not classified as an electoral democracy by Freedom House (the Kingdom of Tonga), in virtually all microstates political alternatives have the right and opportunity to enter the contest for political offices. The presence of this condition of democracy is not only confirmed by Freedom House, but also in the case study literature on individual microstates. Whereas a majority of the Pacific microstates operates without political parties, which complicates the identification of a political opposition, in all other microstates the existence of political alternatives can be confirmed on the basis of the presence of multiple political parties in parliament. This means that formally and institutionally, Dahl's requirement of contestation

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[23] In addition to the size of the state, the significance of linkage increases further when no competing issues on Western policy agendas exist, and when no alternative regional power supports the non-democratic regime (Levitsky and Way 2005: 21-22). Levitsky and Way argue that the *combination* of leverage and linkage will yield the most promising situation for democratic development

for public offices is adhered to by almost all microstates. However, the case study-literature on microstates reveals that a focus on this formal and institutional condition obscures the fact that political competition in microstates appears to be of a markedly different nature than in larger democracies.

Whereas political and partisan competition in larger democracies mostly revolves around political cleavages, substantive political interests, and political programs and ideologies, to a large extent this appears not to be the case in microstates. Regarding the European microstates, in his publication on Monaco Georges Grinda for example points out that:

> "Unlike many countries, here is no ideological confrontation in the usual sense of the word. Indeed, the political movements, although existing and very active, have nothing in common with party organizations in neighboring countries, where an organized structure, a government programme, and the conquest of power are the objectives. Such movements are associations, in civil law, and on very general themes differentiated more by the respective sensitivity of their leaders and their members than by ideological forces" (Grinda 2007: 72).

In similar fashion, David Beattie points out that between the two main parties of Liechtenstein,[24] there is "little if any difference in their political and social philosophies" (2004: 189). Until 1993 formal political parties did not exist in Andorra's *Consell General de les Valls*, as they were technically outlawed (Eccardt 2005: 82), but according to Joan Becat the two parties that emerged after 1993[25] are "necessarily personalized due to the smallness of the electorate and the demographic basis of Andorra" (2010: 155).[26]

With regard to parties in the Eastern Caribbean microstates, similar observations have been made. As Peters points out, political parties in these countries are basically personalistic, as the demise of a political leader usually results in the downfall of the entire political party (Peters 1992: 109; cf. Grenade 2004: 4; Will 1991: 49 for the example of Grenada).[27] This notion is confirmed by Duncan and Woods, who argue that politics in the Anglophone Caribbean is highly personalized:

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[24] These are the Fatherland Union (*Vaterländische Union* - VU), and the Progressive Citizens' Party of Liechtenstein (*Fortschrittliche Bürgerpartei in Liechtenstein* - FBP).

[25] These are the Liberal Party of Andorra (*Partit Liberal d'Andorra*) and the Social-Democratic Party (*Partit Socialdemòcrata*).

[26] Translation by author from original French text: "*forcément personnalisés compte tenu de l'étroitesse du corps électoral et de la base démographique andorrane*".

[27] As Will points out, "In 1989 the partisan landscape of Grenada was highly complicated (…), with the remnants of Mitchell's NNP competing against Blaize's TNP, the NDC which was led by three highly independent personalities (including Brathwaite), and the GULP, a highly personalistic party made up of a mesmerized and loyal, but increasingly senior rural 'crowd' under the leadership of the island's unchallenged labour leader Sir Eric Gairy" (Will 1991: 30-31).

> "Governing and opposition elites know each other personally. (...) It contributes to often reducing political discourse and conflict over policy issues to personal conflicts. In other words, personalities matter in island democracies and sometimes the cleavages that emerge in the population are as much a division over different personalities as over policy and ideological issues" (2007: 209).

The primacy of personalistic over programmatic contestation seems to entail that political parties are not really distinguishable on the basis of their ideological orientations. As Peters argues;

> "While the people in the Caribbean have the right to elect a government every 5 years, they do not so based on national issues. There seems to be no defined "common good". Political campaigns run by those who wish to represent the people are not centered around issues, but rather on personalities and charisma" (1992: 38-39) .

Whereas this observation applies to the entire region, similar findings have been reported about the individual Eastern Caribbean microstates. For the case of Dominica, Cecilia Babb for example notes that:

> "None of the parties espouse a clear national economic, political, and social ideology, and their only role seems to be to compete with each other for management of the state apparatus" (2005: 2).

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Hillebrand and Trefs make a comparable observation, noting that:

> "The competition between PPP and SVLP[28] determined the country's two-party system from 1961 to 1974. It focused more on their respective leaders than on their ideological differences" (2005: 596).

In addition to the relative insignificance of ideological and programmatic contestation, in the Eastern Caribbean the personalization of politics has also resulted in the concentration of power in the hands of single individuals, leading to a culture of authoritarian leadership and oppression (Peters 1992: 54). In all six Eastern Caribbean countries, political emancipation was initiated by trade unions which later transformed into political (Labour) parties, and unified and mobilized the population under the banner of working-class ideals. However, in reality these unions advocated the political and economical emancipation of blacks rather than representing an authentic left-wing or socialist ideological platform (Emmanuel 1983; Peters 1992: 38-39). As a result of the fact that these parties managed to remain in office for decades, the leaders of these parties established highly personalistic and often quite authoritarian regimes. The most

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[28] People's Political Party, and St. Vincent Labour Party.

illustrious examples of these are found in the Bird family's dynasty in Antigua and Barbuda (1960-2004), and Eric Gairy's rule of Grenada (1967-1979).[29]

The personalistic instead of programmatic nature of political parties and political competition also emerges in the case study-literature on the African microstate of São Tomé and Príncipe (Seibert 1999: 193; Frynas et al. 2003: 16). Santomean politics is repeatedly described as extremely personalistic, and political parties appear to be based exclusively on interpersonal relations and conflicts (Seibert 1999: 316-317). It is worth quoting Seibert at length about the nature of politics in this African microstate:

> Because of small size and insularity, social and political life in São Tomé and Príncipe is marked by a small-town mentality. Among the small elite most people know each other personally and some are interrelated by kinship ties. The spatial and societal distance between rulers and ruled is small. Many citizens are acquainted with details of the politicians' private lives. In such an intimate environment, national politics resembles the characteristics of micro-politics: political actions stem from essentially personal relations based on individual contact rather than the indirect, administrative relationships and formal contacts that dominate in a larger society. Consequently, politics in São Tomé and Príncipe is highly personalized, while personal issues are frequently politicized. The effects of strong personalism in small states are considered as potentially positive, as rulers are personally accessible and can be held directly accountable for their actions, but also potentially negative, since administrative decisions are based on personal factors rather than on impartial rules (1999: 316-317).

Since the reintroduction of multiparty-democracy, three parties have always managed to win seats in the 55-member Santomean National Assembly, but these parties are not cohesive and exist of temporary alliances between individuals. Apart from the prevalence of personalistic politics, this is also a consequence of the general absence of cleavages in the country's society, and the parties therefore do not advocate divergent interests (Seibert 1999: 316).[30] Competition seems to be primarily oriented towards the question who can control the state apparatus and state resources, of which the benefits are continuously distributed to political supporters (Seibert 1999: 320-321). In turn, support for political parties and politicians from among the citizens seems to be

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[29] According to Hillebrands and Schwehm, "[t]he political dynasty of the Bird family has dominated the politics of Antigua and Barbuda since the colony was granted self-government in the late 1950s" (2005a: 61). On Gairy's leadership in Grenada, Archer points out that: "Gairy had no difficulty in completely dominating his own party. Gairy insisted on one-man rule, and there was no group of leaders around him. From the moment Gairy assumed the premiership in 1967 to his removal from office some 12 years later, he controlled every significant state decision in Grenada" (1985: 96).

[30] Specifically, Seibert argues that: "There are no big differences between the parties with regard to alternative political programs. (...) The parties do not mirror different socio-economic interests" (1999: 316-317). This conclusion is confirmed by Frynas et al., who point out that "[i]n Santomean politics, differences between the main parties are often only superficial. Personalities and personal connections matter most" (2003: 16).

primarily determined by family and friendship relations. In this light, the popular explanation of the abbreviated version of the country's name, STP as "*somos todos primos*" ("we are all cousins"), indeed seems adequate.

In the Pacific microstates, finally, the absence of political parties entails that politics is automatically more personality-oriented. In various publications, the personalistic nature of political competition is mentioned for the cases of Tuvalu (Panapa and Fraenkel 2008: 5, 9), Nauru (Wettenhall and Thynne 1994: 70; Hughes 2004: 6; Connell 2006a: 56), the Marshall Islands (Meller 1990: 56-57), Kiribati (Van Trease 1993: 17, 56, 67, 79-80, 83), and Tonga (Campbell 2006: 276). In an article on the characteristics of leadership in the Pacific islands, Abby McLeod emphasizes the pervasiveness of personalistic 'big-man' leadership in the region, and points out that "[i]n Melanesia, legislators are accountable to the people on their own terms – that is via the distribution of wealth – not in terms of delivering upon legislative, policy and party-based ideological promises" (2007: 29). In the somewhat larger Pacific microstates in which political parties do play a role (e.g. Samoa and Vanuatu), partisan competition camouflages the more personalistic contestation that undergirds it (Van Trease 2005: 324-327; Morgan 2008: 135).[31]

Although the twenty-one microstates are located in completely different parts of the world, have reached markedly different levels of socio-economic development, and differ on characteristics like culture, religion, and demographics, on the basis of the case study-literature it can be ascertained that *all* of them are characterized by the prevalence of personalistic politics and the relative insignificance of ideological and programmatic competition. This finding, which in the previous chapter was expressed by among others Benedict (1967a: 49), Sutton (1987: 15-16), Lowenthal (1987: 38-39), and Farrugia (1993: 223-224), therefore appears to represent a political feature that in all probability is a key effect of the smallness of these microstates. Due to the fact that these case studies are case-oriented and do not attempt to extrapolate or compare the observed political features to other microstates, many of these authors apparently fail to recognize the effects of smallness on the politics in the cases they study, and rather treat their results as idiosyncrasies of the particular microstate(s) under investigation.

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[31] According to Van Trease, in Vanuatu "[d]ividing up the spoils has become the focus of coalition making; ideology is almost never an issue" (2005: 324).

4. <u>Contestation in Microstates: The Horizontal Balance of Power</u>

In addition to the relative insignificance of ideology and political programs, the case study-literature on microstates also confirms the supposition of executive dominance as an effect of smallness. In the previous chapter, it was discussed how Benedict (1967b: 53-54), Sutton (1987: 12), and Gerring and Zarecki (2011: 8-12) have noted that the governments of microstates are supremely powerful in relation to other political and societal institutions, leading to a distorted institutional balance of power in microstates. In the context of the personalistic politics in microstates, executive dominance often entails that individual politicians are able to accumulate vast powers, leading to personality cults and big man-leadership. To this it can be added that the political leaders of microstates have been found to remain in office for a significantly longer period of time than their colleagues in larger states (Sutton 1987: 16), which obviously increases their opportunities to establish and consolidate their power bases.

Out of the four European microstates, three are principalities and therefore have a Prince (or in the case of Andorra two Co-Princes) as head of state. Although Liechtenstein and Monaco refer to themselves as constitutional monarchies and are also recognized as such by for example Freedom House, the Princes of these microstates unquestionably occupy a much more active and powerful position in their political systems than their counterparts in larger European monarchies.[32] In both countries, executive and judicial power is traditionally located in the hands of the Prince, who delegates this power to self-appointed government ministers and judges.[33] Additionally, both Princes have the right of initiative, the right to convoke and dissolve parliament, and have extensive veto-powers, which means that the entire legislative process depends on consensus between the Prince and parliament. Whereas the survival of Liechtenstein's government is dependent on the confidence of both Prince and parliament, Monaco's government is responsible to the Prince only, and the Monegasque National Assembly has no control over the executive (Grinda 2007: 76, 88).[34]

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[32] The specific political arrangement of both Monaco and Liechtenstein has in several publications has been described as a division or balance of power between the Prince and the people (cf. Beattie 2004: 174; Grinda 2007: 53; Marxer 2007: introduction).

[33] Since 2003, Liechtenstein's Prince and parliament jointly select and appoint judges (Beattie 2004: 246).

[34] Due to these factors, the influential and active political role of the Monegasque and Liechtensteiner Princes seems to render a classification as *semi*-constitutional monarchies more accurate, and their constitutional position appears more similar to those of for example the Moroccan and Jordanian monarchs than to their European colleagues.

As a consequence of the fact that the constitutional and practical political role of non-elected leadership in Monaco and Liechtenstein is thus quite extensive, it can be questioned in how far these countries fulfill Dahl's requirement of contestation for the main political offices (Dahl 1971: 4). The Monegasque and Liechtensteiner Princes are the most powerful players in the political systems of their respective countries, and especially in Monaco elected politicians in the National Assembly have a very limited political role as they do not possess the competence to effectively control the government. As Grinda argues:

> "The National Council has no right to restrict the Government's political responsibility; only the Prince can do this. The National Council has no control over the executive since it cannot oblige member of government to resign, nor does it have the right to interrogate, research or investigate the actions of government" (2007: 88).

Whereas elections in these microstates are undoubtedly free and fair, and the condition of inclusiveness is therefore absolutely adhered to, for the main political position – the monarchy – no elections are being organized. In this sense, it is hard to agree with Freedom House's ranking of these countries as full-fledged democracies. In the Andorran political system a similar situation used to exist, but the once omnipotent Co-Princes now occupy a modest and mainly ceremonial political role, comparable to that of the British or Belgian monarchs (Colliard 1993: 386).[35] In short, personality-oriented preeminence of the executive can certainly be noted for the cases of Liechtenstein and Monaco, whereas this appears to be no longer the case for Andorra.

As described in the previous section, personalistic leadership and executive dominance also characterize Eastern Caribbean politics. In his analysis of politics and democracy in this region, Peters for instance remarks that:

> "What is peculiar about the Eastern Caribbean system is the absolute authority that government somehow inherits. Government officials are able to circumvent laws that they have enacted. They are able to use public resources for personal gain (1992: 9)

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[35] In contrast to other monarchies Andorra's suzerains do not have to be noblemen, and it is quite remarkable that both of them are no monarchs in their own territories, since one of them is a president and the other a bishop. In former times, there was an informal division of power between the politically-dominant French president and the spiritual and religious authority of the Bishop of Urgell (Colliard 1993: 382). Currently, the Co-Princes retain a real veto when it comes to the ratification of international treaties, and they also appoint judges on the advice of the government (Colliard 1993: 386-387; Eccardt 2005: 84). Furthermore, Andorrans have absolutely no say in the selection and appointment of their co-Princes and their respective representatives in Andorra. Apart from these regulations however, Andorra's co-Princes function as 'normal' heads of state.

The conclusions of Peters on executive dominance are in large part shared and confirmed by Paul Sutton, who highlights how Eastern Caribbean Prime Ministers have managed to dominate their legislatures, judiciaries, bureaucracies, and media (1999: 73-75). With concern to the power of Caribbean prime ministers, Sutton points out that "[s]hort of defeat at a general election the prime minister is invincible" (1999: 73). In case studies on individual microstates, executive dominance is generally substantiated. For instance, in an article on Dominica Anthony Payne highlights the relative weakness of non-governmental institutions:

> The weakness of the civil service and state institutions in general, and the absence of a viable civil society continue to constitute key structural constraints to further development" (2008: 328).

On the case of Grenada, Archer highlights how Westminster structures have amplified the authoritarian elements of the system (1985: 94; cf. Hinds 2008: 396 on this issue), and in addition describes how "institutions and mechanisms outside of government which limit the power of a prime minister in metropolitan countries are poorly developed" (ibid.). Finally, in their chapter on elections in Antigua and Barbuda, Hillebrands and Schwehm illustrate how the Bird-dynasty has not only crushed the opposition, but also destabilized and manipulated the media and the judiciary in the country (2005a: 61).

In line with O'Donnell's observations in larger third wave democracies, on the case of São Tomé and Príncipe Seibert warns that "[t]he democratization process runs the risk to remain restricted to the creation of institutions based on formalist perceptions of liberal democracy" (1999: 244). In particular, Seibert describes how the bureaucracy of this African microstate has been politicized as a consequence of government patronage, arguing that:

> "The public administration is perceived as the representative of the ruling party rather than a neutral broker between competing interests representing an overarching national interest. Civil servants do not possess an ethic of neutrality" (1999: 244).

Seibert primarily links executive dominance in São Tomé and Príncipe to the country's 'goldfish-bowl society' and intimate social relationships, as a result of which formal institutional roles fall victim to personal relationships, which limits their neutral and impartial functioning. According to Seibert, the smallness of the microstates, and the ensuing close personal bonds between the elite and the people however also prevented the regime from becoming as oppressive as many mainland African states (Seibert 1999: 150).

In the literature on Pacific microstates, governments have also been observed to dominate their political system at the expense of other institutions. On the case of Tuvalu, Goldsmith argues that government is the largest employer and therefore dominates the microstate's economy (2005: 105-107), whereas Panapa and Fraenkel highlight that "the opposition functions not as check or balance agency" and "parliament is seen as the arm of the government-of-the-day" (2008: 2, 13). In Nauru, Kun et al. observe that:

> "The majority of Nauruan parliamentarians do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities. There is a sense that parliament merely rubber stamps legislation presented by the government" (2004: 14).

As Hill finds in the Federated States of Micronesia, also in the Pacific the independence and impartiality of the civil service is undermined by government patronage, and "[w]ithin the public service corruption occurs in the form of nepotism and is an obstacle to the hiring of the most competent public servants and the most qualified contractors" (2004: 5).

The three larger Pacific microstates (Tonga, Samoa, and Vanuatu) have at times experienced less democratic forms of government. As in Liechtenstein and Monaco, Tonga's monarchy continues to play an influential role in this microstate's politics, rendering it the only non-democracy in the group of twenty-one microstates.[36] The Tongan parliament, judiciary, and press are all reported to be acting in the interest of the country's monarchy, which undermines their potential democratic role. Whereas Samoa was the first Pacific island nation to become independent in 1962, until 2000 political rights were reserved to Samoa's traditional leaders (the *Matai*) only (Huffer and So'o 2003: 281-282).[37] The enduring authority and control of the Samoan *Matai* with regard

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[36] Tonga has been ruled by the Tupou-royal dynasty since at least 1875, but the origins of the monarchy of this microstate according to some sources goes back to the 10th century. The microstate's government consists of ministers appointed by the King, who mostly have traditional titles as well (James 1994: 242). In recent years, pro-democracy forces united under the Human Rights and Democracy Movement have made inroads into Tongan politics, and in 2006 the first commoner (Feleti Sevele) was elected prime minister of the island nation (Koloamatangi 2009: 231-232). However, when King Tupou IV's nephew Tu'ipelehake who had played a major role in reconciling the King, nobles, and pro-democracy advocates died in a car accident in the same year, the stability of Tongan politics became further imperiled, culminating in the 2008 riots in Tonga's capital Nuku'alofa. In 2010, a major legislative reform that represented a major step in the direction of constitutional monarchy and therefore democracy was implemented. As a consequence of this law, a majority of Tongan legislators is now popularly elected, and the country's Freedom House rating on political rights went from '5' to '3' (Freedom House 2012).

[37] The authority of traditional leaders on the local level of politics was augmented as a consequence of the *Village Fono Act*, which allowed for the chiefly council (*Fono*) of each Samoan municipality to rule in matters of custom. In addition, out of the forty-nine MPs, in 2009 forty-

to elections, the judiciary, and the media are the primary reasons for Freedom House to give the country less-than-perfect ratings,[38] and the influence of chiefs in many ways seems to consolidate rather than decrease (Macpherson 1997: 44, 48; Freedom House 2012). In Vanuatu, the Anglophone Vanua'aku Party managed to remain in office for eleven years to the detriment of the Francophone opposition (Huffer and Molisa 1999: 102; Morgan 2008: 117). In this period, Vanuatu was autocratically ruled by Father Walter Lini, who brought the country into the Soviet block and advocated 'Melanesian socialism' in the region (Morgan 2008: 121).[39] After the end of the Cold War, Vanuatuan politics became characterized by infighting between big man-politicians for power and influence, with endemic instability and factionalism as a result (Huffer and Molisa 1999: 102; Van Trease 2005: 298; Paterson 2009: 251).

In addition to the earlier observed prevalence of personalistic over programmatic contestation, the current section has revealed that microstates are particularly prone to executive dominance in relation to other institutions. Whereas this occurs in the form of powerful, institutionalized non-elected leadership in some of the European and Pacific microstates, it happens in the form of charismatic big man-rule in the Eastern Caribbean, São Tomé and Príncipe, and other Pacific island nations. In all these cases, executive dominance comes at the expense of other institutions, of which the functioning is undermined by a lack of resources and the multiple-role relations that result from smallness. The fact that only one microstate (Andorra) is a possible exception to this pattern, whereas all other microstates around the globe experience this effect, indicates that executive dominance can almost certainly be recognized as a universally valid political consequence of smallness.

5. Inclusiveness in Microstates: Relations between Citizens and Politicians
Whereas it can on the basis of the discussion in section two be argued that personalistic politics and executive dominance are common features in other third wave-democracies as well, it can also be ascertained that size has an effect

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seven held *Matai*-titles, which is indicative of the dominant role that traditional leaders continue to play in the Samoan system.
[38] Samoa receives a score of '2' on both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2012).
[39] In the aftermath of the 1980 Coconut War in which the island of Espiritu Santo attempted to break away from the rest of the archipelago, Lini used the argument of stability to establish a personalistic and repressive rule. However, at the end of the 1980s conflicts within the leadership of the Vanua'aku Party erupted, and in 1991 Lini was ousted from the party leadership (Premdas and Steeves 1994: 69; Ambrose 1996: 53). After 1991, the exclusion of the Francophone part of the population and Vanuatu's alignment with the Soviet block came to an end, but in its place a period of great turmoil, fragmentation, and instability commenced.

on the influence of these factors. In similar fashion, whereas particularism is a widespread phenomenon in many new, non-Western democracies (O'Donnell 1996), as the literature on the political consequences of size reveals, it can also be determined that smallness increases the likelihood of particularism (Benedict 1967b: 53-54; Lowenthal 1987: 38-39; Farrugia 1993: 223-224). Since personalism, governmental pervasiveness, and particularism are all features that emerge in both the academic literature on new democracies and in the theoretical literature on the political effects of size, it can be questioned in which way their size renders microstates different from other third wave-countries. In general, it appears fair to say that size aggravates or intensifies the political factors that characterize new democracies. This is certainly the case with regard to the particularistic nature of citizen-politician linkages.

Although the influence of particularism in the European microstates is uncertain, the case study-literature on these countries does point to a general awareness about its potential drawbacks as a result from size. For example, as Catudal and Duursma reveal most of these microstates hire policemen and judges from abroad, since "with nearly everyone related to one another, citizens feel that only outsiders can serve impartially" (Catudal 1975: 197). In Monaco, for example, "the majority of the judges in the Monegasque courts and tribunals have to be French nationals" (Duursma 1996: 285), whereas in Liechtenstein "foreign judges may never constitute a majority" (Duursma 1996: 149). Until 1993, Andorran judges were appointed by the Co-Princes, but this situation has changed and at present "judges should be preferably, but not necessarily, of Andorran nationality" (Duursma 1996: 357).

In the literature on the Eastern Caribbean microstates, clientelism, patronage, and nepotism are recurring and defining characteristics of politics. As Peters argues, "[t]he relationship between the government and citizens in the Eastern Caribbean in the post-independence era is essentially one of clientelism" (1992: 128). This conclusion is shared by Sutton, who points out that "Caribbean politics established strong links between political leaders and their supporters, cemented by patronage networks that deliver jobs and benefits in return for votes" (1999: 74). The most elaborate analysis of the issue has however been published by Duncan and Woods, who perceive patronage to be an essential component of Anglophone Caribbean politics, that is also related to the small size of these countries. The authors especially highlight the redistributive effects of patronage, which they believe to "mitigate poverty and social exclusion" (2007: 211).

Patronage and clientelism also emerge as key political factors in the literature on separate Eastern Caribbean microstates. In his account of elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ryan for example argues that "[t]he use of state resources to establish bases of patronage was an important means of securing votes" (2005: 2). In similar fashion, on the case of Antigua and Barbuda Phillips argues that "[t]he ALP[40] has also made use of government funds as an electoral tactic; for example to repair roads, to embark on construction projects, and to provide jobs for supporters and would-be supporters" (2005: 2).[41] On the case of Grenada, finally, Wendy Grenade explains how Hinds' findings with regard to "a culture of party or racial patronage or clientelism" in the Eastern Caribbean are also applicable to this particular microstate (2004: 11). In summary, the case study-literature suggests that the Eastern Caribbean microstates confirm the political pattern of particularism that was suggested by some authors in the previous chapter.

In the case of the African microstate of São Tomé and Príncipe, patron-client relations appear even more perennial and prevailing than in the Caribbean microstates. According to Seibert, "[i]n São Tomé and Príncipe patron-client relationships have been deeply entrenched in local society since the 16th century" (1999: 11). These linkages can possibly be attributed to the small size of this island state, since "[j]obs and resources are not distributed according to economic necessities and the professional capacities of the person in question, but to maintain clients, satisfy kinship obligations, or to do favors to lovers and friends" (1999: 151). As Seibert convincingly shows, the implementation of democratic institutions has not concomitantly resulted in a decline in particularism, since "[d]emocratic institutions have merged with the political attitudes and clientelist models of resource distribution which have characterized all previous regimes", and "[p]arty competition has only resulted in new opportunities for creating and exploiting patron-client relationships that link individuals to politicians and parties" (1999: 244, 322).

Patronage and clientelism are also defining characteristics of Pacific politics, but since the distribution of favors by political leaders is a key component of traditional Pacific island cultures, it can be hard to disentangle particularism from custom and traditions in this region (Larmour 2005: 4-5;

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[40] Antigua Labour Party.
[41] In fact, in the literature Antigua and Barbuda is often mentioned as the most corrupt and patronage-ridden of the six Eastern Caribbean microstates, and Thorndyke notes that "Antigua has over two decades acquired the regrettable image of being the most corrupt society in the Commonwealth Caribbean, hosting a notorious amorality from top to bottom" (1993: 147)

Duncan and Nakagawa 2006). As Taafaki and Oh for instance point out on corruption in Tuvalu;

> "The Tuvalu tradition of reciprocity can provide an effective measure of accountability. It is important for the political survival of leaders to provide employment opportunities for their constituents. This may take the form of contracts for government projects, appointments to the board of statutory bodies, or in some cases, influencing appointments to the civil service. In some countries, these actions may be considered as bordering on corruption. Tuvalu politicians, however, view these actions as a form of accountability to their electorate. It is a fact of Tuvaluan reciprocity, a custom that is still very strongly practised, and corruption is not seen as a significant problem in Tuvalu" (1995: 8).

A comparable observation is made by Kun et al. on the case of Nauru, since they note that "[a]spects of traditional culture such as gift giving, privileges of elders, and the extensive relationships amongst many Nauruans have rendered investigations on corruption more difficult. It is common for the people of Nauru to go to their MPs to ask for money and other favors" (2004: 5).[42]

Although anticorruption and sunshine laws have been implemented in most Pacific islands, these are often in conflict with traditional culture and values. As Nancy Pollock shows, this is for example the case in the Marshall Islands:

> "Traditional values of gift-giving as a means of social cohesion and recognition of kin and wider social ties sit uneasily alongside formal rules against corruption. Nepotism in the civil service and gift-giving at election times may be considered as instances of corruption, but this interpretation is unclear in an indigenous setting" (2004: 11).

In a publication on the Federated States of Micronesia, Edward Hill especially highlights the prevalence of nepotism and patronage in the public sector, revealing that "[w]ithin the public service, corruption occurs in the form of nepotism. Although the laws provide for the hiring of public servants on the basis of merit and require an examination of candidates, in fact personal managers and others have found ways to put relatives and friends ahead of more qualified applicants" (2004: 14). In Kiribati, "[c]orruption (…) occurs at all levels of society, though it is most notable in governmental circles with regards nepotism, petty bribery from public officials and possible instances of vote buying" (MacKenzie 2004: 4).

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[42] In similar fashion, these authors later argue that "[v]oters usually see the receipt of gifts in return for votes as a legitimate part of the electoral process, as it may be the only thing they ever see coming out of the State. Nepotism continues to arise where elected leaders use their powers to meet their welfare obligations to their voters" (Kun et al. 2004).

The larger Pacific microstates are no less plagued by particularism. Tonga's pro-democracy movement was initially also campaigning against abuses of power and corruption, but in the 2005 elections they were themselves accused of such actions (Campbell 2006: 56). Since the 1990s, Vanuatuan politics has been increasingly beleaguered by corruption and misconduct of politicians, with "Ministers and Members of Parliament from all parties being implicated in inappropriate and even criminal conduct" (Huffer and Molisa 1999: 102). The smallness of electoral districts also increases the likelihood of clientelism in Samoa, as "MP candidates will usually visit all the villages in their constituency to ask for support, and this includes bringing gifts for the villages" (So'o 2009: 206). In short, without exceptions the problems of corruption, lack of accountability, and particularism appear to dominate the politics of Pacific island states.

In accounting for citizen-politician linkages in small states, with the possible exception of the European cases particularism appears to play a role in all microstates. It is especially remarkable that other, more positive hypothesized effects of smallness, such as enhanced feelings of efficacy and awareness among citizens, and increased opportunities for communication and responsiveness do not surface as key political features in the case study-literature. Instead, on the basis of this literature the proximity between citizens and politicians actually appears to undermine the quality of political representation, seeing that clientelism and patronage are generally believed to result in political and social dependency (Benedict 1967b: 53-54). Since several publications also indicate that the political participation of microstate-citizens is limited to the casting of a ballot once in several years (Peters 1992: 133),[43] in the next section attention will be paid to the characteristics of more conventional forms of participation in microstates.

6. Inclusiveness in Microstates: The Characteristics of Participation

In the literature on size and democracy, the positive effect of size on levels of citizen involvement and participation is listed as one of the key advantages of smallness, and higher levels of turnout in small states have been reported in several publications (Blais and Carty 1990; Franklin 2002; Gaarsted Frandsen 2002). At the same time, Dahl and Tufte have concluded that "political participation and sense of effectiveness among citizens do not depend to any

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[43] According to Peters, "[d]emocracy means to the Caribbean people the freedom to elect their leaders, but immediately after the elections their political participation ceases. They withdraw from the political process completely and assume their status as subjects of the leaders" (1992: 133).

significant degree on the size of a country" (1973: 65). Since statistics on other conventional forms of participation such as party membership, participation in rallies and demonstrations, or the frequency of contact between voters and their representatives are either lacking or unavailable, turnout is the only form of participation on which enough data are available to enable cross-country comparisons.

A first remarkable characteristic about participation in the European microstates is the fact that women were until extraordinarily recently excluded from the franchise. Whereas female suffrage was introduced during the interbellum in most of Western Europe, women gained voting rights in San Marino in 1959, in Monaco in 1962, in Andorra in 1970, and in Liechtenstein only in 1984 (Eccardt 2005: 101). In this latter microstate, equal rights between the sexes was only realized in 1992 (Beattie 2004: 176), and according to Freedom House "Liechtenstein society remains conservative, and practice lags behind principle when it comes to female emancipation" (2012). Despite these downsides, turnout figures in the European microstates have been quite high, reaching on average 71.8% in Monaco, 73.9% in San Marino, 78.6% in Andorra, and even 86.5% in Liechtenstein.[44] With the exception of Liechtenstein, these figures are however in line with European averages (Wattenberg 2000: 71-72), which indicates that size does not directly have an influence on turnout in the European microstates.

In publications of Peters and Sutton, levels of voter turnout in Eastern Caribbean microstates are reported to be high, especially in comparison to other developing countries (Peters 1992: 209; Sutton 1999: 70). The Eastern Caribbean microstates have rather comparable figures of voter turnout, and with the positive exception of Antigua and Barbuda (which has an average figure of 71.6%), all microstates in this region have an average turnout level of between sixty and seventy percent. This is comparable to turnout figures of larger island states in region like Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados, whereas it is much lower than voter turnout in the Bahamas (which is mostly above ninety percent). Furthermore, since voter turnout reaches on average about 65% in North America and 69% in Latin America (López Pintor et al. 2002: 77), the Eastern Caribbean microstates do not have exceptionally high levels of participation in comparison to the rest of the Americas. In general therefore, their smallness actually does not seem to generate higher turnout levels in the Eastern Caribbean microstates, and twenty years later, Peters' conclusion that

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[44] Own calculations, based on turnout data of the International IDEA database (International IDEA 2011). Figures represent the average of the five most recent parliamentary elections.

"voter participation is among the highest in the Third World" (1992: 209) can no longer be substantiated.

Regarding other forms of participation, on which no data is available, the case study-literature offers a number of indications. According to Peters, "[p]olitical participation by the citizens of the Eastern Caribbean is centered around mass rallies in cities and towns", yet "[m]ost leaders appear to welcome mass participation in the electoral process in order to get elected to government, but seem to discourage participation in the actual governing of the state" (1992: 7, 113). In addition, Peters argues that "[d]emocracy means to the Caribbean people the freedom to elect their leaders, but immediately after the elections their political participation ceases. They withdraw from the political process completely and assume their status as subjects of the leaders" (1992: 133). Furthermore, as Hinds argues, in the Anglophone Caribbean "patronage undermines mass independent participation in the political process" (2008: 393). On the basis of this literature, it appears that apart from election campaigns and the elections themselves, political inclusiveness in the Eastern Caribbean is quite limited.

In São Tomé and Príncipe, the average turnout level in the five most recent parliamentary elections is 67.7%, which is just a little bit higher than Africa's average of 64% (López Pintor et al. 2002: 77). In his book, Seibert argues that "[v]oter turnout in São Tomé and Príncipe has been high, both by African and international standards", but this observation is hence not really corroborated by IDEA-figures. Again therefore, smallness seems to have at best a marginal impact on the level of participation, although "[t]he increasing venality of election campaigns, the changing election results, and the voting patterns within small communities and families both prove that voters in the creole society of São Tomé and Príncipe are not submitted to heavy social or group pressures, but enjoy a considerable individual freedom of political choice" (Seibert 1999: 326). Apart from these remarks, the literature offers little clues on the nature of alternative forms of political participation in the African microstate.

With an average of 79%, Oceania stands out as the world region with the highest voter turnout figures. Since over half of this region is composed of microstates, it seems plausible that at least part of this achievement is an effect of the smallness of the many Pacific island states. At the same time however, turnout statistics on many elections in microstates are lacking, as a consequence of which it hard to estimate average levels of electoral participation. Out of the five most recent Tuvaluan elections, for example, only one turnout figure is available (80.0% in 2002), and the same applies to the Marshall Islands (50.1%

in 2007), Kiribati (67.5% in 2007), and the Federated States of Micronesia (52.6% in 2007). With the exception of Tuvalu, these figures are well below the Oceanian average, and this also holds true for the average figures of Tonga (59.0%), and Vanuatu (62.9%). As a result, only Nauruan (90.3%), Palauan (77.3%), and Samoan (82.3%) figures conform to the average level of the region, and as a matter of fact the largest countries in this region (Australia and New Zealand) have the highest turnout figures. In the Pacific, therefore, the notion that smallness fosters participation is forcefully rejected.

In the case study-literature on Pacific microstates, the relatively negative observations with regard to voter turnout in the region are partially explained. On the case of Vanuatu, for example, Morgan notes that "[s]ince independence, voter turnout has declined steadily, indicating increasing voter disenchantment" (2008: 134). In similar fashion, on the case of Tonga Kerry James notes that "[l]ow turnout (49%) could indicate a passive resistance to the democratic rhetoric and perhaps to politics as a whole" (2002: 314). In general, the case study-literature indicates that the Pacific culture of respect and obedience to political leaders sometimes hampers the willingness of citizens to take part in politics. On the case of Nauru, Quanchi for instance points out that "[t]he predicted close and constant scrutiny by the public did not occur, as inordinate personal wealth and associated consumerism prevailed over political action. Clan loyalties to elected chiefs and leaders also overrode criticism" (2009: 125). In summary, in none of the four regions in which they are located do microstates significantly outperform larger countries with regard to participation, and Dahl and Tufte's conclusions with regard to the absence of a relation between size and participation therefore appear to be accurate.

As mentioned before, no data or statistics are available on the frequency of contacts between citizens and their representatives. However, in table 3.2 the ratios of citizens per Member of Parliament have been presented for all microstates, where it can be seen that in the smallest microstates each MP represents less than one thousand citizens. Even in St. Lucia, where the fewest number of MPs per citizen can be noted, individual MPs still represent less than 10.000 citizens. If these figures are compared to countries like the Netherlands (111.538 citizens per MP), Germany (130.717), or the United States (721.488), it becomes clear that representation in microstates can be expected to occur on the basis of completely different dynamics than in larger states. In the analytical chapters of this dissertation, this hypothesis will be examined in four microstates. Now that the case study-literature on the nature of contestation and

inclusiveness in microstates has been discussed, this literature will be contrasted with the theoretical literature of chapter 2 in the conclusion.

Table 3.2: Citizen-MP Ratios in the Twenty-One Microstates[45]

Microstate	Citizens	MPs	Citizens per MP
Nauru	9.322	18	518
Tuvalu	10.544	15	703
Palau	20.956	16	1.310
Monaco	30.539	24	1.272
San Marino	31.817	60	530
Liechtenstein	35.236	25	1.409
St. Kitts and Nevis	50.314	15	3.354
Marshall Islands	67.182	33	2.036
Dominica	72.969	32	2.280
Andorra	84.825	28	3.029
Antigua and Barbuda	87.884	19	4.625
Seychelles	89.188	34	2.623
Kiribati	100.743	46	2.190
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	103.869	21	4.946
Tonga	105.916	30	3.531
Federated States of Micronesia	106.836	14	7.631
Grenada	108.419	15	7.228
St. Lucia	161.557	17	9.503
São Tomé and Príncipe	179.506	55	3.264
Samoa	193.161	49	3.942
Vanuatu	224.564	52	4.319

7. Conclusion: Connecting the Theoretical and Case Study-Literatures on Size

In the conclusion of the previous chapter, I pointed to a discrepancy between the theoretical literature on size and democracy and the more recent statistics that reveal a correlation between smallness and democracy. Whereas smallness was almost unequivocally cherished by philosophers and thinkers up to the 18th century, since that time a clear majority of the literature has emphasized the drawbacks rather than the advantages of a small population size. In fact, it can be seen that much of the recent optimism about the presumably democracy-stimulating features of smallness are primarily based on statistics, and are actually not buttressed by convincing theoretical explanations. The examination of the case study-literature on microstates that was carried out in the present chapter in large part supports the more comparative literature on the shortcomings of smallness (especially those described in section 5 of the

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[45] Based on own calculations. Data have been retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (2011), and the database of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2011). In the case of bicameral legislatures, only the number of MPs in the lower house of parliament have been taken into account.

previous chapter). This suggests that the statistical link between size and democracy camouflages or misrepresents the true nature of politics in small states, which means that the quest for the explanation of this statistical link (cf. Anckar 2002b; Srebrnik 2004: 339) is actually doomed to fail.

If the main points of the two strands of literature that were examined in the previous and the current chapter are compared, two sorts of potential explanations for the supposed statistical link between size and democracy remain plausible. On the one hand, on the basis of the discussion in section 3 of this chapter, it could be hypothesized that this link is spurious in nature. As argued in this section, the explanation of microstate-democracy on the basis of religious factors or insularity is somewhat problematic in light of the abundance of non-Protestant microstates and non-democratic island nations. On the other hand, the location of microstates in democracy-enhancing regions of the world, their colonial legacies, and international political factors can all be supposed to stimulate democratic development, and can possibly explain the prevalence of democracy in microstates. In the case study-chapters of this dissertation, the relevance and applicability of these factors will be examined for each of the four microstates under investigation.

In addition to the possibility of a spurious correlation, I would like to propose an alternative explanation of microstate-democracy, which is based on the fact that most microstates can be regarded as third wave-democracies. As will be discussed extensively in chapter 4, scholars have encountered considerable difficulties in the classification of various 'third wave'-countries (cf. Huntington 1991) that have not managed to complete the transition to democracy. In particular, O'Donnell has highlighted how these countries have implemented democratic institutions and structures, whereas democratic norms and traditions remain to be lacking (O'Donnell 1996). According to O'Donnell, the academic focus on formal democratic structures leads to the disregard of non-institutional factors such as personalistic politics or particularism. Although almost never studied as such, seventeen of the microstates can be classified as third wave-democracies, which means that O'Donnell's line of argument can possibly be extended to these cases.

Due to the lack of more in-depth, substantive, qualitative analyses of microstate-democracy, the data of Freedom House are virtually the only information available on the political systems of these countries. As a large-N aggregate index of democracy, the Freedom in the World-survey is necessarily focused on formal, institutional indicators of democracy, and can only to a limited degree analyze the less formal and more substantive characteristics of

democracy in these countries. This statistical, quantitative focus has been adopted by many scholars who study democracy in microstates, whereas more qualitative, comprehensive analyses of microstate-politics have remained relatively scarce. It is at least partially the aim of this dissertation to fill this gap in the scholarly literature, by offering a comparative, in-depth analysis of politics and democracy in microstates.

The examination of the case-study literature on microstates has revealed that the politics of these countries are plagued by more or less similar features as those that emerge in the literature on third wave-countries. Personalistic politics, executive dominance, and particularism are all elements that characterize politics in larger third wave-countries as well, and in this sense the microstates do not appear to be markedly different from their larger counterparts. At the same time, publications on the individual microstates also suggest that size is at least to some extent at the basis of these political patterns, which might be reinforced as a consequence of smallness. The accuracy of this expectation will be further examined in the analytical chapters (# 5-8) of this dissertation. Now that the theoretical literature on size and the empirical literature on microstates have been discussed, and the implications of this literature for the present analysis have been outlined, in the next chapter attention will first be devoted to a number of conceptual and methodological issues.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Design

Concepts, Methods, and Case Selection

1. <u>Introduction: the Need for a New Approach</u>

As described in chapter 2, in recent decades a variety of publications have highlighted the statistical association between size and democracy, and have endeavored to find an explanation for this correlation. Until now, this quest has however not resulted in a satisfactory or broadly endorsed theory, and in this sense academic thinking has not progressed much beyond the point of speculation. Since a large part of especially the sociological literature on size now perceives smallness to impede on democratic development, these theories cannot be referred to in explaining the statistical link between size and democracy. In similar fashion, as chapter 3 has demonstrated, whereas the case study-literature on the characteristics of politics in the individual microstates confirms that these countries do have democratic institutions and structures, their practical, informal, and more substantive political dynamics often diverge markedly from the democratic ideal. In this respect, the political systems of (non-European) microstates in many ways resemble those of larger new democracies.

As discussed in the conclusion of the previous chapter, two alternative explanations of democracy in microstates can be conceived of that do not rely on the 'classical' literature on size and democracy. On the one hand, the variable of size can be deemed to overlap with other, democracy-stimulating factors such as religion, geography, colonial history, or international politics. On the other hand, it could be argued that the statistical link is exclusively based on formal indicators of democracy, and that microstates – like other third wave-countries – are characterized by a discrepancy between formally democratic structures on the one hand, and a more antidemocratic political environment on the other hand. If one thing is clear however, more statistical analyses on the relationship between size and democracy are not going to bring academic theorizing in this field any further, and will almost certainly not yield a convincing explanation of this link. As a consequence, the present study explicitly aims to address this puzzle from a new angle.

In the present chapter, the contours and substance of this new approach are outlined. Whereas chapters 2 and 3 have already explored a large part of the academic literature on this study's key concepts of size and democracy, this chapter commences with a further conceptualization and operationalization of these terms. Subsequently, the theoretical model of this dissertation is sketched out and discussed, and the expectations that follow from the literature are once more presented. This is followed by a discussion of the qualitative and exploratory research method that this study employs, and the various components that it entails. After that, section five discusses the case study-methodology of this study, and devotes further attention to the characteristics of both within-case and cross-case analyses. The subsequent sixth section deals with various issues that relate to the selection of cases for in-depth analyses, and explains and justifies the selection of four microstates for qualitative analysis in the chapters to come. The chapter ends with a conclusion, in which the main points are summarized, and the structure of the four case study-chapters is outlined.

2. Concepts: Defining and Operationalizing Size

Since at least the 1950s, an academic debate has emerged about the conceptualization of state size. The size of nations can be measured on the basis of multiple variables, among which population, territory, economic indicators, or military capacity. In addition to highlighting the existence of multiple 'size'-variables, this scholarly debate has also focused on the question of categorization; i.e. how a country should rank on these variables in order to be for example classified as a small state or microstate. As Charles Taylor points out in this respect, countries can score markedly dissimilar on the different size-variables, which encumbers attempts to classify them according to their size (1969: 105).[1] As a consequence of this problem, and the fact that no 'natural' break-off points in each of the three variables under investigation can be detected, Taylor proposes a statistical solution to his puzzle about the definition of a microstate (1969: 102).[2] By integrating three size-variables, Taylor

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[1] Taylor refers to the examples of Hong Kong, which is small in area but much larger in terms of population and GDP-size, and Namibia, which has a large territory but a very small population.

[2] In fact, two possible solutions are proposed in the article; the first is to use statistical thresholds such as medians, quartiles, and deciles as cut-off points (Taylor 1969: 102). For example, a researcher could decide that all countries that fall within the first quartile of the population distribution of all countries can be considered microstates (Taylor 1969: 105). A second option would be to "employ all three dimensions simultaneously" by standardizing the scores of the three variables (ibid.). In a resulting composite dimension, the effects of the three variables would all be represented.

eventually creates an index in which a total number of 74 micro-territories can be separated from 107 non-micro-territories (Taylor 1969: 110-111).

The integration of various size-variables to arrive at a composite measure or index of state size has been proposed by other authors as well (e.g. Downes 1988; Crowards 2002). In contrast to Taylor's observations, Andrew Downes and Tom Crowards argue that the three variables of population, territory, and gross domestic product are closely interrelated (Downes 1988: 87-88), and that natural break-off points in the ranking of countries on these variables can be identified (Crowards 2002: 145-149).[3] In spite of their validity and suitability however, these proposed composite measures have not been widely adopted by other authors, who mostly stick to only one of the size-variables. In this light, population size has been by far the most often applied measure of size, and especially in analyses that seek to examine the influence of state size on politics. Whereas several authors are not really clear about their specific definition of size (Benedict 1967a; Dahl and Tufte 1973; Dommen and Hein 1985; Clarke and Payne 1987; Alesina and Spolaore 2005), and others use a combination of population and territorial size (Ott 2000; Congdon Fors 2007), at present population size unquestionably remains the most frequently used standard.

As Taylor argues, the choice about the variable according to which state size is defined should be primarily guided by the theoretical criteria of the researcher (1969: 116-117). As mentioned before, state size has not only been employed as an explanatory variable in relation to politics and democracy, but also to explain variations in other areas. For studies that aim to analyze the effects of size on economic success or international political behavior for instance, definitions of size according to respectively economic indicators and military capacity may be more appropriate. Since the primary goal of the present dissertation is to examine the influence of size on politics and democracy, the conceptualization of the state size-variable should be consistent with the theoretical assumptions that underpin this relationship. As the discussion of the literature in chapters 2 and 3 has revealed, most of the existing publications on the influence of smallness on politics and democracy depart from a definition of size according to population figures. In addition, the statistical link between size and democracy that was presented in the introduction, and that has been

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[3] Just like Taylor, Downes proposes the solution of selecting a statistical divisor to classify countries according to size. Crowards suggests that a country may be defined as falling into a certain size-category when it is classified as such for at least two of three size-variables (Crowards 2002: 149). A subsequent cluster analysis confirms the existence of five 'size' categories of nations, and creates what Crowards argues to be a non-arbitrary classification of discrete and mutually exclusive groups of countries (Crowards 2002: 173).

confirmed by various scholars in recent decades, is also based on population size. As a consequence of these facts and circumstances, in the present study state size will be conceptualized on the basis of population numbers.

2.1. The Operationalization of Size

As a result of the fact that the current study aims to investigate the effects of state size on politics and democracy, for the purpose of case selection a classification has to be made that separates microstates from other states. As already mentioned, such a classification is hampered by the fact that 'natural' cut-off points on the continuum of population size are hard to find, which renders a decision about any cut-off point inevitably random and therefore hard to defend. All countries in the world can be ranked on their population size, but seeing that there are no a priori reasons why a small increase of decrease in population size would result in different political dynamics, any boundary is arbitrary and capricious. That being said, this does of course not mean that there can be no arguments in support of a certain population threshold, and there are a number of motivations and justifications for locating the cut-off point at 250.000 inhabitants, as the current study does.

Over the years, the population size that is referred to in defining a small state or microstate has been decreasing, due to an increase in the number of small states, and "a growing recognition that the economic characteristics of small size apply more comprehensively to a narrower range of very small countries" (Sutton and Payne 1993: 581-582; cf. Crowards 2002: 145). Whereas for example Kuznets defined small states as having less than ten million inhabitants (1960: 14), Ott looks at countries with populations less than 1.5 million (2000: 18), and Clarke and Payne locate the threshold at one million people (1987: xvii). In addition to the category of small states, several scholars also pay attention to defining microstates, which generally have under a million inhabitants. Diamond and Tsalik (1999: 117-118) and Carsten Anckar (2008a: 440), for example, define a microstate as having less than half a million inhabitants, whereas Hadenius (1992: 125), Ott (2000: 18) and Clague et al. (2001: 25) locate the cut-off point at a population size of 100.000. There is thus no consensus in the academic literature on an appropriate cut-off point to distinguish microstates from small states, and small states from large states.

In the process of selecting a practicable cut-off point in population size to identify the microstates, several factors can be taken into account. To begin with, it would be preferable to have enough cases included in the microstate-group to be able to meaningfully compare this group with the group of other states, and in

order to facilitate the generalization of the findings. In addition, the generalizability of the findings is also enhanced if the microstates differ on as many background variables as possible, since this entails that the effects of size can be more easily distinguished from those of other variables. Thus, a microstate-threshold of 25.000 inhabitants would not be feasible, since only three states would meet this criterion, which are all located in the same region of the world.[4] By contrast, a threshold of 250.000 is clearly more practicable, since it results in a group of twenty-one microstates which are spread over four world regions. The statistics presented in the introduction of this dissertation moreover reveal that the association between smallness and democracy is also strongly significant at the boundary of 250.000 people (see table 1.1). As a third element that should be taken into account, several scholars have pointed to the existence of so-called 'roof effects', in the sense that smallness only has an influence on politics below a certain population figure. According to Hadenius, this 'roof' is located at 100.000 inhabitants, whereas Carsten Anckar believes it to exist at half a million inhabitants (Hadenius 1992: 125; Anckar 2008a: 440). Since a threshold of 250.000 is situated almost in between these two estimates, it can be deemed fruitful in this respect as well. Finally, it is also worth noting that this cut-off point also results in an analysis of exactly the countries that Lijphart has chosen to exclude (1999: 52).

Now that a population threshold has been selected and motivated, it has to be decided what a 'state' is. Whereas earlier publications on size and politics have also analyzed non-independent territories and dependencies (Benedict 1967a; Dommen and Hein 1985; Ott 2000), such a decision necessarily involves hard-to-defend distinctions between the territories that are analyzed and those that are not. Furthermore, at least part of the academic literature suggests that full sovereignty (including membership of international organizations) has a significant effect on the likelihood of democratic governance. As a consequence, the current study applies the scope condition of United Nations-membership to distinguish between independent and non-independent polities. It should be noted that this scope condition results in the exclusion of the Vatican, which is often seen as an independent country, but is at present the only permanent observer state of the United Nations. Since the Vatican has no native population, a completely unique and incomparable political structure, and can be seen as an absolute theocracy (cf. Murphy 1974), I however do not regard this exclusion as problematic.

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[4] These are Nauru, Tuvalu, and Palau, which are all located in the Pacific.

Country	Inhabitants	Area (in km2)	Democracy?
Nauru	9.322	21	Yes
Tuvalu	10.544	26	Yes
Palau	20.956	459	Yes
Monaco	30.539	2	Yes
San Marino	31.817	61	Yes
Liechtenstein	35.236	160	Yes
St. Kitts and Nevis	50.314	261	Yes
Marshall Islands	67.182	181	Yes
Dominica	72.969	751	Yes
Andorra	84.825	468	Yes
Antigua and Barbuda	87.884	443	Yes
Seychelles	89.188	455	Yes
Kiribati	100.743	811	Yes
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	103.869	389	Yes
Tonga	105.916	747	No
Federated States of Micronesia	106.836	702	Yes
Grenada	108.419	344	Yes
St. Lucia	161.557	616	Yes
São Tomé and Príncipe	179.506	964	Yes
Samoa	193.161	2.831	Yes
Vanuatu	224.564	12.189	Yes
Barbados	*286.705*	*430*	*Yes*
Iceland	*311.058*	*103.000*	*Yes*
Bahamas	*313.312*	*13.880*	*Yes*
Belize	*321.115*	*22.966*	*Yes*
Maldives	*394.999*	*298*	*No*
Brunei	*401.890*	*5.765*	*No*
Malta	*408.333*	*316*	*Yes*
Suriname	*491.989*	*163.820*	*Yes*
Luxembourg	*503.302*	*2.586*	*Yes*
Cape Verde	*516.100*	*4.033*	*Yes*
Solomon Islands	*571.890*	*28.896*	*No*
Montenegro	*661.807*	*13.812*	*Yes*
Equatorial Guinea	*668.225*	*28.051*	*No*
Bhutan	*708.427*	*38.394*	*No*
Guyana	*744.768*	*241.969*	*Yes*
Djibouti	*757.074*	*23.200*	*No*
Comoros	*794.683*	*2.235*	*No*
Qatar	*848.016*	*11.586*	*No*
Fiji	*883.125*	*18.274*	*No*

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[5] Data on the number of inhabitants and territorial size have been retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (2011). The Freedom House-benchmark of 'electoral democracy' has been applied to distinguish democracies from non-democracies (2012).

The joined application of the size-threshold and the condition of UN-membership results in a group of twenty-one microstates, which together with all other countries with less than one million inhabitants have been presented in table 4.1. The countries in the table have been subdivided into four groups of a roughly equal size, being countries with less than 100.000 inhabitants, countries with between 100.000 and 250.000 inhabitants, countries with between 250.000 and half a million citizens, and countries with between half a million and one million citizens. In order to distinguish them from the group of microstates, countries belonging to one of the latter two categories have been presented in italics. From the table, it can be seen that the number and proportion of non-democratic states grows as the population size increases; whereas no undemocratic states exist within the group of less than 100.000 people, among the countries with between half a million and one million people more than half are non-democracies. The table therefore provides an additional incentive for locating the cut-off point of population size at 250.000 inhabitants.

3.   Concepts: Defining and Operationalizing Democracy

Democracy can literally be translated as 'rule by the people' (Held 2006: 21). A democracy can therefore be defined as a political system in which 'the people' are sovereign, in the sense that they rule themselves. Hence, it follows that governance in a democracy should be based on the preferences and interests of the people, and that a democratic system should therefore be "responsive to (…) its citizens" (Dahl 1971: 2). Since democracy has become the most fashionable and universally appreciated system of government however, almost all countries in the world now claim to have democratic governments.[6] Yet, the extent to which different regimes around the world are considered to be democratic by scholars or by other countries differs markedly, and this undermines efforts to establish a universally acceptable definition of democracy (Held 2006: 2-3). Whereas democracy is by now almost universally recognized as the best form of government, and while the number of democracies continues to expand progressively, it has become increasingly difficult to formulate a consistent and broadly accepted definition of the concept.[7]

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[6] The exceptions are Brunei, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia, and Vatican City.
[7] The concept of democracy is actually among the most hotly disputed ones in political science (cf. Schmitter and Karl 1991; Collier and Levitsky 1997). Since it has been questioned in how far the term of democracy is applicable to new, third wave-democracies, the accusation of conceptual stretching has figured prominently in this debate (Collier and Mahon 1993: 850-851; Collier and Levitsky 1997: 430; cf. Sartori 1970: 1034, 1041; Goertz 2006: 70-72).

In the last decades of the twentieth century, the number and proportion of countries in the world with authoritarian forms of rule diminished rapidly. This development, which is most eminently discussed in Samuel Huntington's *The Third Wave* (1991), attracted widespread attention from both the academic community and politicians all over the world, and created a general sense of optimism with regard to the spread of democracy. As communism collapsed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the authoritarian governments of Latin America and Southern Europe suffered from legitimacy crises, and several autocratic East-Asian and sub-Sahara African nations entered phases of political liberalization, some scholars even argued that these events signaled the final triumph of the liberal democratic model of government over all its alternatives (Fukuyama 1992: 48). Whereas the concept of liberal democracy had originated in the Western world, and for long was believed to pertain to this part of the world almost exclusively,[8] many authors asserted that the third wave of democratization demonstrated the fallaciousness of this assumption, as countries with decidedly non-Western cultural backgrounds now appeared to make the transition towards democratic government as well. Thus emerged what Thomas Carothers refers to as the 'transition paradigm' (2002); the teleological belief that the countries in which authoritarian governments subsided were 'in transition' from authoritarianism to full-fledged liberal democratic government.

At the dawn of the new millennium, it became apparent that the initial optimism associated with the transition paradigm was unwarranted (O'Donnell 1994, 1996; Zakaria 1997; Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002). On the positive side, several third wave-countries, among which Costa Rica, Uruguay, Taiwan, and the Southern and Eastern European countries of Spain, Portugal, Greece, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia appeared to have successfully abandoned their authoritarian legacies and have made a definitive transition to democracy. For most of the Latin American, Asian, and African states however, this positive pattern did not materialize, and whereas some countries even slid back to outright authoritarianism (e.g. Russia, Nigeria, and Pakistan), most of them entered what Carothers calls 'the gray zone' between democracy and authoritarianism (Carothers 2002: 9).[9] It appears to be the case, therefore, that

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[8] Before the start of the third wave, Japan and India were commonly seen as among the major and only exceptions to this general rule (cf. Sartori 1995: 101) .

[9] The emergence and growth of the group of countries that are neither democratic nor authoritarian has posed scholars of democracy with the question of how these cases should be classified. This problem becomes readily apparent when the number and variety of labels that have been used to refer to these cases is examined; whereas Zakaria (1997) talks about 'illiberal democracies', O'Donnell (1994) labels them 'delegative democracies', Diamond (2002) calls them 'hybrid regimes' or 'pseudo-democracies', Ware (1992) mentions them as 'elective dictatorships',

the third wave has at least partially ended in "the slow, bleeding death of a thousand subtractions" (Diamond 1999: 63).[10]

According to several authors (e.g. Linz 1997; Zakaria 1997), the fundamental problem with the institutionalization of democracy in non-Western settings can be found in the absence of a tradition of constitutionalism or a *Rechtsstaat* in these countries. These traditions were well-established and rooted in the countries of Western Europe already *before* the advent and introduction of democracy, and were never really distinguished from democratic procedures and institutions (Schmitter 1995: 16; Linz 1997: 118-119). In Latin American countries for example, such a spirit and tradition never really existed, which means that democratic institutions (in the form of free and fair elections) in these countries coexist with attitudes and practices that are more particular to this region of the world (and which according to many authors are not really democratic). Guillermo O'Donnell points to the coexistence of electoral practices with widespread particularism in the form of patron-client relationships in the Latin American political context (O'Donnell 1996: 40-41), and also highlights that, once elected, Latin American presidents are largely free to rule as they see fit and without constraints (so-called 'delegative democracy'; O'Donnell 1994). In summary therefore, the exportation of democratic procedures to new settings and contexts has not led to the paralleled exportation of a democratic 'spirit' or democratic norms of behavior to these places (Sartori 1995; Huber et al. 1997: 330-331).

According to O'Donnell, the proliferation of new regime types not only raises questions with regard to classification, but also demonstrates flaws in the way political scientists are used to study democracies and other regimes (O'Donnell 1996: 40). Whereas scholars have usually been focused on the observation of "highly formalized and complex organizations", according to O'Donnell the "extremely influential, informal, and sometimes concealed institution" of particularism remains obscured in this way (ibid.). In these new regimes, free and fair elections are continuously held largely due to "close international attention and wide reporting abroad of irregularities", O'Donnell stipulates, whereas the rest of the political system can be characterized as a "sea

and Carothers (2002) distinguishes between 'feckless pluralism' and 'dominant-power polities'. In their seminal article *Democracy with Adjectives* (1997), David Collier and Steven Levitsky discuss the many (550) 'diminished subtypes' of the concept of democracy as they have been formulated over time, and examine the various strategies that can be pursued to deal with the 'new' third wave-regimes. In the conclusion of their article, the authors argue that the "excessive proliferation of new terms and concepts" should be avoided (Collier and Levitsky 1997: 451).

[10] It should be mentioned, however, that not everyone endorses this view. In fact, some authors have even found evidence of a fourth wave of democratization (Doorenspleet 2001).

of particularism and blurred boundaries" (ibid.). In addition to clientelism, these hybrid regimes may also be characterized by an "uneven playing field between government and opposition", in which the government assures electoral victories through manipulation, intimidation, and harassment of the opposition, journalists, or judges (Levitsky and Way 2002: 53). In such systems, the existence of free and fair elections "masks the reality of authoritarian domination" (Diamond 2002: 24).

Although they are almost never studied as such, the seventeen non-European microstates that are examined in the present chapter are new democracies as well. As a result, it can be questioned whether the political features and characteristics that scholars have observed in larger new democracies also play a large role in these microstates. This question is particularly germane in relation to some of the theories that have been discussed in the previous chapter, which by contrast envisage a higher quality of democracy in small settings. As a result, the newly democratic microstates may not to the same extent be plagued by the democracy-undermining and obstructing political characteristics of larger third wave-countries. On the other hand, as discussed in the preceding chapter, other scholars have argued that smallness promotes the development of particularistic relationships, which would mean that the newly democratic microstates are at best equally, at worst to a larger extent beset by these kinds of linkages between citizens and politicians. The analysis of the four microstates that follows in chapters four through eight will shed more light on this question.

The proliferation of new and ambiguous types of third wave-regimes, and the question of how these regimes should be classified in terms of their democratic quality, have accentuated an already-existing divide in the democracy-studying academic community, which boils down to a discussion about the specific attributes (or, in Sartori's words, intension (1970: 1041)) of the concept of democracy. In the academic, distinctions are often made between liberal versus procedural democracy, and between continuous versus dichotomous operationalizations of the concept. A long and influential tradition of academic literature assumes that democracy essentially entails the regular organization of free and fair elections. This conceptualization of democracy, which has been alluded to as the 'electoral', 'minimalist', or 'procedural' definition, does not envisage the protection of elementary freedoms, the availability of alternative sources of information, and the independence of the judiciary and media as defining characteristics of democracy, although these phenomena are often expected to transpire as a side-effect of free and fair

elections (Huntington 1991: 7; Przeworski 1999: 24).[11] According to scholars who employ a procedural definition of democracy, the conditions and requirements that are part of more extensive and demanding conceptions of democracy are essentially irrelevant, either because they are side-effects or variations of the electoral aspect of democracy, or because they do not belong to the domain of democracy in the first place (cf. Di Palma 1990: 15-16; Gurr et al. 1990: 83; Karl 1990: 2; Alvarez et al. 1996: 4; Przeworski et al. 1996).[12] Over the years, procedural conceptualizations of democracy have had many followers, who have sometimes added a number of conditions that relate to the particular circumstances under which elections should take place (Collier and Levitsky 1997: 434).[13]

Whereas the procedural definition of democracy has remained widely embraced, in recent decades attempts have been made to formulate a more demanding, compound definition of the concept, mostly referred to as *liberal democracy*. Until fairly recently, free and fair elections occurred almost exclusively in countries whose governments were also respectful of civil liberties, and the latter were accordingly mostly seen as a side-effect of the regular holding of elections (Zakaria 1997: 22-23). Over the last two decades however, it has become clear that many countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia do continue to organize regular elections, but do not always (fully) respect

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[11] The electoral definition has been employed in a number of seminal studies in the field of political science. In his seminal work *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, Joseph Schumpeter for instance famously asserts that democracy can be seen as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" (Schumpeter 1943: 269). In similar fashion, Seymour Martin Lipset defines democracy as "a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials" (Lipset 1959: 71). For Anthony Downs, finally, democracy can be conceived of as a political system in which "two or more parties compete in periodic elections for control of the government apparatus" (Downs 1957: 137)

[12] Mike Alvarez and his colleagues, for example, argue that: "[p]erusing the innumerable definitions, one discovers that democracy has become an altar on which everyone hangs his or her favorite ex voto. Almost all normatively desirable aspects of political, and sometimes even of social and economical, life are credited as definitional features of democracy: representation, accountability, equality, participation, dignity, rationality, security, freedom – the list goes on. Indeed, the set of really existing democracies under many definitions is empty. And from an analytical view, lumping all good things together is of little use" (1996: 4).

[13] Samuel Huntington, for example, stresses the requirement that suffrage rights should be extended to include all adult citizens, as he "defines a twentieth-century political system as democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote" (1991: 7). In similar fashion, Przeworksi and colleagues stress the presence of "an opposition that has some chance of winning office as a consequence of elections" as a precondition for democratic elections (1996: 49). Elklit and Svensson (1997), finally, focus on the specific meaning of the adjectives 'free and fair' when it comes to elections, and provide some benchmarks on the basis of which election observers can determine whether elections have indeed been free and fair.

civil rights and liberties (O'Donnell 1993, 1994; Diamond 1999: 27-31). As a consequence, a distinction was created between so-called *electoral* or *illiberal* democracies, that only live up to the conditions of procedural definitions of democracy, and *liberal* or *consolidated* democracies, in which civil rights and liberties are respected as well (Ware 1992: 133; Collier and Mahon 1993: 848-850; O'Donnell 1993: 1361; Bollen 1993: 1208-1209; Linz and Stepan 1996: 15; Diamond 1999: 10-13; Held 2006: 74-75). In the view of scholars who employ a liberal definition of democracy, the Schumpeterian, electoral notion of democracy places too much emphasis on the electoral element of democracy (which is referred to by Schmitter and Karl as the 'fallacy of electoralism'), while it largely disregards other characteristics that they feel should belong to a democratic political system (Schmitter and Karl 1991: 78; Diamond 1999: 9). In particular, these scholars assert that electoral conceptions of democracy place too little emphasis on the safeguarding and preservation of political rights and liberties, which they see as another pivotal element of democracy (Diamond 1999: 8-10).[14] Although the liberal conceptualization of democracy is thus clearly distinguishable from the electoral or procedural one, in the literature a plethora of definitions of liberal democracy can be found.

There are good arguments in favor and against both procedural and liberal definitions of democracy. On the one hand, it appears that uniting many features into one concept of democracy is of little use. Not only would it be theoretically incorrect to equate democracy with all that is good in the world, but it must also be stressed that doing so decreases the analytical value of the concept, as Alvarez and his coauthors correctly point out (1996: 4; cf. Huntington 1991: 11). If too many attributes are attached to the concept of democracy, there is a danger that research becomes tautological, since democracy cannot explain phenomena that are part of the concept itself. On the other hand, a minimalist definition of democracy also appears impracticable, because free and fair elections are meaningless if institutions like the judiciary or the media are politicized, or if real executive power is in the hands of a person or institution that cannot be held accountable. It should also be highlighted that the case study-literature principally implies that the classification of microstates as democracies essentially depends on the definition of this concept, since whereas virtually all

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[14] Additionally, as Schmitter and Karl argue, these academics believe that the participation of citizens in a democracy should not be confined to casting a vote once in every four or five years, but should also involve opportunities for expressing opinions or exerting influence on the political process by means of other channels (Schmitter and Karl 1991: 78).

microstates do organize free and fair elections, their adherence to the conditions of liberal democracy often appears questionable.

Dahl's concept of polyarchy can be seen as an intermediate alternative between liberal and procedural democracy. Although it is often regarded as a procedural version of the concept (Diamond 2002: 21-22), Dahl's definition is definitely more extensive and demanding than the minimalist Schumpeterian notion that for example Przeworski and others have adopted, in the sense that a number of elementary freedoms are highlighted as attributes of the concept of polyarchy. For example, the first two of Dahl's conditions refer to the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly, whereas Dahl's requirement of 'alternative sources of information' can be translated into the existence of a free press. Finally, the condition of 'institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference' alludes not only to the electability and accountability of the executive, but also to the existence of checks and balances between other political institutions.

In addition to the discussion about the definition (or conceptualization) of democracy, an extensive academic debate has emerged on the question of whether democracy should be seen as a dichotomous or as a continuous variable. This debate is somewhat related to the preceding discussion, in the sense that scholars who employ a procedural definition of democracy are usually more likely to divide the world in the two (dichotomous) categories of democracies and non-democracies, whereas academics who employ a liberal definition generally use more graded dimensions to classify their cases.[15] Such a graded measure allows scholars to distinguish between liberal democracies and illiberal, flawed, or pseudo-democracies, which are usually seen as in-between categories (Levitsky and Way 2002; Diamond 2002; Carothers 2002). In addition however, many of these authors also argue that democracy necessarily has to be a continuous measure, since it is always present or absent to a certain degree (Bollen and Jackman 1989: 616-619; Bollen 1990: 13-14; Coppedge and Reinicke 1990: 52; Elkins 2000: 299).[16]

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[15] Samuel Huntington, for example, defends his choice for a procedural, dichotomous approach to democracy on the grounds that it "better serves the purpose of this study because our concern is with the transition from a nondemocratic regime to a democratic one" (1991: 11). Similar arguments in favor of a dichotomy can be retrieved in other studies that employ an electoral definition of democracy (Sartori 1987: 184; Alvarez et al. 1996: 4; Przeworski et al. 1996: 54; Doorenspleet 2001: 14-15).

[16] According to Kenneth Bollen, democracy must be thought of as a continuous variable since it is possible to rank groups of countries from democratic to non-democratic, which means that it is possible to distinguish between more and less democratic countries within both the groups of democracies and non-democracies (Bollen 1990: 13-14).

According to Giovanni Sartori, who is strongly in favor of a dichotomous approach to measure democracy, assessing levels of democracy on a continuous scale is a "stultifying" exercise in "degreeism", which is analytically invalid because democracy and non-democracy are contradictories (Sartori 1987: 184). Collier and Adcock, on the other hand, extensively examine and discuss the various justifications and motivations that have been used to defend both dichotomous and continuous operationalizations of democracy, and argue that generic claims for both alternatives are incomplete (Collier and Adcock 1999: 537).[17] Instead, the authors propose and suggest that the choice between dichotomous or continuous measures of democracy should be based on "specific arguments about the goals and context of research" (Collier and Adcock 1999: 561). In this light, Collier and Adcock argue, "research that is focused on democratization as a well-bounded event and on classical subtypes of democracy favors dichotomies" (Collier and Adcock 1999: 561-562). In light of these recommendations, such a measure will indeed be adopted in the current analysis, and Dahl's definition of polyarchy also envisages a dichotomous measure of democracy.

3.1. The Operationalization of Democracy

On the basis of the considerations described above, in the present study I make use of Dahl's conceptualization of democracy as outlined in his landmark work *Polyarchy* (1971).[18] For a political system to be classified as a polyarchy, according to Dahl the following eight conditions have to be met (1971: 3):

1) Freedom to form and join organizations
2) Freedom of expression
3) Right to vote
4) Eligibility for public office
5) Right of political leaders to compete for support and votes
6) Alternative sources of information
7) Free and fair elections
8) Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference

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[17] According to the authors, a generic claim refers to the argument that "the concept of democracy inherently requires one approach or the other" (Collier and Adcock 1999: 546).

[18] Dahl prefers to reserve the term 'democracy' for the ideal-type polity in which a political system is completely responsive to its citizens' needs. Since the existence of this kind of system is according to Dahl unknown, he prefers to use the term 'polyarchy' to refer to real-world instances (Dahl 1971: 2).

Dahl's eight conditions of polyarchy can broadly be transformed into two separate dimensions (Dahl 1971: 4; Doorenspleet 2001: 7-9; Coppedge et al. 2008). On the one hand, the dimension of *contestation* (or competition) refers to the extent to which public offices are open to public and political competition, and therefore also to the opportunities for the existence of a political opposition. On the other hand, the dimension of *inclusiveness* stands for the proportion of citizens who are allowed to participate in the political process.[19] In this regard, active and passive suffrage rights have generally been regarded as the most important indicator. In polyarchies, contestation of government is present and practically all adult citizens are granted the right to take part in political affairs (Dahl 1971: 8).[20]

For the purpose of the present analysis, and particularly in light of the specific hypothesized effects of size that were discussed in the two previous chapters, each of Dahl's two dimensions can be subdivided into two sub-dimensions. Whereas the dimension of contestation on the one hand refers to the presence of substantive political alternatives and a political opposition, in line with condition eight it can also be translated into the existence of political checks and balances between institutions.[21] If institutional checks and balances are able to function as a restraint on executive power, the abuse of power and executive dominance are controlled for, and this generally means that the preferences of

[19] Several scholars have questioned the independence of Dahl's two dimensions of inclusiveness and contestation, and have found democracy to be a one-dimensional concept (cf. Bollen and Grandjean 1981). Others, however, have confirmed the separate value of each of Dahl's dimensions, even though some aspects of democracy such as the holding of free and fair elections correspond to both contestation and inclusiveness (Coppedge et al. 2008: 633).

[20] As Dahl himself readily acknowledges, the requirements of contestation and inclusiveness are somewhat problematic in the sense that in no country all public offices are open to contestation, and in no country all citizens are entitled to participate in the electoral process. In most countries judges are for example not elected, and in many countries (e.g. most parliamentarian systems) the head of state is not directly elected (Alvarez et al. 1996: 4-5). Furthermore, in some countries non-elected officials such as army officers or traditional leaders exert considerable influence on the daily conduct of politics (Gurr et al. 1990: 94-95; Valenzuela 1992; Whitehead 1992; O'Donnell 1993). In order to deal with these problems related to contestation, several scholars have emphasized that in a democracy at least the offices of the chief executive (mostly the head of government) and the legislature have to be contested (Bollen 1980: 376; Gurr et al. 1990: 80-82; Alvarez et al. 1996: 7-8). Regarding inclusiveness, Dahl points out that in a polyarchy practically all adult citizens should have the right to participate in the political process (Dahl 1971: 4). Thus, if democracy is rule by the people, 'the people' should be conceived of as everyone in the polity, except for children and specific, small groups of adults (such as foreigners or the mentally disabled). As Schmitter and Karl point out, suffrage rights were historically granted to only a small number of citizens (Schmitter and Karl 1991: 77). Thus, whereas the United States and Switzerland are generally regarded as among the most consolidated and high-quality democracies, the fact that African Americans were not allowed to vote in the US until 1965 and women did not obtain suffrage rights in some Swiss cantons until 1990 entails that these countries should be classified as competitive oligarchies before the extension of the franchise.

[21] In line with Montesquieu's *Trias Politica*. In fact, later in his book Dahl also refers to the balance of power between institutions as a major indicator of polyarchy (1971: 240).

citizens are more closely reflected in the conduct of government. In light of the specific and often-mentioned effects of size on the relations between citizens and politicians, the dimension of inclusiveness can be split up into one sub-dimension that refers to this aspect alone, whereas the second sub-dimension alludes to the more conventional forms of participation such as voter turnout and membership of political parties. In summary, this means that the characteristics and quality of democracy in microstates can be assessed on the basis of the following four sub-dimensions:

1) Contestation I: the presence of political alternatives and a political opposition;
2) Contestation II: the horizontal balance of power between institutions;
3) Inclusiveness I: the relations between citizens and politicians;
4) Inclusiveness II: the political participation of citizens.

Now that the choice for a dichotomous measure of democracy based on Dahl's conditions of polyarchy has been explained and motivated, the specific indicators of the four sub-dimensions of democracy that the present study employs should be described. In table 4.2, Dahl's two dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness have been presented in the first column, followed by the four sub-dimensions of this particular study in the second column. The sub-dimensions have been further subdivided into a total of fifteen indicators on the basis of which politics and democracy is studied in four selected microstates. In addition, in the last column the specific means by which each indicator is measured has been listed. As a consequence of the lack of existing data on microstates and the qualitative, exploratory nature of this research in general, the scoring on these indicators does not occur on the basis of specifically demarcated categories or numbers, but instead is largely based on the conclusions that follow from my own assembled interview data.

With regard to the first sub-dimension, which examines the presence of political alternatives and a political opposition, the first indicator of free and fair elections can be seen as a first minimal requirement that has to be adhered to in order to classify as a democracy. The second and third indicators should be seen as attempts to measure the presence and relevance of the opposition, since they measure the number of available political alternatives (# 2) and the extent to which these alternatives have been able to realize their objectives by taking office in the executive. In order to examine the supposition that microstate-politics is personality- instead of ideologically-oriented, the fourth indicator aims to investigate whether the available political alternatives also aim to realize divergent policies and interests. Finally, in order to control whether the system

also allows these alternatives to attract and mobilize supporters, the fourth indicator examines if citizens can freely support the opposition. With the exception of the third indicator, all indicators have emanated from the variables by means of which Dahl measures polyarchy (1971: Appendix A).

Table 4.2: Dimensions, Sub-Dimensions, and Indicators of Democracy

Dimensions	Sub-Dimensions	Indicators	Operationalization
Contestation (Opposition)	Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition	Free and Fair Elections	*Freedom House*; Election Reports
		Party System	Effective Number of Parties (ENP)
		(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Official & Local Statistics
		Interest Articulation by Parties	Election Manifestos; Interview Data
		Freedom to Support the Opposition	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
	Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions	Freedom of the Press	*Freedom of the Press Index*; Interview Data
		Status of the Legislature	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
		Status of the Judiciary	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
		Status of the Bureaucracy	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
Inclusiveness (Participation)	Relations between Citizens and Politicians	Contact With and Access to Representatives	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
		Nature of Contact between Citizens and Politicians	Interview Data; Secondary Literature
	Political Participation of Citizens	Universal Suffrage	*Freedom House*; Election Reports
		Turnout at Elections and other Plebiscites	*Inter-Parliamentary Union*; *Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance*
		Party Membership	Available Local Statistics
		Participation in political activities (e.g. rallies, demonstrations)	Interview Data; Available Local Statistics

Regarding the second dimension, which measures the horizontal balance of power between institutions, four indicators have been listed that measure the autonomy and independence of the four institutions that can be expected to endure the consequences of executive dominance. Whereas the freedom of the press can be measured on the basis of an available index, the scoring on the other indicators will primarily occur on the basis of assembled interview data. On the basis of these indicators, it is also possible to examine the hypothesis that microstate-institutions tend to be ignored or circumvented by both politicians and citizens. The third dimension, which deals with the relations between citizens and politicians, can be measured on the basis of the frequency of contact and the accessibility of politicians for citizens, and nature and characteristics of citizen-politician contacts. On this basis, it can firstly be assessed whether the increased frequency of citizen-politician contacts that the literature suggests can be corroborated, and secondly it can be determined whether these contacts have a substantive political or a more particularistic nature.

The dimension of political participation, finally, can firstly be measured on the basis of the minimalistic condition of universal suffrage. In addition, the most frequently used indicators of participation, which are voter turnout, party membership, and participation in political activities such as (campaign) rallies and demonstrations, can be analyzed. Whereas data and statistics on turnout are widely available, this is not the case for the other manifestations of political participation. With the exception of the indicators that are used to measure the third sub-dimension, virtually all indicators have been adopted from the ones that are used in Dahl's original work. Now that the key concepts of this study have been operationalized, the theoretical model and expectations that follow from the academic literature are presented in the subsequent section.

4. The Theoretical Model: Expectations

A first impression that follows from both the empirical literature on microstates and the statistics that were presented in the introduction of this dissertation is that the overwhelming majority of microstates conform to the Freedom House-standards of democracy. Although this conjecture is further examined in the case studies, where Dahl's eight criteria of polyarchy are used as benchmarks of democracy, twenty of the twenty-one microstates are classified as electoral democracy by Freedom House (2012). However critical the empirical literature may be about the practical operation of politics and democracy in microstates, it is generally agreed that elections are free and fair, and other democratic

institutions are in place. In this light, a distinction can be made between the group of authors who primarily focus on formal institutions and who accordingly have a positive idea about democracy in microstates (e.g. Diamond and Tsalik 1999; Ott 2000; Anckar 2002b), and those who (also) examine the less formal aspects of politics, and have a more negative perspective (e.g. Peters 1992; Sutton 2007a; Gerring and Zarecki 2011).[22] In large part, this distinction coincides with the division between minimalistic versus more substantive definitions of democracy. Although the formalist and anti-formalist perspectives diverge in terms of their appreciation of microstate-democracy (cf. Hinds 2008), it must be emphasized that even anti-formalist scholars highlight the fact that microstates have democratic institutional structures.

As formulated in the introductory chapter, the aim of the present study is to assess the influence and consequence of size on a political system, and more specifically, democracy and its sub-dimensions. In this regard, the question to what extent the formal democratic structures of microstates can be explained by their smallness is actually only a side issue, especially since the literature has shown that size can be hypothesized to affect many other facets of politics as well. In table six of the second chapter, the main expectations that follow from the theoretical literature on size were already summarized. If these points are contrasted with the main findings that follow from the case study-literature in chapter 3, the expectations that are not corroborated or even disconfirmed in the case study-literature on microstates can be deleted. When the remaining expectations are subsequently sorted out on the basis of the four sub-dimensions of democracy that this study employs, the theoretical model of this study emerges. In table 4.3, for each of the four sub-dimensions of democracy the primary expectations have been listed. With exception of the fourth sub-dimension, the expectations clearly point in one direction, which is basically in line with the more pessimistic or skeptical part of the academic literature on the effect of size on the quality of democracy.

The image that follows from the theoretical model is largely in line with the earlier-mentioned hypothesis that microstates are characterized by a divergence between formally democratic institutions and a markedly less democratic political reality, which is caused by the fact that institutional structures are expected to be recurrently disregarded. If this hypothesis can be

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[22] To a certain degree, the distinction between 'formalist' and 'anti-formalist' studies appears to hinge on their relative definitions of democracy, since whereas formalist scholars primarily focus on the existence of free and fair elections, anti-formalist academics also examine more substantive and informal aspects of politics in assessing the quality of democracy.

confirmed in the analysis that follows in the upcoming chapters, the question remains to what extent the microstates differ from other (new) democracies in which a similar pattern has been observed. On the one hand, since the analytical chapters specifically focus on the effects of size on politics, dissimilarities between microstates and other third wave-democracies that result from size may automatically surface in these chapters. On the other hand, it should be noted that one of the microstates that are studied, San Marino, is not a new democracy. By comparing the political system of this country with that of the other microstates, the effects of size can even be more clearly be distinguished from those that result from the status as a new democracy.

Table 4.3: Theoretical Model: Expectations of this Study

Sub-Dimension	Expectations
1: *Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition*	- Greater homogeneity of interests - Decreased number of factions and interests - Less political competition, weakened political opposition - Personalistic politics; strong person-based polarization
2: *Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions*	- Executive dominance in relation to other institutions (parliament, media, judiciary, and civil service) - Infrequent alternation of power - Circumvention or ignorance of institutional structures
3: *Relations between Citizens and Politicians*	- Increased accessibility of politicians - Increased direct contacts and communication between citizens and politicians - Conflicts of interest due to multiple-role relations - Prevalence of clientelism, patronage, and nepotism
4: *Political Participation of Citizens*	- Increased opportunities for participation due to closeness - Equal or lower turnout levels in relation to larger states (on the basis of case study-literature) - Decreased political role for minorities and opposition

5. Methodological Approach: Comparative, Small-N Research

As discussed before, large-N statistical analyses have thus far neither yielded a convincing explanation of microstate-democracy, nor resulted in a persuasive and universally valid theory of the political effects of size. In addition to the lack of satisfactory explanations that quantitative, statistical analyses have generated,

it also deserves attention that these quantitative studies are almost exclusively based on Freedom House-data. Since other indices of democracy exclude microstates, the Freedom in the World-survey is the only reliable and well-known aggregate index of democracy that provides information on microstates. This however means that any potential errors or biases in the Freedom House-data will automatically appear in every quantitative-oriented publication on microstates as well, thereby making it impossible to cross-validate or triangulate these findings. Although the present study does rely on Freedom House-scores for the initial, preliminary scoring of microstates in order to facilitate case selection, during the in-depth analyses the presence and nature of Dahl's conditions of polyarchy are examined on the basis of on-the-ground evidence.

Instead of statistics, it therefore seems plausible that a qualitative and comparative analysis of a small number of microstate-systems represents a more fruitful research avenue. In comparison to the number of quantitative analyses of smallness and democracy however, the qualitative approach to studying microstates is significantly underdeveloped. A small number of qualitative, in-depth case studies of individual or small groups of microstates does exist (and has been discussed in previous chapters), but Dana Ott's (2000) study is to my best knowledge the only global qualitative investigation of the nature of politics and democracy in small states.[23] In addition to a number of other shortcomings discussed in chapter one, Ott's study employs a population threshold that is much more inclusive than the one of the present study, as a result of which the generalizability of Ott's findings to the microstates that this study examines is questionable.[24] It can therefore be asserted that the current study is a pioneering global, qualitative analysis of politics and democracy in the smallest countries of the world. As a consequence, in some ways this research assumes explorative character, and can be regarding as incorporating both theory-generation and theory-testing elements (cf. Mahoney and Goertz 2006: 230-232).

The qualitative research in the chapters to come occurs along the lines of a small-N case study analysis, or what Evan Lieberman refers to as a model-building small-N analysis (2005: 444-446). It must be noted that the use of case studies in social science research has often been criticized (cf. Lieberson 1991; King et al. 1994). According to Stanley Lieberson, the methodological assumptions that lie at the root of case study-analysis are "usually indefensible in

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[23] In fact, Ott employs a mixed research design which consists of multiple quantitative statistical analyses and two in-depth case studies of the Gambia and Trinidad and Tobago.
[24] This is especially the case in light of the fact that both of the cases that are qualitatively studied have populations of more than one million inhabitants.

social research" (1991: 318). Since qualitative research techniques cannot effectively deal with errors in measurement and the absence of interaction effects, the methods can according to Lieberson not be used to study causation on the basis of a small number of cases. Other authors however point out that case study research has a lot to offer, but that its value and usefulness depends on the goals of the analysis (cf. Gerring 2004; Mahoney and Goertz 2006; Levy 2008). According to John Gerring, small N-case study research is very useful for exploratory research, of which the goal is to search for evidence of new theories. When it comes to exploratory research, "case studies enjoy a natural advantage" (Gerring 2004: 349). As Gerring points out however, exploratory research is significantly undervalued in social science, and it is also under-theorized (2004: 350). Since the present study is at least partially exploratory in nature, on the basis of these recommendations and theories case study-research appears a very feasible method to conduct this analysis.

As a consequence of the character of this research, the expectations that follow from the theoretical model are looser and less stringent than genuine, testable hypotheses. Since the study only examines microstates and makes no comparisons between small and large states, the testing of such potential hypotheses would also hardly be achievable. In this sense, the present study should really be seen as a first initial step in mapping the contours of microstate-politics. However, since large states are extensively covered in existing research and publications, the findings of the in-depth analyses of microstates can not only be mutually compared, but can also (implicitly if not explicitly) be contrasted with this existing literature on both larger consolidated democracies and larger third wave-countries. In this way, it can even more persuasively be demonstrated that their smallness is at the root of diverging political patterns in the microstates that are investigated.

6. Within-Case Analysis, Cross-Case Analysis, and Case Selection
Where quantitative research is generally more useful for studying causal effects, case studies are valuable when it comes to identifying causal mechanisms (Rogowski 1995; Gerring 2004: 349). In order to do so, case study research relies on both within-case and cross-case analyses. On the cross-case level, four microstate-cases are studied as part of the current project, which are compared in order to determine whether the expected political effects of size can be observed across the cases. In the second part of this section, the specific techniques that are used for cross-case comparison are further outlined. On the

within-case level, in each of the microstates under scrutiny evidence for the expectations that are part of the theoretical model are searched, as well as possible indications of other political characteristics that are a result of size. Whereas the cross-case analysis is primarily focused on the observation of causal effects, the aim of the within-case analysis is to detect a causal mechanism (George and Bennett 2005: 206-207).

6.1. Within-Case Analysis: Field Research and Semi-Structured Interviews

The major aim of the within-case analysis is to acquire so-called causal-process observations, which offer indications of a link between different causes or causes and effects at the within-case level of one case (Collier et al. 2004: 252-253). In the present research, the main aim of the within-case analysis is to discover whether and how the political patterns that are observed can be attributed to the size of the microstates under scrutiny. Although most scholars would agree that causal mechanisms are ultimately unobservable, it is mostly possible to observe indications of the existence of a causal process (George and Bennett 2005: 137). The attainment of such observations can best be achieved by conducting a research strategy of process tracing or (historical) thick description. Using the method of process tracing, a researcher engages in a kind of 'detective-work' in which the different causes and their relevant relationships which are leading up to the outcome are carefully analyzed and described (Gerring 2007: 134). The observations that are collected as part of the process tracing can be subsumed under the various expectations and the indicators of democracy, so that they serve to support or weaken earlier formulated conjectures. On this basis, the results of this analysis should offer a general overview of the existing causal processes, and if similar causal processes can be found in other cases as well, the generalizability of the findings can be ascertained.

In the process of within-case analysis, different sources about the political system and specific political characteristics of the respective microstates can be consulted and used for data collection (Thies 2002: 355-356). Regarding the primary sources, official government documents, manuscripts, and reports can be analyzed to find out how the smallness of the analyzed microstates affects the political composition and dynamics of microstates. Secondary sources such as the academic literature about microstate-politics are consulted as well. The major component of the case study research however, consists of interviews with public officials, experts, and ordinary citizens. As a consequence of the limited presence or availability of publications on microstates, and as a result of

the exploratory nature of this study, interviews are an excellent way to uncover information that cannot be obtained by analyzing written sources.

In order to conduct interviews with microstate-respondents and in order to access documents and reports that are only available in the microstates themselves, field research has been carried out in the four microstates that were selected for in-depth analysis. By spending three weeks to a month in every microstate, approximately fifteen interviews with various respondents were held, on the basis of which a comprehensive overview of the microstate-political system has been obtained. A list of the respondents that were interviewed in each of the four microstates can be found in Appendix A of this dissertation. Since microstate-politicians are relatively easily accessible, there are great opportunities for conducting interviews with even the highest public officials. In addition to politicians, other public officials such as civil servants, legal representatives, electoral commissioners and ombudsmen have been interviewed, as well as non-public figures such as journalists, academics, business leaders, and interest group-representatives. The criterion that representatives from as many societal and political backgrounds were included in the sample has guided the selection of interview respondents. Last but not least, although I have not formally interviewed them as respondents, discussions with ordinary citizens are valuable in providing insights on the consumer-side of the political system.

Since this analysis is exploratory in nature, the specific questions that are posed during the interviews should retain an open character, and the interviews should be geared towards theory generation (Bogner and Menz 2009: 46-48). Under these circumstances, a semi-structured interview format with flexible questions and the possibility to raise new questions during the interviews is most suitable. Whereas the hypotheses and the theoretical model can serve as a framework on which to build the initial set of questions, it should also be possible to diverge from these questions and pose other ones instead. For the interviews that I conducted during four stages of field research, a basic shortlist of questions that address the core themes and hypotheses of this study has been established, and can be found in Appendix B of this book. The content of the specific interviews, however, is also based on 1) the country in which the analysis was conducted, 2) the job or specialization of the respondent, and 3) the issues that the respondent raised during the interview.

In addition to interviews that serve as the most important sources on which to construct the analysis, other sources such as government documents, (international) reports, statistics, and newspapers are also analyzed. Besides the

intrinsic value of these sources for the analysis, they are also used for triangulation; i.e. as a check on whether the issues that have been raised by the participants to the interviews are substantiated (Thies 2002: 359). In addition, these sources can reduce or correct eventual biases that might arise during the interviews, and are used to reconstruct historical events or causal processes (Lustick 1996; Yin 2003: 85-89). As such, documentary and archival analysis primarily serve to supplement the data that is derived from the interviews. The evidence from the analysis is further strengthened by using and referring to existing case studies on the microstates.[25] In contrast to the documentary and archival material, academic case studies are more likely to provide an inclusive overview of the entire microstate-system, and in that sense are used to validate the general conclusions that are drawn from the in-depth analysis.

6.2. Cross-Case Analysis: the Method of Agreement

Whereas the within-case analysis serves to expose the political effects that result from a small population size, a cross-case analysis is required to cancel out the notion that these political characteristics are caused by idiosyncratic characteristics of the individual cases, or by other background variables. Since it is however not possible to expansively study all twenty-one microstates, a selection of microstates has been made. Seeing that the goal of the small-N analysis is to acquire a universally valid and generalizable model of microstate-politics, the cases that are selected for in-depth analysis should be *typical* or representative of the larger group of microstates (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 296-299). In addition, the case selection should lead to a sample on the basis of which as many secondary background variables can be eliminated as explanatory factors, so that the explanatory value of the remaining variable(s) of size is maximized. In order to achieve this, Mill's method of agreement provides the most fruitful research design (Lijphart 1971: 687-688).

When it comes to small-N comparative research, two classical strategies for cross-case comparison have been introduced by John Stuart Mill: the method of agreement (or the most different systems design) and the method of difference (Mill 1843). Whereas the method of difference is employed to study variance on the dependent variable, the aim of the method of agreement is to explain a similar outcome in the cases that are studied. In order to be able to make strong causal inferences, the latter method departs from a selection of cases that are as different as possible on all potential explanatory variables, but

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[25] Much of the case study-literature was already discussed in the previous chapter, but the case studies on the four selected microstates have not been analyzed there.

have one independent variable in common. Since the goal of this analysis is to examine the influence of a variable that all the cases share (which is their small population size) the selected cases would preferably differ on as many other background variables as possible (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 300-301).

Over the years, Mills methods have become the subject of rigorous criticism. According to Stanley Lieberson, Mills methods are based on a deterministic logic, and should therefore conform to a number of criteria[26] that are normally unattainable in qualitative research (1991: 318). In addition, Lijphart, Lieberson, and King, Keohane and Verba all caution for an indeterminate research design, which comes about if the number of observed cases is lower than the number of independent variables (Lijphart 1971: 685; Lieberson 1991: 314; King et al. 1994: 118-122). In case of an indeterminate research design, it becomes impossible to assess the explanatory value of the separate independent variables. However, King, Keohane and Verba also emphasize that indeterminacy is only a problem if the goal of the analysis is to make causal inferences, and not in the case of exploratory or descriptive studies (King et al. 1994: 119).

It is clear that the present study has an indeterminate research design. In the first place, it can be posited that it is hard to analyze the effects of size on the quality of democracy if the cases under investigation are all microstates. In the second place, the number of cases that are analyzed can be perceived as limited in relation to the relatively large number of variables and indicators on which the cases are ranked. In reaction to these objections, it can be argued that the two dimensions and four sub-dimensions on the basis of which democracy in microstates is studied offer a robust and workable framework to analyze the quality of democracy, by means of which not only formal and institutional effects of size can be examined, but also the more practical and informal political dynamics that figure so prominently in the theoretical literature described in chapters 2 and 3. Whereas the shortcomings of this research design imply that no final conclusions can be drawn about political differences between large and small countries, by means of the cross-case comparisons it is however possible to acquire an accurate image of the nature of microstate-politics and –democracy. In this sense, it is likely that the research design does result in a number of political patterns that can be ascribed to the size of the cases under scrutiny.

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[26] Specifically, according to Lieberson the research must have 1) a deterministic rather than a probabilistic logic, 2) no errors in measurement, 3) the existence of only one cause, and 4) the absence of interaction effects (Lieberson 1991).

6.3. Case Selection: The Four Microstates

In the literature on methodologies of case studies, extensive attention is paid to strategies of case selection (Geddes 1990; Collier and Mahoney 1996; Seawright and Gerring 2008). The primary recommendation that follows from this literature is to avoid the pitfall of selecting on the dependent variable. According to Barbara Geddes, the selection of cases with a similar outcome leads to a situation in which it can never be ascertained that the indentified causal variable really explains the outcome (1990: 132). This view is shared by Collier and Mahoney, who add that selection bias can lead to an underestimation of the effects of the main independent variable (1996: 62). In the view of other scholars, however, case selection in small-N research should not occur randomly, but cases should be carefully selected on the basis of the twin criteria of representativeness and useful variation on the variables of interest (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 296; Levy 2008: 9).

These yardsticks for case selection are also adopted as leading strategies for case selection in the current study, which means that case primarily occurs on the independent variable that is central in this dissertation: size. The goal of the analysis is to discover the effects of this independent variable on a political system, and by ensuring as much variation as possible on other potential explanatory factors, any political features that the microstates share can with a greater degree of confidence be attributed to their small size. It is important to emphasize that this study only to a limited degree selects cases on the basis of their scoring on the dependent variable. Whereas the dependent variable of this study is 'democracy', the main question of this dissertation focuses not so much on the *presence* or *absence* of democracy, but rather on the *quality* of democracy - in terms of contestation and inclusiveness - that results from a small size. Since this outcome obviously remains unknown before the current analysis is conducted, in this regard no selection on the dependent variable has occurred. In fact, as will be explained below, the selection of one case that according to Freedom House is only partially free – which is the Republic of Seychelles – actually ensures at least some variation in outcomes on the dependent variable. If the political effects of size are also found to play a role in a political system that is regarded as only partially democratic, the explanatory value of the size-variable arguably becomes even stronger.

If it can be asserted that – in line with the method of agreement - the selected microstates are preferably as different as possible on potential background variables, but similar on the key independent variable under

scrutiny, the question arises which background variables to take into account in this respect. Firstly, since the method of agreement requires one shared explanatory variable, only cases that fall within the parameters of size that this study employs have to be selected. Secondly, geographical or regional bias can be avoided by selecting microstates from different regions in the world.[27] Since the microstates are clustered in four world regions, a preliminary decision is to select one microstate from each region, which leads to the feasible number of four in-depth case studies. Thirdly, it would be sensible to select microstates that score differently on variables that have also been hypothesized to affect the microstate-political system, such as colonial history, religion, culture, ethno-linguistic homogeneity, economic development, geographical factors, and political institutions. The ranking of these three criteria as they have just been described also determines which criterion prevails over the other(s) in the case that incompatibility between the criteria arises.

On the basis of the three case selection-criteria, the microstates of San Marino, St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Palau are selected for in-depth analysis and field research. In the following four paragraphs, the choice for each of these four microstates is motivated and defended. In table 4.4 at the end of this chapter, the twenty-one microstates have been ranked on background variables in order to further clarify the choices that have been made as part of this case selection.

6.3.1.. *The European Microstate: San Marino*

Being among the smallest of the four European microstates in terms of population size,[28] the Republic of San Marino is in this sense a logical European case for in-depth analysis. Like the other three microstates in the region, San Marino has never been colonized, has a predominantly Catholic population, a high level of economic development, and a parliamentary system of government in which pre-modern institutions exist up to the present day. The main difference with Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Monaco is that San Marino is no principality but a republic, and in this sense the oldest one of its kind in the world.[29] From the viewpoint of my study, San Marino is an appealing case to

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[27] The twenty-one microstates are clustered in four different regions of the world (the Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa), and the microstates in each region are largely similar to the other microstates in that region (in terms of economic development, colonial legacy, culture, religion, and so on), but very different from microstates in other regions.

[28] Monaco is the smallest of the European microstates, but since the difference with San Marino is only a little over 1.000 inhabitants (on a total of approximately 30.000), I consider this difference to be negligible.

[29] According to the legend, San Marino was founded in 301 AD.

study because it has been known for centuries as a bastion of liberty and democracy.[30] In contrast to European microstates such as Liechtenstein and Monaco, which both have politically powerful monarchies, San Marino therefore appears to be an exemplary case of microstate-democracy. Since virtually no publications on politics in San Marino have appeared in recent years, however, only its *formal* political institutions are superficially known, and little is known about the practical, informal conduct of politics in this microstate.

6.3.2. The Eastern Caribbean Microstate: St. Kitts and Nevis

Out of the six microstates in the Eastern Caribbean region, the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis is selected for field research. The microstates in this region are remarkably similar on their background characteristics, so the preference for the smallest state has been guiding in the selection. Aside of being the smallest of the Eastern Caribbean microstates, St. Kitts and Nevis shares its British colonial heritage, Westminster parliamentary institutions, medium level of economic development, and insular geographical nature with the other five microstates in this region. In contrast to these other states however, St. Kitts and Nevis constitutionally is a federation that consists of two separate states, coinciding with the two islands of the nation. Since the federal government suggests the existence of at least a geographical cleavage, St. Kitts and Nevis embodies an especially appealing political system to examine the assumption of (attitudinal) homogeneity in microstates. Attaining independence in 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis is (as of yet) the last of the former British colonies in the Eastern Caribbean region to acquire statehood.

6.3.3. The African Microstate: Seychelles

Given that only two of the microstates are located in Africa, it is impossible to pick a case that is 'representative' for the microstates in this region. As a consequence, again the benchmark of smallness has therefore guided case selection, and the Republic of Seychelles has been selected as the African case to be analyzed. Seychelles is different from the other African microstate, São Tomé and Príncipe, in almost all variables that can be thought of: it has a French-British instead of Portuguese colonial heritage, a moderate to high instead of a low level of development, and a presidential rather than a semi-presidential system. The two countries are similar, however, in the sense that they both have a predominantly Catholic population, both had a one-party socialist regime from

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[30] The country refers to itself as the *Antica Terra della Libertà*, which translates into the "ancient land of freedom".

the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, and both are island nations. Although Seychelles is classified as an electoral democracy in the Freedom House-survey, it has a score of 'partly free' on political rights as well as civil liberties (Freedom House 2012).[31] Because of this, Seychelles can to some respects be seen as a deviant case, in which the more demanding requirements of liberal democracy have not all been attained (yet).

6.3.4. The Pacific Microstate: Palau

Out of the nine Pacific microstates, the Republic of Palau has been chosen for case-study research. Palau is the third smallest state in the Pacific, but the smaller island states of Nauru and Tuvalu are not selected because certain features make them less attractive cases to study. Like St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, Tuvalu is a former British colony with (predominantly) Westminster institutions, and its inclusion would have led to a clear bias towards ex-British colonies. Palau, on the other hand, is a former US trust territory and has adopted the most important institutions of the American presidential system. Nauru has been left out because I consider it unrepresentative for the region; whereas the political systems of all other Pacific island nations are characterized by a significant influence of (councils of) traditional leaders, this is not the case in Nauru. According to the literature on the subject, Palau on the other hand does have a strong heritage of traditional leadership (cf. Shuster 1994). With regard to the variables of economic development, insularity, and democratic governance, Palau is also unmistakably representative of the Pacific region as a whole. The microstate acquired statehood and UN-membership only in 1994, rendering it the youngest independent microstate in the Pacific region.

7. Conclusion: Summary Remarks and Structure of the Analytical Chapters

The goal of this chapter was threefold. In the first place, its aim was to translate the two central concepts of this dissertation – size and democracy – into workable variables and indicators on the basis of which the analysis in subsequent chapters can be carried out. Secondly, attention has been paid to a description, explanation, and justification of the research method that this study employs. On the basis of the observation that quantitative research is unlikely to generate new findings, I have chosen for an exploratory, qualitative research design that is based on four in-depth case studies of microstates around the

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[31] The only other microstate that does not rank as 'free' on these dimensions is the Kingdom of Tonga, which however is no electoral democracy either (Freedom House 2012).

world. In each of these microstates field research is conducted, which focuses on semi-structured interviews with local respondents, and a supplementary analysis of available written sources and secondary literature. As a third objective, this chapter has sought to explain and motivate the selection of four microstates that serve as cases for in-depth analysis in the four analytical chapters that follow. On the basis of various arguments, the microstates of San Marino, St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Palau were selected as cases.

The four analytical chapters that follow are organized on the basis of a similar structure. Each chapter commences with a brief introduction, followed by an overview of the political history of the particular microstate under scrutiny. Subsequently, one section in each chapter is devoted to the discussion of a number of factors that can explain the existence of democratic institutions, after which one section deals with an overview of the political-institutional framework of the microstate. After this, four analytical sections deal with an examination of the nature and characteristics of each of the four sub-dimensions of democracy that this study employs. Each chapter ends with a conclusion in which the main findings are summarized. The first case study, which follows in the next chapter, is focused on San Marino, whereas chapter six offers an analysis of St. Kitts and Nevis. Subsequently, in chapter seven the political system of Seychelles is analyzed, and as a final case study the characteristics of politics and democracy in Palau are examined in chapter eight.

As mentioned before, the largest part of the findings that are presented and reported in the analytical chapters are based on interview data. In the analytical narrative, fragments and quotations from these interviews are occasionally presented in order to substantiate the findings and as illustrations of the themes that are discussed. Because of the intimate social relations and the lack of personal anonymity in small states, and in light of the sensitivity of some of the statements, I have decided not to disclose the names and professions of the individuals by whom the specific interview excerpts were expressed. Only in cases in which the profession of the respondent gives an additional dimension to a quote, and in which the information that the excerpt contains is not overtly touchy, I have made it public. However, a complete list of the people I interviewed in each of the microstates can be found in Appendix A of this book.

Table 4.4: Overview of Microstate-Scoring on Background Variables for Case Selection[1]

Microstate	Population	Region	FH-Score	Independence	Colonizer	Religion	Pol. System	Wealth
Nauru	9.322	Pacific	2 (Free)	1968	Australia	P/C	Parliamentary	Low
Tuvalu	10.544	Pacific	2 (Free)	1978	UK	P	Parliamentary	Low
Palau	20.956	Pacific	2 (Free)	1994	USA	C	Presidential	Low
Monaco	30.539	Europe	3 (Free)	_(1297)_	-	C	Principality	High
San Marino	31.817	Europe	2 (Free)	_(301)_	-	C	Parliamentary	High
Liechtenstein	35.236	Europe	2 (Free)	_(1866)_	-	C	Principality	High
St. Kitts and Nevis	50.314	Caribbean	2 (Free)	1983	UK	P	Parliamentary	Medium
Marshall Islands	67.182	Pacific	2 (Free)	1986	USA	P/C	Hybrid	Low
Dominica	72.969	Caribbean	2 (Free)	1978	UK	C	Parliamentary	Medium
Andorra	84.825	Europe	2 (Free)	_(1278/1993)_	-	C	Principality	High
Antigua and Barbuda	87.884	Caribbean	4 (Free)	1981	UK	P	Parliamentary	Medium
Seychelles	89.188	Africa	6 (P. Free)	1976	UK	C	Presidential	High
Kiribati	100.743	Pacific	2 (Free)	1979	UK	P/C	Parliamentary	Low
St. Vincent - Grenadines	103.869	Caribbean	3 (Free)	1979	UK	P	Parliamentary	Medium
Tonga	105.916	Pacific	8 (P. Free)	1970	UK	P	Monarchy	Low
Fed. St. of Micronesia	106.836	Pacific	2 (Free)	1986	USA	P/C	Presidential	Low
Grenada	108.419	Caribbean	3 (Free)	1974	UK	C	Parliamentary	Medium
St. Lucia	161.557	Caribbean	2 (Free)	1979	UK	C	Parliamentary	Medium
São Tomé and Príncipe	179.506	Africa	4 (Free)	1975	Portugal	C	S-Presidential	Low
Samoa	193.161	Pacific	4 (Free)	1962	N. Zealand	P	Parliamentary	Low
Vanuatu	224.564	Pacific	4 (Free)	1980	UK-France	P	Parliamentary	Low

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[1] Data retrieved from the 2011-indices of the CIA World Factbook, Freedom House, and the World Bank. Regarding religion, P stands for Protestant, and C for Catholic. On the issue of wealth, 'Low' indicates a GDP per capita figure up to US $10.000, Medium represents a GDP per capita figure between $10.000 and $20.000, and High signifies a GDP per capita figure of over $ 20.000.

CHAPTER FIVE

Antica Terra della Libertà

The Republic of San Marino

Figure 5.1: Location and Map of San Marino[1]

1. Introduction: the Ancient Land of Freedom

Entering the Most Serene Republic of San Marino[2] from the main road that leads up from the Adriatic coast to the *Monte Titano* on which the microstate was founded, one cannot miss the border signals that welcome the visitor to the "*Antica Terra della Libertà*" – the ancient land of freedom. This nickname accurately summarizes the qualities that San Marino wishes to confer to its many day-trip visitors – that the place is antique, and that it has a tradition of safeguarding and promoting liberty. When it comes to age, San Marino claims to be the world's most ancient republic, having been established in 301 AD according to the legend of its foundation. In terms of liberty, the country can rightfully claim to have frequently and at critical times functioned as a hiding place for political refugees. The hero of the Italian *Risorgimento*, Giuseppe Garibaldi, for example found refuge in San Marino during the summer of 1849

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[1] Retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (2011).
[2] Translated from the country's full name in Italian; "*Serenissima Repubblica di San Marino*". Henceforth, the country will be simply referred to as 'San Marino'.

when he was chased by Austrian troops. At the end of the Second World War, more than 100.000 Italian citizens fled to the Republic in order to escape the allied crossing of the Gothic Line and the ensuing Battle of Rimini.

In addition to functioning as a hiding place for political refugees, San Marino's domestic political history provides a second justification for its reputation as a bastion of liberty. From its foundation up to the present day, the microstate has been known for its republican traditions and its respect for individual rights and freedoms. In addition to its historical respect for personal liberties, San Marino also has a longstanding tradition of participatory decision-making, even though the microstate has also experienced periods of more autocratic rule. At present, with a territory of 61 square kilometers and approximately 30.000 inhabitants, the country is the second smallest state of Europe when it comes to population, and the third smallest in terms of territorial size.[3] Like its Italian neighbor, the Sammarinese population speaks Italian (in the form of the *Romagnolo*-dialect) and is religiously almost entirely Roman Catholic, but with a GDP per capita-level of US $61.223 (the 9th highest in the world), the country is clearly more wealthy than its larger neighbor, as the Italian equivalent figure is at US $38.385 (World Bank 2011). A remarkable demographic characteristic is that one third of the Sammarinese nationals (between 12.000 and 13.000 people) live outside their country, primarily in Italy, France, the United States, and Argentina (San Marino Statistics Office 2011). In addition, twelve percent of the people residing in San Marino (about 3.500 individuals) possess Italian nationality.

In the present chapter, the influence of size on San Marino's democracy is analyzed by examining the presence, manifestation, and characteristics of the two dimensions of polyarchy - contestation and inclusiveness (cf. Dahl 1971: 6). Before this analysis however, an overview is given of some of the pivotal moments in this microstate's political history and its pathway to democracy. Subsequently, an attempt is made to explain the present-day democratic institutional structure of the microstate by pointing to a number of contributing factors, and San Marino's contemporary political institutional structure is outlined. In four succeeding sections, the influence of size on contestation and inclusiveness is analyzed on the basis of the list of indicators that was formulated in the methodological chapter. In sequence, attention is paid to 1) the role of ideology, political parties, and the political opposition, 2) the horizontal balance

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[3] The Vatican is smaller both in terms of population and territory, and Monaco is smaller in territory (it has only 2 square kilometers of land) but not in population size (CIA World Factbook 2011).

of power between institutions, 3) the relations between Sammarinese citizens and politicians, and 4) the characteristics of political participation. The chapter ends with a summary of the findings and an assessment of the influence of size on Sammarinese democracy.

The current analysis of San Marino's political system is based on field research conducted in the country in November 2010. As part of this in-depth analysis, eighteen Sammarinese individuals were interviewed, among whom former heads of state, government ministers, parliamentarians affiliated with both the government and the opposition, (former) members of the Council of Twelve, journalists, leaders of unions and employers' organizations, academics, business leaders, and the Sammarinese ambassador to the United States. In this light, one effect of smallness instantly surfaces; many of the respondents fulfill multiple roles in society, and often combine functions that would usually be separated in larger states. One of the journalists I interviewed was for example also active as an opposition MP, and one MP combined her job with being president of the state museum. In addition to combining functions, many interviewees have already been active in Sammarinese public life for decades, and also in varying functions. One minister told me that he had fulfilled all political-institutional roles in the country; that of Captain Regent, minister (four times), party group leader, and member of the Council of Twelve. A complete list of the people I interviewed can be found in Appendix A of this book.[4]

2. Political History and Democratization of San Marino

Wandering through the narrow streets of San Marino's capital town that bears the same name as the country, one is struck by the sense of pride that the microstate derives from its political history. On the corner of almost every street, tribute is being paid to the well-documented Sammarinese history and its accompanying heroes. According to the legend,[5] San Marino was founded on the 3rd of September 301 by the stonecutter Marinus the Dalmatian, who was later canonized as Saint Marinus – San Marino in Italian (Duursma 1996: 216; Sundhaussen 2003: 274; Eccardt 2005: 278-279).[6] On the slopes of Mount

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[4] In the following discussion, I will occasionally present quotes from these interviews to illustrate some arguments. Some of my interviews were conducted in English and others in Italian. Whenever the interview was in Italian, I have translated the quote to English and presented it as such, with the original Italian citation in a footnote.

[5] It is not clear to what extent this legend must be taken for true, but historians and archeologists have found evidence of the existence of an autonomous society on the slopes of Mount Titano going back to at least the 9th century (Miller 1901: 635; Bacciocchi 1999: 27).

[6] Marinus originated from the island of Arbe (or Rab) in contemporary Croatia, but traveled to the coastal town of Rimini to assist in the reconstruction of its fortifications, which had been

Titano, Marinus and a small number of his followers founded a community based on the freedom to practice their religion, and although Marinus died in the autumn of 301,[7] his followers continued to preserve and defend the values of liberty on which the tiny society was built (Eccardt 2005: 278).

Although not much is known about the first ages that followed the foundation of the commune, writings from the early Middle Ages substantiate the existence of the *Arengo* (or *Arringo*), a council composed of all Sammarinese heads of family (the *capifamiglia*), which at the time constituted the most important decision-making institution of the polity (Miller 1901: 635; Sundhaussen 2003: 217). Attendance at *Arengo*-meetings was compulsory, and although only (male) heads of family could participate, for at least part of the Middle Ages San Marino thus had a system of popular and participatory decision making. Due to the growth of the population and ensuing logistical problems of organizing *Arengo*-meetings, the largest part of the *Arengo*'s powers were transferred to a representative body, the Council of Sixty, at the end of the fifteenth century (Giannini 1899: 31; Bacciocchi 1999: 28-29; Casali and Crescentini 2003: 57-58).[8] Hence, the society transformed from a system of direct decision-making into a representative polity, even though the *Arengo* continued to exist and was still convoked on instances of extraordinary importance.

Already in the 13th century, the duumvirate (joint leadership) of the Captains Regent (*Capitani Reggenti*) constituted the political leadership of the Sammarinese polity (Sundhaussen 2003: 217; Casali and Crescentini 2003: 61). This institution, which originated in the Roman Republic (in the form of consuls) and was very common in medieval Italian republics, has been preserved up to the present day. In the year 1600, the first complete Statutes of San Marino were established and written down, thus forming one of the most ancient written constitutions in the world (Catudal 1975: 194; Bacciocchi 1999: 28).[9] In its

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demolished by pirates. When the Roman Emperor Diocletian issued laws that called for the persecution of Christians (known as the Diocletianic Persecutions), Marinus supposedly fled inland and found a hiding place on Mount Titano, which nowadays is the location of San Marino's capital. Another version of this history assumes that Marinus came to Mount Titano to find material (stones), and then remained to live there.

[7] This year is now viewed as the founding date of the Republic, and is used as the staring point in San Marino's own calendar. As a consequence, the period between 1 September 2011 and 1 September 2013 is seen as year 1712 d.F.R. (*dalla Fondazione della Repubblica*).

[8] The *Arengo* and the Council of Sixty (*Consiglio dei Sessanta*) exist up to the present day, but the former is only very rarely convoked, and the latter has been renamed as the Great and General Council (*Consiglio Grande e Generale*).

[9] In these Statutes, the legislative and constitutional competences of the Council of Sixty have been formulated, and also its task to nominate and appoint people to the main political positions of the polity. In addition, the Statutes of 1600 also describe and delineate the powers and

external relations, the Republic maintained a policy of neutrality and abstinence from international affairs, and largely succeeded to remain independent by not arousing the attention of its neighbors (Sundhaussen 2003: 217).[10] The Vatican recognized the sovereignty of San Marino in 1291 and again in 1627, but despite its clever diplomatic tactics the country was occupied for two brief periods; first in 1503 by the Italian former Cardinal Cesare Borgia, and in the years 1739 and 1740 by Cardinal Giulio Alberoni, in an attempt to bring the Republic under the influence of the Vatican (Duursma 1996: 216).[11]

Over the course of the seventeenth century the democratic traditions of the Sammarinese Republic had declined significantly, as the *Arengo* was not convoked anymore and the Council of Sixty (which at times consisted of far less than sixty members) had become an oligarchic assembly of which the members were selected by hereditary cooptation (Bacciocchi 1999: 31-32). As a consequence, the political power of the Republic was in the hands of the few powerful families that controlled the Council of Sixty, and who became the aristocracy of San Marino.[12] Due to its isolated location and its withdrawal from international political affairs, the Republic has mostly been severely underdeveloped economically and only very few people were literate, a situation which endured well into the 20th century.

When Napoleon began his conquest of northern Italy in 1796, a treaty of friendship was signed between the French Empire and San Marino, in which Napoleon pledged to respect the autonomy of the tiny Republic (Duursma 1996: 216). The Emperor even offered San Marino a significant increase of its territory, which the country's leaders (under the leadership of the skillful Antonio Onofri) however refused. Napoleon was well aware of the exceptional history of the microstate, and had been particularly fond of its republican and democratic traditions (Casali and Crescentini 2003: 74). Additionally, the geo-strategic insignificance of San Marino and the positive propagandistic effects of refraining

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competences of the main jurisdictional and administrative organ of the Republic, the Council of Twelve (Casali and Crescentini 2003: 64).

[10] Sundhaussen calls this the "leave us alone"-attitude (2003: 217). In San Marino, the motto "known to us, unknown to others" (*Cogniti Nobisque Incognti Aliis)* was used as an expression of the Republic's longstanding policy with regard to international relations.

[11] This *Occupazione Alberoniana* ended when Pope Clement XII, after receiving numerous pleas from the Sammarinese population, restored the independence of the Republic.

[12] In the beginning of the 19th century, it was decided that only a third of the Council should exist of nobles, whereas the other two thirds were to be occupied by the inhabitants of Sammarinese towns, and by farmers (each one third).

from an invasion of the Republic probably made Napoleon decide not to violate its autonomy.[13]

During the *Risorgimento*, San Marino offered a hiding place to numerous supporters of the unification movement, among whom Giuseppe Garibaldi and 250 of his followers (Miller 1901: 646-647). Due to these events the leaders of the newly established Kingdom of Italy respected San Marino's sovereignty, and in 1862 a treaty of friendship was signed between the two countries (Sundhaussen 2003: 215-216; Eccardt 2005: 100). Since then, San Marino has been able to retain its independence, and remained neutral during the two World Wars, with the exception of a short period in 1944 when the country was erroneously bombed by the British air force and later briefly occupied by the Allies (Bacciocchi 1999: 101).

On the eve of the 20th century, San Marino's internal political organization was to experience a number of profound changes. For the past ages, the country had been controlled by the oligarchic Council of Sixty (a period now known as the *Oligarchia*).[14] However, subsequent to similar developments in Italy, the first socialist and democratic movements emerged in the Republic and started the fight for democratization and representation (Bacciocchi 1999: 34-35). Under the leadership of well-educated and competent figures like Gino Giacomini and Pietro Franciosi, the socialists and democrats succeeded in attaining their goals. The struggle for democratization culminated in the 1906 convocation of the *Arengo*, for the first time in several hundred years (the last time it had been convoked was in 1571). In what has now come to be seen as a pivotal moment in Sammarinese history, the *Arengo* decided that the Council of Sixty – henceforth called the Great and General Council (*Consiglio Grande e Generale*) – should be elected by universal male suffrage (Bacciocchi 1999: 50-54; Casali and Crescentini 2003: 59). The introduction of universal male suffrage in San Marino thereby preceded the same development in Italy by a number of years.[15]

The newly established democracy in San Marino was however short lived. After the establishment of Mussolini's fascist regime in Italy in 1922, the

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[13] At the Congress of Vienna in 1815 San Marino's autonomy was not discussed, which allowed the Vatican to proclaim that the territory of the Republic should become an indirect dominion of the Papal State (Duursma 1996: 217). Although this never happened, the relations between San Marino and the Vatican remained tense until the Italian unification in 1861.

[14] Despite the oligarchic nature of its politics and the limited opportunities for political involvement of citizens, San Marino in this period continued to be regarded as a shining example of liberty, democracy, and constitutional republicanism, and was cherished as such by among others Napoleon and Lincoln. As Doyle remarks, in the mid-19th century Republics were an endangered species, as only the war-torn United States, Switzerland, and San Marino upheld the republican ideal (Doyle 2011).

[15] The first election under universal male suffrage was held in Italy in 1913.

Sammarinese Fascist Party (PFS[16]) was formed and finally took over power in the Republic in 1926. For San Marino, the fascist era marked a return to the pre-1906 *Oligarchia*, which is demonstrated by the fact that the fascist rulers of San Marino (with Giuliano Gozi[17] as the most prominent one) came from the same families that controlled the Great and General Council before 1906 (de Visser 1941: 49-51; Pelliconi 1995: 86). Under the fascist regime other parties and their publications were forbidden, and the electoral law of 1906 was abolished. Apart from this however, the fascist regime of San Marino was less motivated by ideology than by the aspiration of several influential conservative families to restore the pre-1906 oligarchic system (Pelliconi 1995: 89). As a consequence, Sammarinese fascism had a much less totalitarian character than in Italy, and can by and large be categorized as a 'regular' authoritarian or oligarchic regime instead. On 20 September 1944 the fascists were decisively defeated, and democracy was restored.[18]

After the war, a coalition government of communists (PCS[19]) and socialists (PSS[20]) took over power in San Marino, and would remain in office for twelve years. As such, San Marino was the only country in Western Europe with a (democratically elected) government that included communists.[21] During the twelve years of its existence, the left-wing government had a strained relationship with the government of Italy, resulting even in a blockade of San Marino's borders in 1950 and 1951 that lasted for eighteen months. In 1957, the defection of five socialist MPs led to a perfect split in parliament (thirty government MPs versus thirty opposition MPs).[22] When one of the communist MPs decided to withdraw his support as well, the government was faced with a minority of seats in the Council, upon which it decided to close parliament and call for new elections.[23] The opposition did not accept this decision and instead

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[16] *Partito Fascista Sammarinese.*

[17] Gozi was five times Captain Regent during the fascist regime, intermittently ruling the country as such for two and a half years. More importantly however, is that he was in charge of the most powerful ministry - that of foreign affairs - for twenty-six years between 1917 and 1943.

[18] Even though its sovereignty had been largely respected, the war had enormous consequences for San Marino, as the country's (economic) infrastructure had been completely demolished.

[19] *Partito Comunista Sammarinese.*

[20] *Partito Socialista Sammarinese.*

[21] Unlike the Italian socialist party, the Sammarinese socialists initially chose to align themselves with the communist party instead of the Christian-democratic party (PDCS – *Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese*), which has since the end of the war always been the largest party in San Marino (Bacciocchi 1999: 104).

[22] The defection of the socialist MPs was a consequence of international political developments: they no longer accepted the alliance of the Sammarinese government to the Soviet Union after the events in Hungary in 1956.

[23] It was a practice of the communist and socialist parties to enforce party discipline by having all their elected legislators sign letters of resignation after each election, before the start of their

formed a provisionary government in the industrial village of Rovereta, in the north of San Marino. This government was immediately recognized as legitimate by Italy, France, and the United States, and the Italian government decided to send 150 *carabinieri* (military policemen) to the Republic. Under this pressure, the left-wing government resigned, and Christian-democrats together with the new social-democratic party that was established by the dissenting socialist and communist MPs[24] formed a new government, without organizing new elections (Catudal 1975: 194; Duursma 1996: 220-221; Bacciocchi 1999: 114-117; Sundhaussen 2003: 218; Bonelli 2010: 163-165).

Table 5.1: Vote Percentage and Seats of Sammarinese Parties at General Elections[25]

	PDCS		PCS		PSS		PSDIS, PSU, PPDS, PD, PSD		AP		RCS, SU		NPS		Other		Total
Year	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	S
1945	34.0	20	-	-	*66.0*	*40*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**60**
1949	42.3	25	-	-	*57.7*	*35*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**60**
1951	43.0	26	29.3	18	22.2	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.6	3	**60**
1955	38.3	23	31.6	19	25.5	16	4.7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**60**
1959	44.3	27	25.6	16	13.8	8	15.9	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**60**
1964	46.8	29	24.1	14	10.7	6	16.2	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.2	1	**60**
1969	44.0	27	22.8	14	11.9	7	18.0	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.4	1	**60**
1974	39.6	25	23.6	15	13.9	8	15.4	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.5	3	**60**
1978	42.3	26	25.1	16	13.8	8	11.1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.7	3	**60**
1983	42.1	26	24.4	15	14.8	9	13.9	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.8	2	**60**
1988	44.1	27	28.7	18	11.1	7	13.6	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5	-	**60**
1993	41.4	26	-	-	23.7	14	18.6	11	7.7	4	3.4	2	-	-	5.2	3	**60**
1998	40.9	25	-	-	23.2	14	18.6	11	9.8	6	3.3	2	-	-	4.2	2	**60**
2001	41.9	25	-	-	24.2	15	20.8	12	8.2	5	3.4	2	-	-	1.5	1	**60**
2006	32.9	21	-	-	-	-	31.8	20	12.1	7	8.7	5	5.3	3	9.2	4	**60**
2008	31.9	22	-	-	-	-	32.0	18	11.5	7	8.6	5	6.3	4	9.7	4	**60**

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terms. Being confronted with a minority in parliament, the heads of these two parties handed in 35 letters of resignation, including those of the MPs that had switched allegiance to the opposition. As a consequence, the quorum of 30 seats could no longer be met, and the incumbent Captains Regent scheduled new elections for the 3rd of November, 1957. Since the term of the incumbent Captains Regent would however transpire on October 1st, and no new ones could be elected (since the quorum could not be met), a constitutional crisis ensued.

[24] This party was called the Sammarinese Independent Democratic Socialist Party (PSDIS – *Partito Socialista Democratico Indipendente Sammarinese*).

[25] **PDCS** = *Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese* (Christian-democratic party), **PCS** = *Partito Comunista Sammarinese* (communist party), **PSS** = *Partito Socialista Sammarinese* (socialist party), **PSDIS** – *Partito Socialista Democratico Indipendente Sammarinese*, **PSU** – *Partito Socialista Unitario*, **PPDS** – *Partito Progressista Democratico Sammarinese*, **PD** – *Partito dei Democratici*, **PSD** = *Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici* (social-democratic parties), **AP** = *Alleanza Popolare* (liberal centre party), **RCS** - *Rifondazione Communista Sammarinese*, **SU** = *Sinistra Unita* (new left parties), **NPS** = *Nuovo Partito Socialista* (social-democratic party). In 1945 and 1949, the PCS and PSS still formed one party, the *Comitato della Libertà*.

The events of 1957 are currently known as the "*Fatti di Rovereta*"[26], and Sammarinese people have since then been divided on the issue, with both sides accusing the other one of committing a *coup d'état*. Several decades later, documents from United States-archives demonstrated that the CIA and the U.S.-government had close links with the Sammarinese Christian-democratic opposition, and actively endeavored to destabilize the left-wing government (Bacciocchi 1999: 117-118). Christian-democrats and socialists ruled the country in subsequent years, and succeeded in realizing an impressive economic growth and the development of a large financial sector in the country. Female suffrage was introduced in 1957, but due to a slow implementation of laws, women could only vote for the first time in 1964, and passive electoral rights were granted to women only in 1973 (Duursma 1996: 227; Bacciocchi 1999: 123-124).[27] In 1978 the communists returned in a coalition with the socialists and in 1986 the so-called 'historical compromise' (*Compromesso Storico*) led to a coalition between the two traditional archrivals in Sammarinese politics, the communist and Christian-democratic parties.

Table 5.2: Composition of Sammarinese Postwar-Governments

1945 - 1957	PCS-PSS	Communists and Socialists
1957 - 1973	PDCS-PSDIS	Christian-Democrats and Social-Democrats
1973 - 1978	PDCS-PSS	Christian-Democrats and Socialists
1978 - 1986	PCS-PSS-PSU	Communists, Socialists, and Social-Democrats
1986 - 1992	PDCS-PCS	Christian-Democrats and Communists
1992 - 2000	PDCS-PSS	Christian-Democrats and Socialists
2000 - 2001	PDCS-PPDS	Christian-Democrats and Social-Democrats
2001 - 2002	PDCS-PSS	Christian-Democrats and Socialists
2002 - 2006	PDCS-AP-PSD	Christian-Democrats, Liberals, and Social-Democrats
2006 - 2008	PSD-AP-SU	Social-Democrats, Liberals, and New Left
2008 - 2012	PDCS-AP-NPS	Christian-Democrats, Liberals, and Social-Democrats

Just like in neighboring Italy, the fall of the Berlin wall and the collapse of communism marked the disintegration of the communist party of San Marino, out of which two new left-wing parties appeared (Bacciocchi 1999: 158). On the right side of the political spectrum new parties emerged as well, mainly as split-offs from the Christian-democrats – most notably the liberal *Alleanza Popolare*. Thus, the Sammarinese party system which had always consisted of three or four stable parties fragmented, and governments became more unstable. At present,

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[26] This can be translated to English as 'the events of Rovereta' or the 'Rovereta affair'.
[27] Since it was assumed that women would be more inclined to vote for the Christian-democratic party, the left-wing coalition refused to allow female suffrage at an earlier stage. Their assumptions turned out to correct however, as the proportion of votes for the PDCS rose significantly after 1957.

twelve parties are represented in the *Consiglio Grande e Generale*, and due to an electoral law that was introduced in 2006 and aimed at countering further fragmentation, parties now have to form pre-electoral alliances (just like in Italy). Although the Christian-democratic party can still be considered as the largest and most important party in the Republic, at elections it now obtains close to thirty instead of over forty percent of the votes. In table 5.1, the percentages of votes received by Sammarinese parties at parliamentary elections have been presented, and in table 5.2 the governments that have ruled the Republic since the Second World War.

At the dawn of the new millennium, an emerging worldwide combat against money laundering and fiscal evasion presented new difficulties for San Marino. With a large part of its economy based on finances and banking, the country has been recurrently accused of engaging in harmful tax practices. Even though the Republic managed to avoid being named on the 'black list' of the OECD, after 2008 the Italian government significantly increased its pressure on the microstate (IMF 2011: 11). Specifically, the Italian government announced a tax amnesty for Italians who repatriated their offshore assets, while concurrently announcing further legal action against those who maintained their bank accounts in San Marino. In addition, the Italian government discouraged Italian companies to do business with San Marino, and when a money-laundering scandal in San Marino's largest bank (the *Cassa di Risparmio della Repubblica di San Marino*) became public and the executives of the bank were arrested, San Marino's image as a malevolent fiscal paradise was complete (IMF 2011: 14).[28] Whereas the Sammarinese economy had been growing with over four percent annually during the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, in 2008 this declined to two percent, and for 2009 a shrink of over twelve percent was noted.[29] In the context of the severe crisis that is now plaguing the country, for the first time in history Sammarinese politicians are openly debating the option of EU-membership.[30]

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[28] Many of my respondents pointed to hypocrisy on the part of the Italians in this regard; whereas rich Italians used San Marino as a bank for decades, and eagerly exploited its flexible financial laws and low taxes, San Marino is now suddenly being treated as a malicious fiscal paradise. Furthermore, several politicians highlighted the fact that many Sammarinese banks are at least partially owned by Italians, implying that the root of the problem is for some part to be found in Italy itself, and that the Sammarinese government has a limited capacity to solve it.

[29] Statistics derived from the Sammarinese Chamber of Commerce (*Camera di Commercio*) website (www.cc.sm).

[30] A referendum on the issue was scheduled to be held on March 27th 2011, but several days in advance the government blocked the referendum on the grounds that it will set in motion the accession procedures itself. As a consequence, the process towards EU-membership has been

3. Explaining Democracy in San Marino

Now that the historical process by means of which San Marino became a democracy has been outlined, a number of factors that can explain or have contributed to San Marino's democratic institutional framework can be listed. The participatory *Arengo*-system by means of which political decision-making occurred in medieval San Marino can be seen as a pre-modern democratic system, in which participation was limited to a small number of citizens. Full democratization arrived with the realization of universal male suffrage in 1906, but the fascist regime constituted an eighteen year-long return to authoritarianism. Seeing that the appearance of pro-democratic forces was strongly influenced by the rise of similar movements in Italy, which were virtually mirrored by the Sammarinese ones, regional and diffusion effects can effectively explain San Marino's (re-)democratization in the early 20th century. Regardless of whether it was a coup d'état, the 1957 *Fatti di Rovereta* demonstrate Italy's readiness to intervene in case it perceives a threat to San Marino's (capitalist) democracy. In this sense, San Marino's location in the heart of a presently democratic country (which is located in a democratic continent), and its economic, military, and political dependence on its larger Italian neighbor can be deemed to have contributed to the development and sustainment of the Republic's democracy after 1945.

Whereas San Marino for centuries maintained a policy of abstinence and isolation from international affairs, after the Second World War this policy shifted dramatically, and the country now maintains connections with many international actors. In 1988 the Republic became a member of the Council of Europe, and in 1992 it entered the United Nations. Interviews with Sammarinese political figures indicate that this reorientation in foreign policy was fueled by a desire to decrease the country's dependence on Italy. Be that as it may, the relations with Italy remain of extreme importance to San Marino, especially in light of the far-reaching monetary, economic, postal, and customs agreements that have been signed between the two countries over the years (Duursma 1996: 232-245).[31] Although San Marino is formally and legally completely autonomous,

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stalled for now, but the public discussion continues. Especially the social-democrats (PSD) have been strongly advocating the entrance of San Marino into the EU.

[31] In 1862, the newly established Italian Kingdom by means of a treaty recognized San Marino's sovereignty (Sundhaussen 2003: 215-216; Eccardt 2005: 100). The bilateral relations between the two countries were reconfirmed with new treaties in 1939 and 1971, in which the special relation between the countries is further emphasized. The treaties envisage extensive cooperation in judicial, economic, administrative, and commercial areas, in which Italy will support San Marino in exchange for loyalty to Italy's foreign policy objectives (the so-called 'protective friendship'; Duursma 1996: 233-234).

in practice the Republic is crucially dependent on its larger neighbor, and the relations between the countries are in this sense obviously extremely unequal.[32] In light of San Marino's dependence on Italy, and due to the EU and OECD's focus and emphasis on democracy and good governance in Europe, the international environment of San Marino offers formidable inducements for the persistence of democracy.

In addition to the role played by international actors, virtually all the Sammarinese people I interviewed pointed to the increased political awareness, attachment to the public good, and involvement of the country's citizenry as an explanatory factor of the country's democracy. In the words of one of the politicians I interviewed:

> "Participation in politics is very important, and it is one of the reasons why the Republic of San Marino has remained independent, while being so small. This collective participation in public life has determined the success of the Sammarinese republican model after all these ages, and the success of the microstate."[33]

Apart from the influence of international factors on San Marino's democracy, the Sammarinese historical tradition of republicanism and liberty should according to a majority of respondents not be discounted in explaining the country's contemporary democracy. Other European microstates that are currently located in a similarly democracy-friendly environment as San Marino, like Monaco and Liechtenstein, continue to have powerful and occasionally controversial monarchs.[34] Whereas these microstates originated as autocratic personal fiefdoms and to a significant extent remain to be governed as such, San Marino was actually created on the creed of (religious) liberty, and has traditionally steered away from the concentration of power in the hands of single individuals.[35]

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[32] Several interviewees pointed out that the personal sympathies and beliefs of individual Italian ministers with regard to San Marino and its autonomy have a decisive effect on the bilateral relations, which further demonstrates the vulnerability and dependence of San Marino on its larger neighbor.

[33] "*Questa participazione alla politica è molto importante, ed è una delle ragioni per cui la Repubblica di San Marino è rimasta indipendente così piccola. Questa participazione colletiva alla vita pubblica è stata la ragione che nei secoli ha determinato il successo del microstato.*"

[34] These two countries are often criticized by European actors and organizations for the less democratic aspects of their political systems. The Council of Europe, the OECD, and the European Parliament for example strongly and vocally criticized the outcomes of the 2003 Liechtensteiner referendum, which according to their perceptions increased the power of Prince Hans-Adam II at the expense of democratically elected institutions in the country.

[35] This difference between the European microstates is most clearly visible in the organization of executive power. Whereas the Monegasque and Liechtensteiner monarchs assume an exceptionally powerful position in their respective political systems (especially in comparison to other constitutional monarchies), the position of head of state of San Marino is shared by two

It is also clear, however, that the democratization movement of the early 20th century was spearheaded by a handful of intellectuals, which means that the actions of several single individuals had a great impact on the establishment of democracy in 1906. The country was at this time economically underdeveloped and primarily consisted of a poor, uneducated, and illiterate peasantry (Sundhaussen 2003: 220), which according to Bacciocchi had lost all hopes of participating in public life (1999: 36-37). In combination with the enduring economic malaise, the expression of demands for popular representation by a small number of educated individuals like Giacomini and Franciosi, aided by Italian sister movements, eventually mobilized the Sammarinese people into opposing the oligarchy. Although trade unions and political parties did appear, the constraints of San Marino's small size prevented the emergence of pro-democratic mass movements that arose in larger countries, and democratization therefore appears to have primarily been a consequence of the actions of a few determined individuals, who largely copied Italy's model of democratization.

4. Political Institutions of San Marino

In many ways, the present-day political-institutional structure of San Marino has the appearance of that of a medieval Italian city-state. Although the country has unmistakably made the transition to representative democracy, its pre-modern institutions have remained virtually intact. In this sense, Sammarinese political structures have been more resilient than those of many larger states in Western Europe, in which institutional renovation and transformation have intermittently occurred. In addition to the antiqueness of the microstate's institutions, in many ways they also seem to be specifically devised and suitable for a small society. Many of the former Italian city-states (like Lucca, Venice, and Ferrara) which later were incorporated in the Italian Kingdom had the same type of councils, consuls, and tribunals that continue to exist in present-day San Marino.[36] In this respect, the political institutions of the microstate can be seen as relics from the past, which have accidentally survived against all odds, and which can give some unique insights in the workings and structures of pre-modern Italian city-states.

The contemporary political system of San Marino can be characterized as a parliamentary democracy, with a government (the State Congress - *Congresso di Stato*) that is accountable to parliament (the Great and General Council). San

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persons with an office term of only half a year, after which they cannot be appointed to the same position for the next three years.

[36] For example, many of these city-states (like Lucca and Venice) also had the adjective *Serenissima* in their names, and whereas Venice was ruled by a *Doge* and Lucca was governed by a *Capitano del Popolo*, in Florence the city council (*Signoria*) controlled political decision-making.

Marino's heads of state and heads of government are the two Captains Regent, and together with Andorra (which has two Co-Princes) San Marino is the only country in the world with two heads of state.[37] The Captains Regent reside in office for only half a year, which is the shortest of any head of state in the world, and they are elected by and from the members of the Great and General Council. Decision-making by the Captains Regent occurs on the basis of collegiality, meaning that any decision has to be approved by both officeholders. After having served as Captain Regent for half a year, it is by law forbidden to be elected to this position again for at least three years (Duursma 1996: 220; Eccardt 2005: 287-288).[38] The position of the Captains Regent is largely ceremonial, and even though they preside over the main institutions of the state (such as the Great and General Council, the State Congress, and the Council of Twelve) and represent their country in external contacts, they have little factual powers. Due to the tiny population and the rapid turnover in Captains Regent, practically every Sammarinese family has one or more members who have been the head of state of their country.

San Marino's legislative power is vested in the Great and General Council, which has sixty members who are elected every five years on the basis of proportional representation.[39] With sixty MPs representing a population of approximately 30.000 people, the number of citizens per MP is about 500, which is the lowest number in the world.[40] The Council has the competence to nominate and appoint people to important organs of the state such as the *Reggenza* and the judiciary, and in line with the parliamentary system the survival of the Sammarinese government depends on a parliamentary majority (Duursma 1996: 219-221). Whereas the relationship between the executive,

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[37] In the literature, this is referred to as a diarchy or duumvirate (Sundhaussen 2003: 217).

[38] Together with the extremely short period in office, and the fact that there are two heads of state instead of one, this rule is said to be designed in order to prevent for the concentration of power in the hands of one person, which is evidently a risk in a small state with only a few people that are willing and able to assume political positions.

[39] Specifically, San Marino has a system of List-PR in which the entire country is treated as one constituency. Since 2008, an electoral threshold (between 0.4% and 3.5%, depending on the number of competing coalitions) has to be reached in order to gain representation in parliament. In order to curb the increasing fragmentation of the country's party system, a 'majority bonus' or *premio di stabilità* (premium of stability) was introduced to bestow the winning coalition of parties with at least 35 of the 60 seats. However, this majority bonus is only awarded if the winning coalition gains at least 50% of the votes, which creates a strong incentive for parties to cluster in two opposing coalitions, as is now the case. If no coalition reaches 50% of the votes, a second round is organized in which only the top two coalitions of the first round can participate (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2011). Voters can choose between voting for a coalition or for one party in the coalition, and electoral coalitions are obliged to present their programs and the composition of their potential government before the polling day.

[40] Based on own calculations and data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 2011).

legislative, and judicial powers in the Sammarinese system always used to be somewhat unclear (Duursma 1996: 223), in recent years a more strict separation between these powers has been established (Pelliconi 1995: 67).[41] Out of the sixty members of the Great and General Council,[42] twelve members are elected to form the Council of Twelve (*Consiglio dei Dodici*), a remarkable institution that used to have a number of significant judicial competences (as it was for example the administrative judge in third instance), but with the recent separation of powers has lost much of its duties, and is now primarily an administrative organ. However, the Council of Twelve does continue to decide on matters that involve the acquisition and possession of territory by foreigners, which is an important matter in a country with an area of only 61 square kilometers of land (Duursma 1996: 226).

The State Congress (*Congresso di Stato*) of San Marino is composed of ten secretaries of state, and exercises the executive power in the country. Every minister heads his or her own functionally specialized ministerial department, which each has its own public administration. The Captains Regent preside over the State Congress, but in the absence of a prime minister the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is generally considered to be the most authoritative minister within the Congress, and thus also the most important political figure in the country. Unlike the Captains Regent, for a long time there were no term limits for the function of secretary of state, and because the number of potential ministerial candidates is inherently small it was and is not uncommon for secretaries of state to be in office for many years, often also at different departments.[43] Although they preside over the State Congress, the Captains Regent have no voting rights.

In addition to the upper layer of national government, San Marino is subdivided in nine communes (the *Castelli*[44]), which each have their own local administration, the *Giunta di Castello*. Each *Giunta* has its own assembly, which is directly elected by the inhabitants of the commune, and is headed by a *Capitano*

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[41] Other than before, members of government can now no longer be MPs at the same time.

[42] A number of typical (size-related) restrictions with regard to the membership of parliament have existed over time, such as the rule that husband and wife or father and son cannot be members at the same time.

[43] The most illustrious (yet somewhat dated) example is found in the person of Domenico Fattori, who in the 19th and 20th centuries was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for 48 years, twelve times Captain Regent, and also secretary of state for internal affairs, and for finances for a couple of years. More recently, the de facto leader of the Sammarinese fascists, Giuliano Gozi, was secretary of state for external affairs for 26 years (de Visser 1941: 50-51).

[44] These are Acquaviva, Borgo Maggiore, Chiesanuova, Città di San Marino, Domagnano, Faetano, Fiorentino, Montegiardino, and Serravalle. In addition, the Republic is made up of 43 *curazie* or parishes.

di Castello (Duursma 1996: 221-222). The local administrations have the competence to deal with issues related to health, culture, and sport, and can also manage their own budget. Additionally, they have the right to initiate laws and to call for a referendum (ibid.). In order to preserve impartiality in a society where everybody knows each other, San Marino's judges and policemen are mostly hired from Italy (Catudal 1975: 197; Duursma 1996: 223). The Great and General Council appoints judges for a four year period, which can be prolonged indefinitely. In 2002, a three-member constitutional court (*Collegio Garante della Costituzionalità delle Norme*) was set up, of which also only non-Sammarinese judges can be members.[45]

In addition to the representative political institutions, San Marino also maintains a number of direct democracy-instruments. The historically most salient of these is the *Arengo*, which technically continues to exist but is only very rarely convoked. Instead, twice a year the so-called *Istanze d'Arengo* occur, in which citizens can present petitions and requests of public interest to the newly elected Captains Regent.[46] The Captains Regent can choose to propose these requests to parliament, which can transfer them into law. In addition to the biannual *Istanze d'Arengo*, San Marino occasionally also organizes and holds referendums, which can be abrogative, confirmative, or proposing (in the form of a popular initiative). For a proposing referendum to be held, the signatures of sixty Sammarinese citizens and admission by the constitutional court are required, whereas an abrogative referendum requires the signatures of 1.5 percent of the number of eligible votes. Referendums can also be initiated by at least five of the nine *Giunte di Castello*.

On the basis of both its history and its contemporary political-institutional structure, San Marino's tradition of democracy and liberty stands out as a recurrent and defining characteristic of the microstate. In spite of its smallness, as such the Republic managed to catch the attention of many statesmen from larger countries, among whom Abraham Lincoln, who in 1861 became an honorary citizen of San Marino.[47] In the academic community, the peculiarities

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[45] In addition to regulating disputes between political institutions and controlling whether proposals of law are in line with the constitution, this constitutional court also functions as the so-called *Sindacato*. After the term of the Captains Regent has expired, citizens have three days to present claims or complaints to the *Sindacato*, which has the capacity to pursue legal action against former Captains Regent.

[46] As the term of new Captains Regent starts on April 1st and October 1st of every year, the *Istanze d'Arengo* occur on the first Sunday after these dates.

[47] Lincoln was impressed with the Sammarinese republican principles and practices, and wrote to the leadership of the Republic: "Although your dominion is small, your state is nevertheless one of the most honored, in all history. It has by its experience demonstrated the truth, so full of

and achievements of San Marino were at the basis of several publications in the late 19th century, such as those by Bent (1879), Tucker (1880), Giannini (1899), and Miller (1901). At present however, academic publications on Sammarinese politics are exceptionally rare, and many recent publications are only available in Italian and can only be retrieved in the country's state library. In this sense, a secondary aim of this chapter is to (partially) fill this gap in scholarly attention to the Republic. As the political history and institutional structure of San Marino have now been outlined, the subsequent sections will pay attention to the characteristics of the two dimensions of democracy – contestation and inclusiveness – as they exist in San Marino, and to the way in which these are influenced by the country's small size.

5. Size and Democracy in San Marino

According to Freedom House, which is the only aggregate democracy index that includes San Marino, the microstate is a full-fledged democracy, acquiring the most favorable scores on both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2012). The overwhelming majority of my respondents agreed and confirmed that elections in San Marino are free and fair, and in annual Freedom House-reports the freedom and fairness of elections is always underscored (Freedom House 2012).[48] It can therefore be ascertained that San Marino organizes free and fair elections for its national parliament and local assemblies, and the microstate additionally offers its citizens alternative channels of political involvement through the *Istanze d'Arengo* and occasional referendums. Active suffrage rights are awarded to every Sammarinese citizen who is at least eighteen years old, and passive rights (i.e. the right to be elected to the Great and General Council and therefore to the Council of Twelve and the Regency) are granted to those who have reached the age of twenty-five. In conclusion therefore, the formal institutional requirements for both contestation and inclusiveness are present in the Republic, which according to Dahl's standards unquestionably qualifies as a polyarchy. In order to fully examine the influence of size on the characteristics of contestation and inclusiveness however, it is essential to look beyond the formal channels and institutions in San Marino. In the subsequent four sections, analyses of the influence of size on contestation (4.1. and 4.2.) and inclusiveness (4.3. and 4.4) in San Marino are offered.

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encouragement to the friends of humanity, that government founded on republican principles is capable of being so administered as to be secure and enduring" (Doyle 2011).

[48] Since it was included in the dataset in 1992, San Marino has always received a score of 1 on both Freedom House-dimensions, based on a 7-point scale in which 1 is most free and 7 is least free (Freedom House 2012).

5.1. Contestation: Ideology, Political Parties, and Opposition

According to Dahl, contestation refers to "the extent of permissible opposition, public contestation, or political competition" (Dahl 1971: 4). In San Marino, contestation occurs in the form of elections for representative institutions and occasional plebiscites in which citizens can express their opinions on specific issues or policies. Elections for the Great and General Council are organized once in five years,[49] and the members of this Council nominate and appoint people to the Council of Twelve, the judiciary and the Regency. Since the State Congress depends on a parliamentary majority, virtually all political offices are either directly or indirectly open to contestation. Passive electoral rights furthermore ensure that every Sammarinese citizen of at least twenty-five years old has the opportunity to take part in political competition for public office, and this inclusiveness provides the necessary conditions for contestation to occur in the first place.

On a more substantive level, contestation also refers to the availability of alternatives, in the sense that citizens actually have a choice when they express their political preferences. In this respect, the degree to which parties articulate different political interests can be regarded as an important indicator. On the basis of a comparison of the election manifestos of the two electoral coalitions of parties in the 2008 elections, it appears that the parties do not really advance divergent substantive political platforms, as more or less similar issues are raised in these programs. Although Sammarinese parties do publish lengthy and wide-ranging manifestos, and therefore do appear to articulate political interests, seventeen out of eighteen respondents indicated that electoral programs are rather similar and do not really determine the dynamics of Sammarinese politics. Since virtually all interviewees hence shared my tentative conclusion that the political parties of San Marino do not really represent substantially different political orientations, the relative insignificance of political ideas and ideology appears to be a first fundamental characteristic of Sammarinese politics.

Although the history of San Marino appears to be dominated by ideologies like communism, socialism, fascism, and Christian-democracy, on closer inspection these ideologies have always been fairly superficial and generally concealed the personal rivalries that undergirded the competition between them

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[49] In practice this figure is much higher, due to the frequent government changes that have occurred in the last two decades.

(cf. Bacciocchi 1999: 145, 147). As Pelliconi notes, Sammarinese fascism should be essentially understood as a reversion to the pre-1906 *Oligarchia* and the return to power of the old aristocratic families, and not as an ideologically motivated attempt to transform the country's society along fascist lines (1995: 86, 89).[50] In similar fashion, the Sammarinese communists surely were in close contact with their Eastern European and Soviet counterparts, but never attempted to radically reorganize San Marino according to the Soviet model (Muccioli 2011: 5). Nevertheless, before the end of the Cold War ideologies at least to some extent determined Sammarinese domestic political competition.

After the collapse of communism and the disintegration of the Sammarinese communist party (the PCS), the entire party system of the country fragmented, just as happened in neighboring Italy. According to Laakso and Taagepera's measure the effective number of parties (ENP) in San Marino has risen from 1.80 in 1945 to on average around 3.0 in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, to over 4.0 in the two most recent elections (Laakso and Taagepera 1979).[51] At present, no less than twelve parties are represented in parliament, albeit that the most recent electoral law has instigated the formation of two blocs of parties – the governing *Patto per San Marino* (Pact for San Marino) and the opposition that is united in the *Riforme e Libertà* (Reforms and Freedom) coalition. Although the number of competing factions has grown, it paradoxically appears to be the case that the diversity in terms of political ideas and substantial alternatives has diminished.

With only one exception, all my respondents agreed that no significant substantive differences exist between the contemporary Sammarinese parties. When asked about the role of ideology in the Sammarinese political context, one of the politicians associated with the left for example answered:

> "Unfortunately, there are not many ideological differences. Take for example the differences that have arrived in the socialist field; we presently have three socialist parties, and they are not based on ideological motivations or on the question how to manage the state. They are probably due to personal relationships (…). Within a reality like ours, personal relationships affect politics a lot, and most of all also affect the composition of governments."[52]

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[50] This is also demonstrated by the fact that the Sammarinese fascists left the country's institutional structure almost completely intact, but just abolished the organization of elections, banned other political parties, and repealed universal suffrage.

[51] Based on own calculations, using data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 2011).

[52] "*Purtroppo, differenze ideologiche non ce ne sono molte. Penso, ad esempio alle divisioni nell'area socialista, al fatto che oggi siamo tre partiti di area socialista; e sono dovute ai rapporti personali. (…) All'interno di una realtà come la nostra, i rapporti personali incidono molto sulla politica, e soprattutto incidono anche nella formazione di governi.*"

Although discrepancies between the Sammarinese parties can be observed on certain specific issues, such as whether San Marino should accede to the EU or whether the country should open a casino, in terms of the broader political orientation of the microstate the parties express more or less similar viewpoints.

The fact that parties from across the political spectrum have cooperated in coalitions further illustrates the insignificance of ideology. With regard to the indicator of alternation in office, table 2 already demonstrated that Sammarinese governments have traditionally consisted of various combinations of parties, and that it remarkably appears as if every combination between parties is possible, regardless of these parties' respective ideological and programmatic orientations. Christian-democrats, communists, socialists, and liberals have at various times all cooperated with each other in coalition governments.[53] One academic in this context said that:

> "The fact is that we now have a coalition in government that has the extreme right, *Alleanza Nazionale*, and also the socialists, NPS – the new socialist party, which is a little socialist formation, and they are in the same government. It's transversal. Between the two coalitions, the programs are almost equal."

According to various respondents, the relative unimportance of ideology in San Marino is primarily a consequence of the intimate social relationships between citizens and politicians that result from the smallness of the country. Since virtually all citizens personally know one or more politicians, voting behavior appears to be essentially motivated by personal considerations, as a result of which the importance of programmatic ideas seems to diminish.[54] One journalist explained this as follows:

> "You have to compare it to the difference between a city election and a national election in Italy. When you vote in a city election, you don't look at left or right, you look at the people that are there. Here it is the same thing; you do not vote for a person because he is left or right, but because it's him you want. You don't worry if it's Sinistra Unita or Democrazia Cristiana; it does not matter."[55]

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[53] In this regard the *Compromesso Storico* of 1986 can be seen as a watershed moment in Sammarinese political history, since it brought together the formal archrivals of Sammarinese politics (communists and Christian-democrats) in one government. A similar agreement was never achieved in the First Italian Republic.

[54] Volatility between elections might theoretically constitute a good indicator of personalistic voting behavior, in the sense that if people constantly vote for the same persons volatility can be expected to be low. Due to the fragmentation of the Sammarinese party system however, volatility remains around European averages (on average 11.6% (0.116) over the period 1949 - 2008, compare Dalton et al. 2000: 41).

[55] In this sense, voting behavior in San Marino can perhaps be compared to voting behavior in other non-political elections with a very small number of voters, like for example university-elections to form a student council. In this sort of elections people also tend to vote primarily on the basis of their personal relations, and although student parties might for instance present

With one exception all interviewees argued that the differences between the parties are primarily personalistic in nature. Sammarinese politics therefore appears to revolve essentially around personalities, and the case study-literature indicates that since the Second World War, government coalitions have largely been constructed and terminated on the basis of interpersonal relationships. The three or four main traditional parties of San Marino have to a large extent disintegrated due to personal conflicts, and new parties have been established on the basis of political opportunism on the part of several individual politicians (Bacciocchi 1999: 97, 145, 147, 175).[56] One politician for example pointed out that:

> "The micro-parties are evidently personalistic; they originate from personal contrasts within the larger parties. Then there are some parties which are only and exclusively formed out of political opportunism. I can see at least two of them. They will align themselves with anyone."[57]

Whereas contestation for political positions definitely occurs in the Republic, the political alternatives therefore appear to be much more defined in terms of personalities than in terms of policies.

In the introduction to this chapter, I pointed out that Sammarinese politicians often combine their political job with other societal functions or positions, and that many of them have been active in Sammarinese public life for a long time. In terms of contestation, this implies that the group of people who compete for political offices is inherently small, and that these individuals know each other really well. Due to the tiny population size, only a handful of people are willing and able to assume political positions and pursue a political career, and these people form the closely interlinked and well-connected political elite of San Marino. It is hardly surprising that in such an environment, political decisions are often not made on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis of different policy options, but on the basis of alliances and feuds between persons within

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certain policy-proposals, the differences between such 'parties' are mostly mainly personal instead of programmatic.

[56] The formation of coalitions has arguably served to enhance this opportunism. The current governing coalition, the *Patto per San Marino*, consists of seven parties among which a (supposedly) extreme-right party (the *Alleanza Nazionale*) and a social-democratic party (the *Nuovo Partito Socialista*). This latter party seems to have joined the right-wing coalition only for opportunistic reasons. The contemporary opposition, united in the *Riforme e Libertà*, consists of socialists, neo-communists, Christian-democrats, and liberals, and is therefore as ideologically incoherent as the governing coalition.

[57] "*I micro-partiti, è evidente che sono partiti personalistici; provengono dei contrasti personali nei partiti più grandi. Poi ci sono alcuni partiti che si formano solo ed esclusivamente per opportunismo politico. Io ne vedo almeno due. Questi si alleano con tutti.*"

the elite instead. According to a historian I interviewed, this circumstance strongly impedes on the creation of continuity:

> "It is difficult when you do something positive in politics; a nice project or something positive for the country, then it's difficult to have continuity, because when there is a change of government (...) the changer will break off the project started, without thinking about it on the theoretical level."

The absence of ideological divergence in the Sammarinese party system is matched by the absence of strong (ideological) cleavages in the country's society. A majority of respondents asserted that the country's population is categorically really homogeneous, and that the strong economic development from the 1960s onwards has created a high level of prosperity across the board. Although no data on income differences (such as the Gini-coefficient) are available for San Marino, in 2011 unemployment figures were for example at around 5%, which is half of Italy's figure (San Marino Statistics Office 2011). Although San Marino receives a score of 0.29 in Alesina et al.'s fractionalization index (2003),[58] this score is due to the Italians that compose about 12% of the microstate's population, but these have no say in domestic Sammarinese politics. On account of the categorical homogeneity of the Sammarinese society, in conclusion no major socio-economical cleavages appear to exist between different segments of the country's population.

As a consequence of the absence of politicized cleavages and the absence of major socio-economic differences in the Sammarinese society, no major differences in political preferences appear to exist among the Sammarinese population; respondents asserted that the country's extensive welfare provisions and facilities are undisputed, and that nobody would argue in favor of tax increases. Some respondents pointed to the likelihood that the current economic crisis leads to a political reconfiguration and economic restructuring, but this remains to be seen. In combination with the closeness and intimacy of San Marino's small society, the absence of cleavages and the presence of categorical homogeneity thus can be assumed to create the basis for personalistic instead of programmatic contestation.

Virtually all of my respondents have described San Marino's society as heavily politicized, in the sense that politics permeates all segments of the country's public life. Since contestation is essentially personalistic in nature, and since the small population size implies that every Sammarinese family has one or

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[58] This index measures ethnic, religious, and linguistic fractionalization, and ranges between 1 and 0, with 0 indicating the absence of fractionalization, and 1 indicating a completely fractionalized society.

more members who are politically active, people are often judged or identified on the basis of their surname or place of residence. As various respondents indicated, the members of a family which has for example always supported the Christian-democratic party are unlikely to change their support; on the one hand because of the traditional allegiances of the family, and on the other hand because of the family members that continue to be active for the party. As one interest group-representative explained in this regard:

> "There is this political classification, because traditions within the family might entail a certain political orientation. We automatically know who people are, and it's an old habit to classify people."[59]

These political classifications and branding also have their drawbacks however, because various individuals explained to me that they can impede on equal treatment and impartiality in for example schools and non-political offices. When it comes to the indicator of freedom to support the opposition, it can therefore be remarked that although no major constraints exist on supporting a particular political party, the smallness of San Marino entails that people are generally highly aware of each other's political preferences, and that this may influence their behavior vis-à-vis one another.

5.2. Contestation: the Balance of Power between Institutions

In addition to the presence of competition for public office, contestation also alludes to the horizontal distribution of power between the various public offices that are contested, and between non-elected institutions that nevertheless play an important role in a democratic political system, like the judiciary, the media, and the civil service. Among Dahl's eight criteria for polyarchy is the availability of alternative sources of information, which can be translated into the existence of an independent press. In similar fashion, political contestation is meaningless if the institution that is open to competition is actually powerless or controlled by a non-elected body. Number eight of Dahl's criteria is the existence of "institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference" (Dahl 1971: 3), and this condition calls for the presence of certain checks and balances (or at least a reasonable horizontal distribution of power) between the various institutions for which contestation occurs.

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[59] "*C'è la catterizzazione politica perché tradizioni interne di una famiglia avevano un indirizzo politico di un certo tipo. Conosciamo automaticalmente le persone, e questa è una vecchia abitudine, di classificare le persone.*"

Since the ministers in the Sammarinese government are for the main part powerful individuals that have been in politics for a relatively long time, and since they establish and sustain strong relations with people from all segments of society, a clear majority or interviewees argued that the Sammarinese government has an exceptionally powerful and dominant position in relation to other political or societal institutions. The Sammarinese parliament only consists of part-time politicians, who often exercise important societal functions in addition to their parliamentarian job, allowing them to accumulate a great amount of influence as well.[60] This means that it can be hard for institutions that ought to function autonomously or as a check on the power of government and parliament, such as the judiciary and the media, to preserve their independent and neutral positions. The smallness of San Marino exacerbates this tendency, since respondents emphasize that it causes these other institutions to suffer from a lack of resources in terms of finances, qualified personnel, and therefore professionalism.

Since the Sammarinese parliament appoints people to many other state institutions, the Great and General Council has been described as an exceptionally strong legislature (Sundhaussen 2003: 219; Eccardt 2005: 287). Due to the fragmenting party system governments have become more unstable, which could have further enhanced the position of parliament. However, the 1990s-reforms that were aimed at creating a more clear separation of power between the executive, legislative, and judicial powers arguably have strengthened the position of government vis-à-vis parliament. Since government ministers are no longer members of parliament, the legislators that I interviewed perceive their control over the actions of government to be diminishing rather than augmenting in recent years. Respondents affiliated with the opposition indicated that the parliamentary opposition is ignored by a much more powerful government and parliamentary majority, but interviewees associated with the government expressed an opposite opinion. Therefore it is hard to estimate the status of the Sammarinese legislature in relation to the country's government.

In addition to more common legislative functions, the Council also has a number of judicial powers, such as the competence to grant pardons, amnesty, and to repeal a criminal judgment (Duursma 1996: 219). The fact that judges are appointed by and responsible to the Council is a source of concern, and according to some of the politicians I interviewed frustrates the autonomy of the judiciary;

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[60] On the website of the Great and General Council (www.consigliograndeegenerale.sm), it can be seen that virtually all MPs have a secondary profession, such as lawyer, doctor, businessman, or freelancer.

"The judiciary is not independent; the judges are nominated by the government. All systems, from health care to the judiciary, all of them, depend on the government. And this brings distortions, because there is no real freedom. I am not saying that there is a dictatorship because some things do not work. But judicial choices are never free; they are always influenced by politics, always."[61]

The opinion that the judiciary is not independent was definitely not shared by most of my other respondents, and especially journalists asserted that judges had often ruled in their favor, i.e. against politicians or the government. In addition, a wide majority of interviewees cherished the fact that most judges are Italians, which they perceived to enhance the impartial and independent status of the judiciary. Whereas virtually all respondents argued that the Sammarinese judiciary is free and fair, concerns about the disproportional influence that politicians have on the appointment of judges were also voiced by some of them. Without details, Freedom House simply concludes that the judiciary of San Marino "is independent" (Freedom House 2012).

The Sammarinese media landscape consists of three daily newspapers,[62] one television and radio station (San Marino RTV) that is owned by the government, and a handful of weblogs and online newspapers.[63] Whereas the television station has a big staff and according to all respondents receives ample state funding, the newspaper-journalists complained that they have a very small staff of mostly non-professional journalists, are for the predominant part owned by persons with extensive public and financial interests, and receive only very limited financial resources from the state. Since the potential public and hence also the sales revenues are inherently limited,[64] the newspapers of San Marino find themselves in an unfortunate position to start with, which is further amplified by a lack of staff, lack of professionalism, and lack of financial support. Being financially dependent on others, the Sammarinese journalists I interviewed complain that they do not always feel free to publish their news reports, since these might run against the interests of some of their donors;

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[61] "*La giustizia non è indipendente; i giudici vengono nominati dal governo. Tutti i sistemi, dalla sanità alla giustizia, tutti, dipendono dallo stato condizionalmente. Questo porta distorzione, perché non c'è libertà vera. Non sto dicendo che c'è una dittatura perché qualcosa non funziona. Però le scelte giudizarie non sono mai libere, sono sempre comunque influenzate dalla politica, sempre.*"

[62] *La Tribuna Sammarinese*, *San Marino Oggi*, and *l'Informazione*. The existence of (formally) non-affiliated newspapers is rather novel, because until the 1990s only partisan newspapers existed in the Republic.

[63] Of which *Libertas – Notizie San Marino* (www.libertas.sm) and *Giornale.sm* are among the most prominent.

[64] Newspaper journalists told me that a Sammarinese newspaper typically sells a few hundred copies a day.

> "We don't know who is behind our journals, and for democracy this is not a good thing. It's very difficult to be independent here, because the government gives some money to the journals, but very little. And so we have to take advertisements, and we give away our control. You always have a lot of pressure."

The fact that the ownership of the newspapers is in the hands of persons with public interests who occupy a central position in San Marino's public life may well go at the cost of the quality or impartiality of the newspapers. Despite these limitations, in the Freedom of the Press-index San Marino receives a score of 17 on a 100-point scale in which 100 stands for 'least free', indicating that the press has ample freedom of expression (Freedom House 2012).[65] In comparison to the written press, the only existing Sammarinese television station has much more resources, staff, and professionalism, but the fact that it is owned by the government and occupies a monopolistic position readily leads to questions about its autonomy. Interviews with newspaper journalists and politicians have revealed that there are indeed some concerns with regard to the position and independence of San Marino RTV;

> "This is a major limitation for San Marino. The only television, the state television, is monopolistic, which means that it is not possible to establish another. And this is really bad."[66]

Since Sammarinese political contestation focuses on persons and not on policies or ideas, it is no wonder that the bulk of news is also oriented towards individual persons and politicians. This is a source of great annoyance to the public officials I interviewed, and by accusing them of defamation, legal action against journalists occurs frequently. According to one politician;

> "Unfortunately, scandals or sensational things in politics are often more important than other issues. Here, there is not really any substantial attention on the part of the media for the true interests of San Marino. Often, stories get published that are incorrect or exaggerated."[67]

The Sammarinese journalists, on the other hand, perceive recurrent legal action as an attempt on the part of politicians to reduce their independence. In recent years the number of online newspapers and blogs has grown dramatically, and

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[65] In its reports, Freedom House emphasizes that Sammarinese people have broad access to Italian print media, which obviously increases the number of alternative sources of information (Freedom House 2012).

[66] "*Questo è un grande limite di San Marino. L'unica televisione, di stato, è monopolistica, cioè non è possibile farne un'altra. E questo è molto grave.*"

[67] "*Purtroppo, lo scandalo o la cosa eclatante nella politica diventa più importante delle altre cose. Per cui non c'è una attenzione da parte dei media veramente sugli interessi di San Marino. Spesso vengono sparate le notizie che non sono vere, oppure sono esagerate.*"

according to many respondents these can be a fruitful alternative form of journalism, since they are widely accessible and are not financially dependent.

In terms of contestation, two major effects of size on San Marino's politics can be noted. Even though political competition does occur and a political opposition is free and active, contestation is essentially based on personalistic issues and interpersonal relations instead of ideologies, policies, or programmatic considerations. With regard to the balance of power between political institutions, it can be observed that the legislative and executive powers occupy a relatively dominant position vis-à-vis the judiciary and especially the media, although this does not appear to significantly harm the independence and autonomy of these institutions. In line with the academic literature on the politics of small states, governmental dominance appears to result from size in the sense that smallness puts constraints on the number of resources available to other institutions, as a result of which the government is the only really professionally organized institution in the country (Sutton 2007a). Both patterns are therefore a direct consequence of the small size of San Marino, which creates a closely connected, homogenous population that is ruled by a minute, cohesive, yet often quarrelling elite.

Contrasting these findings with the theoretical literature, it can be seen that the predictions of Benedict (1967b) and Sutton (2007a) with regard to (exaggerated) personalism and governmental dominance are at least partially confirmed by the Sammarinese case. Additionally, the supposition of small-state homogeneity that follows from the work of Dahl and Tufte, and Anckar is corroborated by this analysis. However, whereas Anckar (1999: 30) hypothesized that homogeneity would create a spirit of "cooperativeness and accommodation", the Sammarinese case demonstrates that the absence of cleavages does not automatically generate more consensus or less factionalism. Instead of ideological competition, contestation in San Marino occurs on the inter-personal level, and in this sense political parties appear to camouflage the personalistic competition that drives politics in the country. Personalistic competition can obviously be more ferocious than policy-based contestation, and smallness in the Sammarinese case therefore absolutely does not imply more unity or consensus.

5.3. Inclusiveness: Relations between Citizens and Politicians

According to Dahl, inclusiveness refers to "the proportion of people entitled to participate on a more or less equal plane in controlling and contesting the conduct of government" (1971: 4). When it comes to political participation, the

literature on size and democracy, from Plato to the present, emphasizes that citizens of small states are likely to display increased feelings of attachment to the public good, awareness, and efficacy, and are therefore more likely to participate. On the other hand, the absence of strong societal cleavages might also diminish participation rates, especially if this limits the number of available alternatives. The closeness between citizens and politicians is supposed to foster opportunities for direct communication, which according to Dahl and Tufte has the potential to create a higher quality of responsiveness and representation (1973: 87). As the present section will demonstrate, the effects of closeness and direct contacts on the quality of inclusiveness in the case of San Marino are not as encouraging as this literature suggests.

The smallness of San Marino creates an environment in which citizens are not only closely connected to each other, but also to their politicians. It is very common for citizens to meet politicians when going out for dinner, to the supermarket, or when having a drink in a bar. Additionally, all Sammarinese citizens know at least some politicians because they are family members, neighbors, friends, colleagues, or because they used to go to the same school. As the literature suggests, this creates a situation in which people know each other through multiple role-relationships (Benedict 1967a: 6-9; Ott 2000: 94-95). Under such circumstances, there evidently is a risk that personal interests enter the political domain, with conflicts of interest looming large. Since personal relations determine political competition, the interminglement of public and private issues in Sammarinese politics is further facilitated. All eighteen of my respondents pointed to the significance of this closeness for politics in San Marino, and almost all of them argued that closeness has both advantages and disadvantages.

On the positive side, many respondents stressed the benefits of direct access of citizens to politicians, and the opportunities for direct and face to face communication. Reciprocal communication means that Sammarinese politicians are generally more aware of the political preferences and opinions of their electorate, which also means that they have increased opportunities with regard to political responsiveness. As two of the country's politicians said about direct contacts:

> "That could be positive according to some measures. Positive, because it gives a real, a constant measure of the problems and the items that the people, the citizens of San Marino, feel to be very important."

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> "Here, politicians are questioned every day, because (…) there is direct contact with the people. So I think that the political commitment is stronger here in San Marino, and this is also the reason why politics here is more lively."

Other respondents argued that the smallness of San Marino also enhances feelings of political involvement among citizens, since political decisions can more clearly have a direct impact on their lives. Although no data are available to support it, on the basis of interview data it certainly appears to be the case that meetings between Sammarinese citizens and politicians occur much more often than in larger states, both inside and outside formal institutional settings. With regard to the indicator of awareness and efficacy, among the Sammarinese citizenry it certainly appears to be the case that these figures are very high.

Although these positive effects of San Marino's size were mentioned by the majority of my interviewees, a larger part of them primarily highlighted the negative consequences of smallness. From the interviews, it can be extrapolated that the topics that are discussed during face-to-face contacts between citizens and politicians are mostly not matters of public interest, but private and individual interests instead. One of the former civil servants I interviewed pointed out that:

> "In this way citizens consider all that is possible. So you will go to a restaurant this evening, there is a minister there, and you can ask him what you want, about anything. And this is not completely correct, because in this way the citizens consider (…) that they can ask for everything. "I have a problem with my kid in school, would you be so kind to take a look at that school?", or "I have been to the hospital but the queue was too long; can you do something about that?" And if the politician is a clever guy or clever girl, they could use it".

Along the same lines, from the opposite perspective one of the politicians argued that:

> "In San Marino everyone, even the most insignificant individual, can influence politics. And this is a great limit of small countries, a very great limit. Every citizen has access to political leaders; because they are friends, because they are related, or because they love each other. (…) And this closeness makes it difficult to respect the law; in this country it is very difficult to respect the law. Especially because of this reason, because everyone seeks a way to circumvent the law. (…) So the minister who one day of every week receives the public does not receive people who ask for respect of their rights, but he receives people who ask him to break the law in their interest."[68]

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[68] "*A San Marino tutti, anche l'ultimo cittadino, può incidere sulla politica. E questa è un limite dei paesi piccoli, un limite molto grosso. Perché ogni cittadino ha accesso ai leader politici, e può farlo per amicizia, per parentela, o perché lo ama. (…) Questa vicinanza rende difficile il rispetto della legge; in questo paese è difficilissimo fare rispettare la legge. Proprio per questa ragione, perché tutti cercano delle strade alternative alla legge. (…) Quindi il Ministro che un giorno alla settimana riceve il pubblico, non riceve persone che chiedono il rispetto dei loro diritti, riceve persone che chiedono la violazione della legge nel loro interesse.*"

On the basis of a wide majority of the interviews, it appears that citizens often do not use their access to politicians to talk about politics and policies, but because they demand personal favors from politicians. Citizens thus appear inclined to mostly ignore or circumvent the official institutional channels for representation, and instead often directly pressure their politicians to bestow them with benefits. In this situation, multiple-role connections can obviously become a disadvantage, because personal, political, and public interests may become intertwined. According to three quarters of my respondents, clientelism and patronage are recurring phenomena in Sammarinese politics, and the smallness of the country increases the tendency to develop particularistic relationships.

Since clientelism is a covert and mostly unobservable practice, it is hard to gauge the extent to which it influences Sammarinese politics, and no data on this phenomenon are available. Several of my respondents attempted to downplay its significance, whereas others argued that it is a determining characteristic of politics. Due to the frequent contacts between citizens and politicians, the intimacy of San Marino's society, and the existence of multiple role-relationships, it seems that there generally is a high awareness among citizens about the actions and behavior of their politicians, although unfortunately no data is available to prove this. As a consequence of awareness, the citizens of San Marino recognize that clientelism has an influence on their country's politics, and the specific instances of politicians who have taken advantage of their position are generally well known. Paradoxically however, politicians are only seldom in any way penalized for their behavior, and continue to receive many votes despite their bad reputations. According to some of my respondents, clientelism is tolerated because everybody at some point benefits or has benefitted from it. Furthermore, clientelism leads to a situation in which many citizens are (financially) dependent on their government, which according to some respondents also discourages them to undertake any action against their politicians.

Although the prevalence of particularism is also common in larger countries, and San Marino's larger neighbor has a reputation for clientelism, it can be ascertained that the size of San Marino creates additional incentives to develop particularistic relationships. As discussed before, citizens often approach politicians with demands for favors, and due to multiple-role relations the pressures on politicians to comply with these demands can be formidable. Due to smallness, citizens therefore have stronger capacities to induce their politicians to deliver on them. On the other hand, as a result of the smallness of electoral districts and the increased likelihood that one or a few votes will make

the difference between winning and losing an election, Sammarinese politicians can have a strong enticement to attract these voters by offering rewards in return. On the sides of both citizens and politicians, smallness thus reinforces the profits that clientelistic bonds can entail.

In addition to clientelism, a majority of respondents alluded to patronage in the civil service as one of the major problems of the country, and one of the major effects of San Marino's small size. About a quarter of the Sammarinese workforce is hired by the state, which means that more than 5.000 people are working in the public sector (San Marino Statistics Office 2011). On the one hand, the oversized Sammarinese bureaucracy can be explained by the fact that being a small yet independent country, the government of San Marino has to execute all the duties and services of a larger state. On the other hand however, over half of my respondents believe that jobs in the public administration are often distributed by politicians to voters in exchange for political support, as the following business leaders mentions;

> "Everybody wants to go into the public administration, because you will have money and certain work for the rest of your life. So everybody will do everything to get into the public administration; even giving their votes in exchange for work. And this thing happens everywhere, but in a small country you feel it stronger."

According to respondents, salaries of Sammarinese civil servants are relatively high, jobs in the public sector are comparatively undemanding, and working conditions are excellent. As a consequence, jobs in the public sector are much more popular than in the private sector. In addition to the costs of running an oversized bureaucracy, various interviewees highlighted that patronage also impedes on the impartiality of the administration.

The large size of the bureaucracy also has consequences for San Marino's private sector. Firstly, since many parliamentarians are active in or even run some of the country's larger companies, conflicting private and public interests repeatedly emerge. The boundary between these two sectors often gets blurred, which makes it especially hard to implement economic reforms.[69] Secondly, since public sector-jobs are generally preferred over those in the private sector, the Sammarinese companies are left with less qualified employees. Whereas hiring Italians or other foreigners could be a solution to this problem, private sector-

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[69] In the context of the recent economic crisis and Italy's determinacy to bring an end to fiscal evasion and the preferential tax regime of San Marino, it is clear that an economic reorientation is necessary and that new and stringent rules will have to be introduced in the financial sector. However, with so many politicians directly involved in Sammarinese banks, until now this has been very hard to realize.

spokespersons point out that San Marino has stringent laws that force businesses to hire Sammarinese personnel;

> "Because the government wants to preserve the occupation in San Marino, if a company needs a person for itself, the office of government will check if there is a person in San Marino who has the same skills as the person you ask for in Italy. And so companies have a lot of problems, because they would like to take highly skilled persons, but there is the government that would like companies to take persons with no skills."

In this way, the smallness and closeness of San Marino not only create a civil service that is oversized and prone to partiality, but also undermine the efficiency and competitiveness of the country's private sector.

In addition to clientelism and patronage, several scholars have argued that small states are particularly prone to cronyism (particularistic relations with friends) and nepotism (particularistic relations with relatives). A large majority of my respondents however indicated that these two forms of favoritism are not very common in San Marino, in large part due to the extensive social control that prohibits such behavior. At the moment of my field research a large scandal had just erupted about a secretary of state who had allegedly changed the law to create a job for his son, and this instance of nepotism was very well-known and broadly condemned not only by my interviewees, but also among other Sammarinese citizens with whom I had conversations about politics.

5.4. Inclusiveness: Participation of Citizens

On the basis of the closeness and face-to-face contacts described in the previous paragraph, scholars have repeatedly assumed that levels of participation in small states are higher than in larger states. Inclusiveness first and foremost refers to the extent to which citizens participate in politics, and therefore take part in political contestation. As table 5.3 demonstrates, the participation of Sammarinese citizens at general elections has not been very high in comparison to the Western European average, but on closer inspection this is primarily a result of low turnout figures among emigrant voters. Domestically, voter turnout has usually reached levels of above 90 percent, and this is comparable to Italian figures, but whereas voting in Italy is compulsory this is not the case in San Marino. The table also reveals the declining significance of emigrant voters, who constituted almost half of the votes in 1959, but in 2008 only represented one tenth of the votes that were cast. This is both an effect of the shrinking

proportion of the external electorate, as well as strongly decreasing turnout levels among this group of voters.

In addition to general elections, voter turnout figures for the six most recent referendums have been presented in table 5.4. In this table, it can be seen that turnout varies strongly between different referendums, and no pattern can be detected here. Although separate figures for domestic and external turnout are only available for the two most recent referendums, the strong differences between these two measures are again clearly visible. Whereas data and statistics for voter turnout – which according to many scholars is the principal manifestation of participation – are available, unfortunately no data exist on membership of political parties and interest groups or participation at demonstrations, rallies, *Giunta*-elections, or *Istanze d'Arengo*. The turnout statistics reveal that political participation in San Marino is perhaps not as high as a part of the literature on size suggests, with domestic turnout at parliamentary elections as the major exception. For this figure, the smallness of San Marino indeed seems at the root of higher rates of political participation. Since interest in public matters and substantial political issues however appears to be generally low, an alternative explanation for high domestic turnout figures has to be found.

Table 5.3: Voter Turnout at Sammarinese Parliamentary Elections[70]

Year	Turnout				
	Total	**%Domestic Votes**	**Turnout Domestic**	**% External Votes[71]**	**Turnout External**
1945	57.5%	100	57.5%	-	-
1949	67.5%	100	67.5%	-	-
1951	62.5%	100	62.5%	-	-
1955	70.1%	100	70.1%	-	-
1959	85.7%	52.3	99.1%	47.7	74.7%
1964	84.0%	60.4	97.3%	39.6	69.5%
1969	80.1%	65.8	94.0%	34.2	61.2%
1974	79.7%	70.8	94.2%	29.2	58.0%
1978	79.0%	75.2	93.1%	24.8	53.3%
1983	79.7%	76.2	93.4%	23.8	54.3%
1988	81.1%	73.8	94.9%	26.2	57.6%
1993	80.3%	73.7	94.9%	26.3	56.1%
1998	75.3%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
2001	73.8%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
2006	71.8%	n.a.	90.8%	n.a.	33.3%
2008	68.5%	88.6	89.8%	11.4	24.0%

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[70] Source: www.elezioni.sm. For several elections and referendums, no separate data and statistics for domestic and external votes have been published or reported.
[71] Expatriate Sammarinese citizens can vote in Sammarinese elections since 1959.

Year	Total Turnout	Domestic Turnout	External Turnout
1997	46.4%	n.a.	n.a.
1999	56.2%	n.a.	n.a.
2003	35.1%	n.a.	n.a.
2005	21.7%	n.a.	n.a.
2008	35.4%	49.8%	5.6%
2011	40.4%	59.1%	4.7%

When it comes to the more informal characteristics of participation in San Marino, personalism and particularism are again the defining terms. The notion of Montesquieu and Rousseau that small state-citizens display higher levels of interest in public matters must be disconfirmed for the Sammarinese case. According to a wide majority of the persons I talked with, many citizens of San Marino are primarily politically interested and active because of the direct effects of politics on their personal well-being, and not because of a genuine interest in the well-being of the country. As one of the MPs I interviewed explained:

> "We are really close but also really far away from each other, because the population is generally apolitical or disinterested. They have not participated much in order to be involved."[72]

Since political contestation principally revolves around personalities instead of policies, it can be no surprise that political participation in San Marino is also primarily oriented towards individuals and personal benefits. According to a large majority of respondents, electoral clientelism occurs regularly and is a major problem for the country. Clientelism however also partially seems to be an explanation of high (domestic) turnout rates at national elections, since this is the primary instance in which voters demonstrate political loyalty and support to their political patrons.

Clientelism during elections can for a large part be attributed to San Marino's small electorate, as a consequence of which the significance of a single or a few votes rises markedly (Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Due to face-to-face contacts and the intimacy of the country's society, politicians can relatively accurately estimate the number of (preferential) votes they need in order to be elected. The Sammarinese electoral law invites voters to cast three preference votes on their ballot, which gives Sammarinese elections a strongly personal dimension. This voting rule according to many respondents further encourages

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[72] "*Siamo molto vicini ma molto distanti, perché la popolazione è tendenzialmente apolitica o disinteressata. Non ha fatto molto per essere coinvolta*".

clientelism, and election results demonstrate that several of the 'dinosaurs' in Sammarinese politics gather an impressive number of preferential votes, especially in comparison to the total number of votes that their party receives. In table 5.5, which lists the ten politicians with the highest number of preferential votes in the 2008 parliamentarian elections, it can be seen that a small number of politicians collect the wide majority of preferential votes of their party, and that many of these politicians have been politically active for multiple decades. The table hence accurately illustrates the personal nature of Sammarinese politics.

Table 5.5: Candidates with Highest Number of Preferential Votes in 2008 Election[73]

Name	Party	Preference Votes and % of Party Votes	Total Votes for Party	Years Active in Politics
Giancarlo Venturini	PDCS	1.225 (18.3 %)	6.692	15
Antonella Mularoni	AP	1.174 (48.6 %)	2.415	19
Pasquale Valentini	PDCS	1.118 (16.7 %)	6.692	24
Gabriele Gatti	PDCS	1.107 (16.5 %)	6.692	38
Paride Andreoli	PSD	881 (13.1 %)	6.702	40
Fiorenzo Stolfi	PSD	762 (11.4 %)	6.702	34
Fabio Berardi	PDCS	700 (10.5 %)	6.692	34
Silvia Cecchetti	PSD	607 (9.1 %)	6.702	-
Claudio Podeschi	PDCS	569 (8.6 %)	6.629	24
Marino Riccardi	PSD	566 (8.4 %)	6.702	40

According to my interviewees, clientelism has been especially poignant with regard to the votes of expatriate Sammarinese citizens. Table 5.3 demonstrates that the vote share of emigrants is quite significant, although it is steadily decreasing. At times of poverty and economic and financial hardship, many Sammarinese citizens have emigrated, primarily to Italy, the United States, France, and Argentina. In total, over 12.000 Sammarinese nationals now live abroad, which represents approximately one third of the population (San Marino Statistics Office 2011). After the Second World War, a protracted political discussion evolved over the question of emigrant voting rights, especially because it was believed that their votes would benefit the Christian-democratic party at the expense of the socialists and communists. Since correspondence voting was abolished in 1966, citizens living abroad have to come to San Marino to cast their vote, and the travels of those wanting to do so were paid by the state

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[73] Source: www.elezioni.sm. Since the order of candidates on the party list is alphabetically determined, this indicator cannot be used to measure the political appeal of individual candidates.

until 1996 (Bacciocchi 1999: 143). Many people think that individual politicians or parties are now paying the emigrants to come to San Marino to vote:

> "A large part of our population lives outside of San Marino. There was a great scandal here in San Marino, because politicians went to Argentina or the United States to really buy the votes of emigrant people. This vote is very important, because it can really decide who governs and who not. Someone made a video of Argentineans who came to hotels in Rimini, and who were paid to come here and vote."

Since the rewards of clientelism are so direct and obvious, and since at least some politicians appear to win elections primarily due to their particularistic networks, not engaging in clientelism is likely to result in a defeat at the polls. This provides additional incentives for politicians to establish and develop such networks, and makes it very hard to counter this trend.

If the findings of this section are contrasted with the theoretical literature on inclusiveness and participation in small states, it becomes clear that the non-substantively politically interested populations that have been found to exist in Eastern Caribbean, (Peters 1992; Duncan and Woods 2007), African (Seibert 1999), and Pacific (Larmour 1994; Powell 2007) microstates for a large part can be identified in San Marino as well. This finding is remarkable in light of the fact that San Marino is neither a new democracy nor located in a lesser developed region of the world, which all the non-European microstates both are. It appears to be the case, however, that the arguments of Benedict, Lowenthal, and Sutton with regard to the effect of size on participation can be substantiated; in the case of San Marino smallness indeed leads to personalistic and particularistic forms of participation, and high turnout rates can be explained on the basis of particularistic rather than programmatic reasons. In summary, my research has revealed that although the positive elements of closeness and face-to-face contacts are present in San Marino, these are largely overshadowed by the more ominous effects of favoritism and personalism.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

On the basis of both its political history and contemporary political institutions, the political system of San Marino by all means appears highly democratic. All eight of Dahl's criteria for polyarchy are met, political contestation for the most important political institutions takes place, and all adult Sammarinese citizens have the right to participate in their country's political system. With the exception of a number of idiosyncratic institutions like the Council of Twelve and the Captains Regent, the impact of smallness on San Marino's institutional structure seems limited, since the country employs representative institutions

that are comparable to those of other, larger democracies in the region. From a formal institutional perspective, San Marino thus in many ways appears to be a rather typical Western European democracy.

Table 5.6: San Marino's Scoring on the Indicators of Contestation and Inclusiveness

Dimension	Section	Indicator	Classification of San Marino
Contestation	Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition	Free and Fair Elections	Present
		Party System	Multiple (ENP >5)
		(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Regularly
		Interest Articulation by Parties	Does occur in manifestoes but voting behavior and political dynamics are person-oriented
		Freedom to Support the Opposition	Present, but political branding is common
	Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions	Freedom of the Press	Press free (FotP-score 17), but weak and unprofessional
		Status of the Legislature	Not really clear; different opinions among respondents
		Status of the Judiciary	Impartial, but concerns about appointment procedures of judges; most judges foreigners
		Status of the Bureaucracy	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage
Inclusiveness	Relations between Citizens and Politicians	Contact With and Access to Representatives	Continuous contact and access
		Nature of Contacts between Citizens and Politicians	Particularistic and personalistic
		Political Awareness and feelings of Efficacy of Citizens	High
	Political Participa-tion of Citizens	Universal Suffrage	Present
		Turnout at Elections and Other Plebiscites	(Very) high at elections, mixed at referendums
		Party Membership	No data available
		Participation in Political Activities	No data, but according to respondents seems to be high

The present in-depth analysis of the practical and informal aspects of Sammarinese politics however reveals that size actually has a strong impact on the conduct of politics in the microstate. If the findings of this case study are matched with the theoretical discussion on the effects of size in chapters 2 and 3, it can be seen that the arguments of more skeptical scholars like Benedict, Lowenthal, Sutton, Peters, and Baker turn out to be more valid than those of the academics who are optimistic about smallness. In the case of San Marino, homogeneity leads to the absence of cleavages, the prevalence of personalistic over programmatic contestation, and personalistic voting behavior. The closeness between citizens and politicians induces multiple-role relations, conflicts of interest, and perhaps most disturbingly, the incidence of various forms of particularism and favoritism. In the absence of resources and professionalism, and due to politicization and multiple-role relations, the autonomy and capacity of the judiciary, media and the civil service vis-à-vis government and parliament are sometimes challenged, as a consequence of which these latter institutions assume a considerably more powerful position.

On the basis of its classification on the indicators of contestation and inclusiveness that were formulated in the methodological chapter, table 5.6 provides a summarized overview of the influence of size on the Sammarinese political system. The table adequately demonstrates that whereas the advantages of smallness (i.e. closeness and contacts between citizens and politicians, higher forms of participation, efficacy, and awareness) to a large degree do materialize, with regard to contestation size appears to induce personalistic rather than programmatic contestation, and with regard to inclusiveness it principally seems generate more particularistic-oriented forms of participation. On the basis of these results, the question can be posed whether the imitation or adoption of institutional structures that in large part originated in larger states (in this case primarily Italy) is a fruitful or practical way to organize the political system of such a small society. Sammarinese politics is based on the premise of competing political parties, but voting behavior seems essentially person-oriented and mostly unrelated to the political programs and platforms of these parties. In similar fashion, it should be questioned whether, as a result of the country's smallness, the Sammarinese electoral system and state organization harm rather than advance the quality of politics, as they primarily appear to stimulate clientelism and patronage. In this sense, more direct forms of participation and inclusiveness (such as the *Arengo*) might be more feasible to organize politics in such a small state.

In the wake of the global economic crisis and the recently emerging combat against preferential tax regimes, San Marino's economic and political structures have recently come under severe pressure. Whereas clientelism and patronage were much less controversial in the preceding decades of strong economic growth, in the last two years this is unmistakably changing. The option of EU-accession is now seriously debated, and the need for reform is broadly heard. However, without wanting to be overtly deterministic, with regard to particularism San Marino seems to find itself embroiled in a catch-22 situation that is not easily adjusted. In large part, particularism can be explained by the country's small size, which provides strong incentives on the part of both politicians and citizens to develop patron-client networks. Without pressure or help from external actors like the EU, it seems to be very hard to counter this political pattern. Recent debates in San Marino focus on the potential influence of the mafia in the country's politics and financial institutions.[74] An often-heard complaint is that whereas San Marino used to be a country of high morals and a safe-haven for the oppressed and persecuted, it now has become a corrupted safe-haven for shady people with too much money.

The suggestion that follows from the findings of this chapter is that any academic examination of microstate-politics should proceed beyond the level of statistics and formal political institutions. Precisely because of their smallness, the informal level of microstate-politics reveals much more about the political consequences of size than the formal, institutional level does (cf. Hinds 2008). This finding opens up the possibility that despite all their differences on the formal, institutional level, the informal political characteristics of St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Palau are relatively similar to those of San Marino. Since the informal political features of San Marino are in large part determined by size, a similar pattern can be expected for the other three cases.

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[74] This belief is actually quite widespread, and all major newspapers have reported about it. Attention has focused on links between several politicians with the Calabrian mafia group *'Ndrangheta*. Although no legal steps have yet been taken, concerned Sammarinese citizens have established online communities and now often organize rallies and demonstrations, for example at the inauguration of new Captains Regent.

CHAPTER SIX

Politics or Politricks?

The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

Figure 6.1: Location and Map of St. Kitts and Nevis[1]

1. Introduction: the Eastern Caribbean Political Context

On the 10th of August, 1998, 61.7 percent of Nevisian citizens cast a vote in favor of secession of their island from the federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.[2] Although the referendum just failed to reach the two-thirds majority in favor of independence that the constitution requires for this to succeed, the result of the referendum reflected the strong dissatisfaction among Nevisian citizens with the existing federal union with their larger sister island. As the referendum failed to result in the dissolution of the federation, as of yet the Eastern Caribbean island state of St. Kitts and Nevis remains the smallest federation in the world, and the smallest UN-member state in the Western hemisphere. The federation has a total population size of about 50.000 people, of whom approximately 35.000 live on the island (and federal state) of St. Kitts, and the remaining 15.000 people on the island (and federal state) of Nevis. Attaining independence and UN-membership

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[1] Retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (CIA World Factbook 2011)

[2] Officially, the name of the country is Saint Christopher and Nevis. According to the Constitution, both denotations are permissible (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 1.1). In recent decades, the more popular St. Kitts and Nevis has become the most often used name.

only in 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis is the youngest independent Caribbean state, and as of yet the last former British West Indian colony to acquire statehood.[3]

In terms of demographics, the population of St. Kitts and Nevis is for over 90 percent composed of blacks whose ancestors were brought to the islands as slaves, with small groups of mulattoes, Indians, and whites making up the remainder of the population. English is the only official language on the islands and is spoken by everyone, and in terms of religion virtually the entire population is Christian, and consists of Anglicans, Evangelicals, and Catholics (CIA World Factbook 2011). According to World Bank figures, in 2010 St. Kitts and Nevis had a GDP-per capita figure of US $12.500, which is comparable to that of the other Eastern Caribbean island states, and makes the federation a middle-income country (World Bank 2011).[4] Although no data such as the Gini-coefficient are available, in terms of the distribution of welfare secondary sources suggest that no major income differences exist in the country, and that the population as a whole has become more affluent in recent years (Griffin 1994: 238). Due to migration to mainly the United Kingdom and the United States, about 32.000 Kittitians and Nevisians live in a foreign country.

In the academic literature, St. Kitts and Nevis is usually analyzed as part of the wider Anglophone Caribbean region.[5] According to scholars who study this region, the political systems of the Anglophone Caribbean are characterized by 1) the preservation and maintenance of political democracy, 2) the predominance of Westminster-Whitehall political institutions, and 3) a distinct Caribbean political culture, which has a number of authoritarian features (Peters 1992: 20-21; Payne 1993a: 58; Thorndyke 1993: 151-154; Sutton 1999; Duncan and Woods 2007; Hinds 2008). Unlike larger, non-Anglophone countries in the region such as Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic,[6] the formerly British West Indian islands have for the overwhelming part experienced only

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[3] Whereas most of the former British island colonies in the Caribbean are now independent countries, Anguilla, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the British Virgin Islands continue to be British Overseas Territories.

[4] In 2011, the federation furthermore had a Human Development Index of 0.735, and as such ranks 72nd in the world in terms of human development (World Bank 2011).

[5] Several other names for this region are sometimes used, such as the West Indies, the Eastern Caribbean, the Commonwealth Caribbean, the Lesser Antilles, or the Windward and Leeward islands. These names cover different groups of islands, but St. Kitts and Nevis forms part of all of them.

[6] In fact, larger Caribbean states have seen some of the most authoritarian and repressive governments in history, such as Fidel Castro's communist regime in Cuba, the governments of "Papa Doc" and "Baby Doc" Duvalier in Haiti, and Rafael Trujillo's 30-year rule of the Dominican Republic.

democratic rule since their independence.[7] In fact, the prevalence of democracy in the Anglophone Caribbean has raised the attention of several scholars, and has resulted in what the distinguished Caribbean scholar Jorge Domínguez calls 'the Caribbean question' (Domínguez 1993: 3).[8] Since attaining independence in 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis is one of the West Indian island states that have commonly and consistently been ranked as a democracy.

Whereas many scholars have cherished and applauded the Anglophone Caribbean islands for the preservation of democratic political institutions, others have expressed more mixed views on the democratic nature of the region. According to David Hinds, a scholarly divide can be observed between academics who primarily examine formal democratic institutions and who are generally positive about the level of democracy in the region (which is what Hinds calls the 'formalist' perspective), and those who emphasize informal political aspects, political culture, and the more substantial quality of democracy (the 'anti-formalist' perspective; Hinds 2008: 393-394). The latter group of scholars highlight that Westminster institutions are unsuitable for the Caribbean political context, as they primarily generate extreme partisan polarization, top-down authoritarian leadership, and the exploitation of state resources to finance clientelism and patronage (Peters 1992: 21; Duncan and Woods 2007: 211-213). On the basis of these considerations, it can be hypothesized that the formal, democratic institutional structure camouflages the more authoritarian political features of the Caribbean (Emmanuel 1993: 2-4).[9]

Against this theoretical background, the present chapter will offer an overview of the influence of size on the political system and context of St. Kitts and Nevis. The analysis is based on field research conducted in the federation in

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[7] The Marxist New Jewel Movement (NJM) that ruled Grenada between 1979 and 1983 constitutes the sole and major exception. Larger former British colonies in the Caribbean such as Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Barbados have also maintained democracy since their independence. Guyana, which is located on the Southern American continent but is often perceived to be part of the Caribbean in terms of (political) culture, witnessed authoritarian rule between 1964 and 1985 under the rule of Forbes Burnham. It is now commonly seen as a democracy.

[8] The specific quotes of Domínguez in this context are: "no other region in what has been called the Third World has had, for so long, so many liberal democratic polities. (...) The Caribbean's capacity to sustain liberal democratic politics is impressive. Since independence (...) ten of twelve (...) Anglophone Caribbean countries have consistently held fair elections and have been free from unconstitutional transfers of power" (Domínguez 1993: 2-3).

[9] In the words of Donald Peters; "[i]n spite of the existence of open, regular elections, opposition parties, and other institutional aspects of a modern democracy, the governmental system of the Eastern Caribbean does not function like a democracy" (Peters 1992: 2). In similar fashion, Anthony Payne argues that "[t]he political order of the Commonwealth Caribbean (...) is unique – a mixture of First World theory with Third World practice, British form with Caribbean vitality. It is not without its flaws; it may not live up fully to some of the ideals of democracy" (Payne 1993a: 72).

January 2011. As part of the research, semi-structured interviews were held with thirteen Kittitian and Nevisian respondents, among whom the Governor-General, government ministers, members of parliament affiliated with the government and the opposition, journalists, the ombudsman, academics, and the executive officer of the chamber of commerce.[10] The chapter starts off with an overview of the political history of the federation, after which two sections are devoted to outlining the microstate's democratic institutions and explaining their continued existence. Subsequently, the influence of size on the politics of St. Kitts and Nevis is examined by analyzing the nature and quality of contestation and inclusiveness. In four successive paragraphs, I assess the characteristics of political competition, the relations between political and societal institutions, the effects of closeness and direct contacts, and the political participation of citizens. The chapter ends with a summary and evaluation of the main findings.

2. Political History and Democratization of St. Kitts and Nevis

Like the other islands of the Eastern Caribbean, the indigenous Carib and Arawak populations of St. Kitts and Nevis were virtually annihilated by the European colonizers.[11] The Europeans imported slaves from the African continent to work on sugar plantations, and the contemporary population of the federation is therefore in large majority composed of descendants of these slaves. The islands of Saint Christopher and Nevis were discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493, but in subsequent centuries control over the islands changed frequently between the Spanish, French, and British colonial administrations.[12]   In the beginning of the 17th century, the first British and French colonies in the Caribbean were established on St. Kitts (hence called the "mother colony" of the Caribbean), and the island was divided into British and French zones.[13] The first African slaves were imported to the island to work on newly established sugar

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[10] A complete list of the people I interviewed can be found in the appendix. Throughout the chapter, I occasionally use interview quotes to underline or illustrate my findings and the analytical narrative. Due to the strong interpersonal relations and the smallness of St. Kitts and Nevis's society, I have decided not to disclose the names and professions of the people to whom the specific interview excerpts belong.

[11] In 1626, the British and French settlers on St. Kitts massacred large numbers of Caribs in a place that is now known as Bloody Point. These events have now been documented as the Kalinago Genocide.

[12] Saint Christopher (*San Cristóbal*) was named after the patron saint of travel, whereas Nevis was named after *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves*, a reference to a 4th century miracle in ancient Rome.

[13] Over the course of the 17th century, the French and British used St. Kitts as a base from which they established colonial administrations on nearby islands.

cane plantations in this period as well (Simmonds 1985: 58; Harris 2008: 1-3). After 1713, both St. Kitts and Nevis finally came entirely under British control.

In 1660, what is now known as the 'old representative system' was established on the British part of St. Kitts (Harris 2008: 2). This system of colonial government strongly resembled the Westminster political model, with a Governor representing the British monarch on the island, and a legislative assembly in which members of the plantocracy and a number of merchants were represented. Despite formally being a British colony, the old representative system thus largely enabled the settlers of St. Kitts and Nevis to rule their islands as they desired. Although the system was designed for the exploitation and control of slave workers who formed the backbone of the islands' economies, conflicts between the assembly and the Governor time and again resulted in political deadlock (Simmonds 1987: 278-279). As a solution, the British government took over control and the islands became a British crown colony in 1867. Under crown colony rule, the powers and prerogatives of the Lieutenant-Governor were overwhelming and virtually unchecked (Peters 1992: 59; Inniss 2005: 29).[14]

From the 17th to the 20th century, the British experimented with various federations and unions between their West Indian island colonies, but in 1882 the three-island unit of St. Kitts, Nevis, and Anguilla was formed, with the Governor and central authority residing on St. Kitts, which was the largest of these islands (Midgett 2004: 45). Although London later decided to integrate these islands into larger units,[15] in 1962 St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla again became a separate British colony (Lewis 2002: 12-14). From the beginning of the union onwards, strong antagonisms characterized the relations between St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Kitts and Anguilla, as the two smaller islands opposed and challenged the dominant position of St. Kitts in the union. In particular, the peoples of Nevis and Anguilla felt that the interests and autonomy of their islands were neglected by the central government on St. Kitts (Inniss 1983: 1; Midgett 2004: 45-46; Dee 2001: 14).[16] On the other hand, people on the wealthier island of St. Kitts had the idea that they were forced to carry the

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[14] Although the plantation owners were reluctant to transfer their powers to the British government, they were aware of the increased physical security that this would bring.

[15] First the Leeward Islands Federation (between 1871 and 1956) and later the West Indies Federation (between 1958 and 1962).

[16] In the discourse on all three islands, Nevis and Anguilla were perceived to be colonies of St. Kitts. Inniss (1983: 9-10, 68) for example asserts that St. Kitts was in the paradoxical position of being both a colony and a colonizer, and that Britain had forced her to carry the burden of the two other islands. Nevisians on the other hand, felt that they were a colony of a colony, and were hence financially completely neglected (Murrain 1993: 6).

financial burden of the two lesser developed islands (Inniss 2005: 5). Whereas a highly profitable sugar industry was established on St. Kitts in the 17th and 18th century, the Nevisian and Anguillan economies were much less successful.[17] On Nevis a small peasantry emerged and the first tourism facilities of the Caribbean were set up, whereas Anguilla's economy was mainly based on fisheries (Inniss 1983: 2).

After the abolishment of slavery in 1834 and the emergence of new and more competitive sugar industries in Brazil and India, the sugar plantations on the Caribbean islands in general witnessed a period of decline. As the richest and most successful sugar colony in the Eastern Caribbean, St. Kitts was initially less affected by these developments than other islands in the region, but the economic situation on the island nevertheless deteriorated in the first decades of the 20th century (Inniss 2005: 45). Whereas Britain for a long time profited from its Caribbean colonies, at the end of the 19th century its control over these islands gradually turned into a financial burden. Several violent riots by the sugar workers occurred when their living conditions became more and more dismal, and in 1932 the Workers League was established, which vied for the representation of workers in the legislative council of the island (Inniss 1983: 102). Since Nevis and Anguilla did not have sugar plantations, no equivalent movements emerged here.

After ongoing riots and violence throughout the Eastern Caribbean, the British government appointed a special royal commission under the leadership of Lord Moyne to review and examine the social and political situation in their West Indian colonies. Although the Moyne-commission did not suggest immediate independence for the islands, it did recommend a host of social and political reform measures (Peters 1992: 62-64). In reaction, the British government decided to abolish crown colony rule and reintroduce elections on the islands, even though the franchise remained extremely restricted (Inniss 1983: 62).[18] In 1940, the Workers League was transformed into the St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla Trades and Labour Union, out of which the Labour Party emerged as a political arm. This party was led by the young plantation worker Robert L.

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[17] On Nevis a sugar industry was launched as well, but it was far less successful than on its neighboring island because the geological characteristics of Nevis were less appropriate for the cultivation of sugar cane (Dee 2001: 15; Midgett 2004: 46-47).

[18] The franchise established under the 1936 Constitution was based on the following property and income qualifications: 1) ownership of real property of the value of 100 pounds or payment of rent of 12 pounds per annum on real property, 2) payment of direct taxes of 15s. per annum in respect of the district in which the voter resides, 3) salary or income of 30 pounds per annum (Inniss 1983: 62). These requirements effectively excluded the overwhelming majority of the plantation workers from the electorate.

Bradshaw, who became its first leader in 1946, and was elected into the legislative council that same year.

Only in 1952, the first elections under universal suffrage were held in the colony. In all eight constituencies, also those in Nevis (2) and Anguilla (1), candidates from the Labour Party were elected, and Bradshaw became the colony's first Premier. Whereas the party and its leader were extremely popular on St. Kitts, their support on Nevis and Anguilla declined rapidly. In the 1957 elections, three independent MPs were elected on these two islands, who opposed the authorities on St. Kitts and especially the leadership of the Labour Party.[19] In expressing their opposition to the Labour Party, the peoples of Nevis and Anguilla conveyed their feeling that the government only represented Kittitian interests (Simmonds 1987: 282-283; Griffin 1994: 235; Dee 2001: 20-21). In 1965, the People's Action Movement (PAM) party was established and succeeded in forming the first realistic opposition to the Labour Party, winning two seats on Nevis and Anguilla in the 1966 elections (Midgett 2004: 52). Nevertheless, between 1952 and 1980 politics in the colony remained strongly dominated by the Labour Party, and especially by Bradshaw.

After a short militant rebellion (called the 'Anguillan Revolution'), Anguilla seceded from the union in 1967.[20] Nevis had expressed its wish for secession already many times before, but both the British and the Bradshaw-governments were reluctant to allow this to happen.[21] In 1970, the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) was formed with the primary aim of achieving complete autonomy for the island.[22] Winning one seat in the elections of 1971, and six of the nine seats in Nevisian local elections that same year, the NRP rapidly became the largest party on Nevis, thereby overtaking the position of the PAM (Dee 2001: 23-26). The rise of the NRP signaled the ultimate separation of

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[19] Since this party however managed to win all five constituencies in St. Kitts, it could manage to stay in power. When he was informed about the rejection of his party on Nevis and Anguilla, Bradshaw angrily declared to put "pepper in their soup and bones in their rice" (Midgett 2004: 43). He also stated that he would "not rest until I have reduced that place to a desert" and that Anguillans would have to "suck each other's bones" (Griffin 1994: 237).

[20] After this rebellion Anguilla became a separate British overseas territory, which it has remained until today. The PAM was accused of stimulating the Anguillan secession, and its leaders on St. Kitts were imprisoned (Simmonds 1987: 283).

[21] In fact, Nevis already opposed the creation of the union in 1882, and Nevisians commonly believe that the prosperity of their island has started to decline from the creation of a union onwards. In 1904, one of the two representatives from Nevis in the legislative assembly made the first plea for secession (Dee 2001: 16).

[22] The establishment of the NRP was a direct reaction to the sinking of the *Christena*-ferry and the ensuing death of 227 mainly Nevisian passengers that same year, for which the people on Nevis blamed the central government on St. Kitts.

Kittitian and Nevisian partisan politics, as both Labour and PAM eventually decided not to contest elections on Nevis any longer.

In the meantime, the once unshakable position of the Labour Party on St. Kitts began to erode, as people from the evolving middle-class started to support the more business-oriented PAM (Griffin 1994: 238). Real change arrived with the death of Bradshaw in 1978, and of his successor and co-founder of the Labour Party Paul Southwell one year later. In the pivotal 1980 elections, the PAM won three out of seven Kittitian seats, and together with the two Nevisian seats of the NRP it was able to form a coalition government under the leadership of Dr. Kennedy Simmonds (Griffin 1994: 239; Harris 2008: 14).[23] Shortly after the new government was formed, the two parties which paradoxically both had campaigned on anti-independence platforms started negotiations that in 1983 led to independence for St. Kitts and Nevis (Midgett 2004: 57).[24] Whereas the two islands thus jointly formed a new state, it was also decided that the new country was to become a federation, with a separate parliament and government for Nevis (the Nevis Island Assembly and Nevis Island Administration). By contrast, St. Kitts did not acquire its own legislative and executive institutions.[25] Furthermore, in the new Constitution a clause (no. 113) was added that provides for the possibility of unilateral secession of Nevis (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 113; Inniss 1983: 76; Dee 2001: 33-37; Griffiths 2005: 3-4).

In subsequent elections until 1995, the PAM-government managed to remain in office, and after 1984 without the support of the NRP. On Nevis the monopolistic position of the NRP ended because many Nevisians were dissatisfied with the party's more moderate stance towards the secession issue since it had entered the coalition government. Accordingly, the Concerned Citizens' Movement (CCM) was formed, which won one of three seats in the Nevisian local elections of 1987, and has consistently occupied two of the three Nevisian seats in the federal parliament since 1993 (Midgett 2004: 58). The

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[23] The defeat of Labour was also a result of some rather extreme and seemingly undemocratic statements by its new party leader Lee Moore, who at one point suggested that the country should become a one-party state under the leadership of Labour (Griffin 1994: 239).

[24] By coincidence, independence came exactly one hundred years after the British had forced the two islands into one union. After having been denied a legislature in 1882, Nevisians felt that they now finally regained (some) control over their own island (Dee 2001: 31).

[25] As a result, both Kittitians and Nevisians claim that the country is not a real federation, but rather a 'pseudo' or 'semi'-federation. Kittitians frequently complain that this is unfair, because whereas Nevisians do have a say in Kittitian matters (through the federal institutions), the reverse is not the case (Griffiths 2005: 3). Nevisians, on the other hand, point to the fact that a large majority of parliamentary seats in the federal assembly are reserved for Kittitian MPs, as a result of which one party from St. Kitts can often form a government on its own, without a Nevisian coalition partner (as has been the case since 1995).

federal elections of 1993 resulted in a stalemate and constitutional crisis when Labour and PAM both managed to win four of the eight Kittitian seats, CCM won two Nevisian seats, and NRP one. The PAM-government thereby lost its majority, but since CCM-leader Vance Amory upheld his campaign promise not to cooperate with any Kittitian party, no government could be formed. Consequently, the Governor-General swore in a minority government of PAM and NRP, which immediately led to protests and riots on the part of Labour-supporters. In the end, under the auspices of a number of societal institutions such as the chamber of commerce and the churches, the four political parties negotiated a joint declaration (the so-called Four Seasons Accord) calling for fresh elections to be organized in the next year (Dee 2001: 43-46).

Table 6.1: Vote Percentage and Seats of Kittian-Nevisian Parties at Elections[26]

	Labour		UNM		PAM		NRP		CCM		Other, Ind.		Total
Year	**V%**	**S**	**V%**	**S**	**V%**	**S**	**V%**	**S**	**V%**	**S**	**V%**	**S**	**S**
1952	84.7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.3	-	**8**
1957	53.6	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46.4	3	**8**
1961	64.5	7	7.3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	28.2	1	**10**
1966	44.3	7	5.9	1	35.0	2	-	-	-	-	14.8	-	**10**
1971	50.8	7	4.4	-	37.0	1	7.7	1	-	-	-	-	**9**
1975	60.2	7	-	-	23.4	-	16.2	2	-	-	0.2	-	**9**
1980	50.0	4	-	-	33.9	3	16.0	2	-	-	-	-	**9**
1984	41.3	2	-	-	47.6	6	10.1	3	-	-	1.0	-	**11**
1989	37.3	2	-	-	45.4	6	10.9	2	6.4	1	0.1	-	**11**
1993	43.8	4	-	-	33.6	4	8.5	1	10.9	2	3.1	-	**11**
1995	49.2	7	-	-	34.7	1	7.0	1	8.2	2	0.3	-	**11**
2000	53.6	8	-	-	29.6	-	7.8	1	8.7	2	-	-	**11**
2004	50.6	7	-	-	31.7	1	7.5	1	8.8	2	1.2	-	**11**
2010	47.0	6	-	-	32.2	2	9.8	1	11.0	2	0.1	-	**11**

The 1995 general elections resulted in a landslide victory for the Labour Party of Dr. Denzil Douglas, who managed to win seven out of eight Kittitian seats. The Labour Party and Dr. Douglas went on to win the elections of 2000, 2004, and 2010, and have since then always secured comfortable majorities that did not call for the support of a secondary (Nevisian) coalition partner. Due to the fact that Nevis was no longer represented in the federal government, and due to the historical antipathy of Nevisians towards the Labour Party, in 1997 (CCM-) Premier Amory of Nevis decided to invoke clause 113 of the constitution, thereby

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[26] **Labour** = St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party (St. Kitts-based socialist party), **UNM** = United National Movement (Nevisian regional party), **PAM** = People's Action Movement (St. Kitts-based centre-right party), **NRP** = Nevis Reformation party (Nevis-based regional party), **CCM** = Concerned Citizens' Movement (Nevis-based regional and secessionist party).

initiating the process of secession (Dee 2001: 47-48; Midgett 2004: 61-62; Nisbett 2004: 11; Griffiths 2005: 5). Whereas the entire Nevis Island Assembly endorsed the proposal for secession, the 1998 referendum narrowly fell short of producing the two-thirds majority in favor of secession that the constitution requires. Although no further attempts at secession have been made since 1998, the secession issue continues to cast its shadow over the future of the federations. In tables 6.1 and 6.2, the results of federal elections and the composition of federal governments have been presented.

Table 6.2: Composition of Federal Governments of St. Kitts and Nevis since 1952

Time Span	Government Party	Head of Government
1952 - 1980	Labour Party	Robert Bradshaw, Paul Southwell, Lee Moore
1980 - 1995	PAM & NRP	Kennedy Simmonds
1995 -	Labour Party	Denzil Douglas

3. Explaining Democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis

Now that the political history and pathway to democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis have been outlined, in the present section a number of factors that have contributed to the maintenance of democratic institutions in the federation will be listed. Having been a colony of the United Kingdom until 1983, democratization in St. Kitts and Nevis was essentially orchestrated and implemented by this colonial power. Already at the outset of colonialism, the settlers imported the British Westminster system of government to St. Kitts and Nevis, and a Governor became the King's representative. For the subsequent three hundred years, the small white and European elite of the islands used the Westminster institutions to dominate, exploit, and oppress the black working class. Although this system basically excluded the plantation workers from political participation and inclusion, it is supposed to have had a large impact on this group in terms of political socialization (Peters 1992: 25-26).[27] In contrast to many African and Asian colonies that were colonized for a much shorter period of time, Caribbean populations have ages of experience with Westminster institutions, to the point that they have apparently come to regard the system as autochthonous (Sutton 1999: 69).

Academics frequently ascribe the survival of democracy in the Caribbean to the prevalence of the Westminster system (Peters 1992: 7, 206; Payne 1993a:

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[27] As Douglas Payne remarks about the Eastern Caribbean microstates: "socialized by over three hundred years of British colonialism, the emergent Commonwealth Caribbean elite could scarcely have become anything else other than liberal democracies" (Payne 1993b: 9; cf. Duncan and Woods 2007: 205).

58-59; Domínguez 1993: 15-17).[28] Although Westminster institutions have been maintained after independence and have been cherished for bringing about political stability in the region, many scholars have also asserted that 1) the Westminster system is inapplicable to the (small-sized) Caribbean political context, or that 2) the people of the Eastern Caribbean region only experienced the potentially oppressive and authoritarian features of Westminster institutions, which they have now mastered themselves (Peters 1992: 25-26). According to these academics, the Westminster system has helped to create a political system that is characterized by democratic institutions, but is also marked by polarization, top-down government, victimization, and oppression, and therefore hardly deserves a democratic label. In combination with the size and political culture of Eastern Caribbean states, Ryan (1999: 317) for example argues that Westminster institutions lead to a sharp polarization along political-tribal lines, and that they confer vast powers on the winning party, and little or no power on the losing party.[29] Colonial experience in the Eastern Caribbean can therefore not only account for the persistence of representative democratic institutions, but also for the perseverance of a political reality that clearly diverges from democratic ideals. Nevertheless, there is broad scholarly consensus about the socialization and colonization effects on the maintenance of formally democratic political structures in the Anglophone Caribbean.

Although this argument of political socialization in Westminster traditions helps to explain the origins and preservation of democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis, the international political context should be taken into consideration as well. Over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, the historical supremacy of the United Kingdom in the Caribbean basin was overtaken by the United States, which came to regard the Caribbean as its political backyard (Muñiz and Beruff 1994: 113). Becoming one of the key areas of Cold War rivalry, the strategic interests of the US in the Caribbean further increased after the Second World War, and the 1983 invasion in Grenada demonstrated the American determination not to tolerate the establishment of any Soviet-aligned regime in the region in addition to Cuba. In many ways, the Eastern Caribbean microstates

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[28] The argument that microstates have witnessed more intense and protracted periods of colonial rule and are therefore more likely to have democratic political systems is repeatedly expressed in the academic literature (Baldacchino 1993: 31; Srebrnik 2004: 333). In addition, several authors have emphasized the tendency of microstates to stick to the political institutions they inherited from their former colonizers (Anckar 2004b: 215-217; Sutton 2007a: 202-203).

[29] According to Ryan, "[t]he unfortunate aspect of the Westminster model of governance is that it has encouraged a 'to the victors the spoils' mentality. It has ensured that at any time almost half of the population of any given Caribbean society is marginalized and alienated from participation in the development of their society" (Ryan 1999: 317).

became international clients of the United States, which financially and militarily supported these countries in exchange for political compliance (Lewis 1993: 112).[30] Since the end of the Cold War, the United States have been increasingly advocating the protection of human rights and democracy in the world, and have turned these into conditions for the provision of development aid. Being heavily dependent on foreign investments, this provides additional incentives for the Eastern Caribbean microstates to preserve their democratic structures.

The location of the Eastern Caribbean microstates in the proximity of a democratic superpower has indeed been suggested as an explanation for their democratic systems of government (Masala 2004: 252-254). Interviews with Kittitian and Nevisian respondents provide further evidence for this notion:

> "I think that by and large by their comments, foreign governments can have a disciplining effect on democracy and how it is practiced in countries that are small."

> "We sit under the big nose of the United States; we are in the United States' sphere of influence. We have to listen to what the United States says to us."

According to several interviewees, the maintenance of democratic practices is a deliberate strategic attempt to appease the United States, and is actually a façade that serves to camouflage a less democratic reality:

> "Of course yes, there is a façade. (…) When Maurice Bishop on Grenada affiliated himself with Castro on Cuba, the United States government said "there will not be another Cuba in the Caribbean". So what happened to Grenada? (…) Therefore, the need for the façade of democracy is always there."[31]

In addition to the United States, the role of regional international platforms like the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as additional protectors of democratic government in the region should also not be underestimated, since these organizations have historically taken verbal or physical action when democracy was perceived to be under threat in one of its member states. Most of my respondents however

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[30] For a discussion about the application of the patron-client model to international relations, see Carney (1989) and Sutton and Payne (1993). In somewhat comparable fashion, Levitsky and Way have argued that international social, geographical, economic, and political linkages can foster democratization (2005: 22-23). Being so small and vulnerable, the Eastern Caribbean microstates almost by definition maintain many of such linkages with the United States and the United Kingdom. In addition, Taiwan and Venezuela have emerged as new major investors in the region in recent years, and in terms of international patron-client relations St. Kitts and Nevis therefore is a client state to multiple patrons. Like it does with many other microstates, Taiwan supports St. Kitts and Nevis in exchange for recognition and support of Taiwan's positions in the United Nations.

[31] In this regard, Peters argues that, "domestic politics are closely monitored by Britain and the US, and any policy that they believe may threaten the political stability of the region is quickly nipped in the bud, particularly if there are foreign policy implications" (Peters 1992: 76).

asserted that democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis also follows from a strong yearning for freedom and independence among the population, which is argued to be the result of ages of suppression. This idea is buttressed by several manifestations of the intolerance of Eastern Caribbean populations for leaders who became too authoritarian and were eventually ousted, such as Eric Gairy in Grenada and Patrick John in Dominica (both in 1979). In St. Kitts and Nevis, the defeat of Labour Party leader Lee Moore in the 1980 elections has been explained on the basis of his radical and sometimes antidemocratic positions and statements. In short, present-day democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis can be explained from historical, international, and socio-cultural perspectives.

4. Political Institutions of St. Kitts and Nevis

Like the other former British colonies in the Eastern Caribbean, the political institutions of St. Kitts and Nevis are strongly modeled after the Westminster parliamentary example. The government of the federation is responsible and accountable to the National Assembly, and is as a rule supported by a parliamentary majority. The country is a constitutional monarchy in which the monarch of the United Kingdom is officially the head of state, but an appointed Governor-General performs His or Her duties as a viceroy. Although the country is constitutionally labeled as a federation, a system of devolution that is rather similar to that of the United Kingdom has been adopted, in which the largest constituent state (St. Kitts) has no separate political institutions.[32] The public administration of the country is also based on the Westminster example, with functionally specialized departments that are headed by a minister (Simmonds 1985).

According to the Constitution, the Governor-General of St. Kitts and Nevis is appointed by the monarch of the United Kingdom (1983: Art. 21). On His or Her behalf, the Governor-General has among other things the competence to appoint a Deputy Governor-General on Nevis, to appoint senators in the National Assembly, to appoint the Supervisor of elections and members of the electoral commission, to sign proposals of law, to dissolve parliament, and to appoint ministers and the Prime Minister. For many of these duties, the constitution prescribes that the Governor-General shall 'act in accordance with the Prime Minister', which means that the space for political maneuvering of the Governor-

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[32] After the victory of Labour in the 1997 UK elections, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales each acquired separate assemblies and executives, and several powers and competences were devolved to these sub-national institutions. As the largest country in the United Kingdom, England however did not obtain such institutions.

General is rather circumscribed. Since the British monarch appoints a Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister, new Governor-Generals have been customarily appointed after an electoral victory of the opposition.[33] It is therefore hardly surprising that the Governor-General is often perceived to be acting primarily in the interests of the government (and Prime Minister) of the day.

Elections in St. Kitts and Nevis are conducted under the rules of the first-past-the-post plurality system, with eight single-member electoral districts being contested on St. Kitts and three on Nevis in federal elections.[34] Elections are held once in five years, and governments usually fulfill their term in office. In addition to the eleven MPs that are elected in constituencies, the parliament of St. Kitts and Nevis consists of three non-elected senators who are appointed by the Governor-General,[35] and the Attorney-General who is an ex-officio member of parliament. This means that the federal parliament of St. Kitts and Nevis consists of only fifteen MPs,[36] who each represent on average 2.500 citizens. In line with the Westminster system government ministers are also members of parliament, but since the number of government posts usually exceeds the number of parliamentary seats for the ruling party or parties, all ruling party MPs are usually also cabinet ministers. This means that there are no government party-backbenchers in the National Assembly. Government ministers in the federal government are appointed by the Governor-General from among the members of parliament on the advice of the Prime Minister (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 52: 4).[37] The contemporary federal government consists of nine ministers, who each head their own governmental department.

Since independence in 1983, the state of Nevis has its own parliament (the Nevis Island Assembly) and its own executive (the Nevis Island Administration). The Assembly consists of five elected members and three

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[33] After the PAM-NRP government came to power in 1980, Governor Inniss was replaced by Governor-General Arrindell, and after Labour regained office in 1995, Arrindell was swiftly replaced by the current Governor-General, Sir Cuthbert Montraville Sebastian. All of these Governors have been commonly seen as an extension of the incumbent government.

[34] In elections for the Nevis Island Assembly, five electoral districts on Nevis are contested under similar electoral rules.

[35] Two of these senators are appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, and one on the advice of the parliamentary opposition leader (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 30, 35).

[36] Together with the parliaments of the Federated States of Micronesia (14), Tuvalu (15), and Grenada (15), the parliament of St. Kitts and Nevis has the smallest membership size in the world.

[37] The Prime Minister himself is appointed from among the elected MPs by the Governor-General, who has a constitutional duty to select someone who is likely to command the support of the majority of the representatives. In practice this would normally mean the leader of the majority party or coalition.

appointed senators, and the party that controls the majority of seats in the Assembly has the right to form the Administration, which is headed by the Premier of Nevis.[38] According to the constitution, the Nevis Island Assembly has the authority to invoke a secession clause, and two-thirds of the members of the Assembly and two-thirds of Nevisian voters must be in favor of secession in order to accomplish full independence of the island (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 113). The constitution further determines that the Nevis Island Administration can rule on issues relating to infrastructure, education, health, fisheries, and labor, and also has its own budget. Regarding other issues (such as foreign affairs and defense), the federal government has the final say (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 106-111; Dee 2001: 35-37).

Judicial authority in St. Kitts and Nevis is exercised by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC), which is the primary judicial organ of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States[39] and has its headquarters on St. Lucia (Gilmore 1985: 314; Lewis 1993: 101). The ECSC-judges in St. Kitts and Nevis are no citizens of the federation, but are nationals of another member state of the OECS; currently both high court judges in the federation originate from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Cases of appeal used to be transferred to the Privy Council in London, but the establishment of the Trinidad-based Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) by the member states of the CARICOM in 2001 has created a second court of appeal, which might possibly replace the Privy Council in the future (cf. Bryan 1998). Smaller criminal and civil cases are dealt with by local magistrates' courts, of which magistrates are appointed by the Governor-General in accordance with the public service commission (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 83). According to Freedom House, the judiciary of the federation is "largely independent and legal provisions for a fair and speedy trial are generally observed" (Freedom House 2012).

Together with six other small island states in the Eastern Caribbean, St. Kitts and Nevis in 1981 founded the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).[40] Over the years, cooperation within the OECS has led to the

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[38] Since only two parties contest elections on Nevis, the Administration usually takes the form of a single-party government. At present there are seven ministers in the Nevis Island Administration, some of whom are also members of the Nevis Island Assembly. In 2012, the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) won three of the five seats in the Assembly, as a result of which it gained a new term in office.

[39] In addition to the seven OECS members, the ECSC also is the main judicial organ of the British overseas territories of Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands.

[40] The OECS was established in 1981 with the Treaty of Basseterre, which was signed in the capital city of St. Kitts and Nevis with the same name. In addition to St. Kitts and Nevis, the

establishment of an economic and monetary union, relatively far-reaching judicial and security agreements, and the establishment of institutions like the ECSC, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, and the Regional Security System (Lewis 1993: 106-111, 115-117; Thorndyke 1993: 171-174; Alexis 1997: 138-139).[41] The OECS-organs thus exercise a number of judicial, economic, financial, and defense competences that usually belong to the domain of national governments, as a result of which these institutions to some extent assume a supranational character. Talks about further political and economic integration are ongoing, and the benefits of this are underlined by almost all my interviewees.

The present overview of the institutional political structure of St. Kitts and Nevis suggests that the country operates as a full democracy, which is also how the country has been classified in annual Freedom House-surveys.[42] Whereas the academic literature on wider Anglophone Caribbean politics implies that the political reality of the region also inhibits several less democratic or even authoritarian elements, the handful of somewhat recent publications on St. Kitts and Nevis alone do not really reveal to what extent this literature is applicable to this specific microstate as well. In the following analysis of the influence of size on various aspects of contestation and inclusiveness in St. Kitts and Nevis it becomes clear that the country is no exception from the rest of the region, although the federal arrangement creates a number of specific political dynamics that the other Eastern Caribbean microstates presumably do not experience, as the remainder of the chapter will demonstrate.

5. The Influence of Size on Democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis

In terms of Dahl's dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness, as its Freedom House-rankings suggests St. Kitts and Nevis can indeed be classified as a democracy or polyarchy. Acquiring the most positive rankings on both political rights and civil liberties, Freedom House consistently groups the microstate into

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independent (UN-member) states of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada are members of the OECS, as well as the British overseas territory of Montserrat.

[41] All OECS-member states and Anguilla use the Eastern Caribbean dollar as their currency, and all members and Barbados are member of the Regional Security System (RSS). This latter organization is a collective security arrangement that played a major role in 1983-Operation Urgent Fury on Grenada and in the restoration of order after the 1990 coup attempt on Trinidad and Tobago (Linton 1993: 240-242). During the unrest on St. Kitts and Nevis in the aftermath of the 1993-elections, the RSS was briefly deployed to maintain order in the federation.

[42] Freedom House is the only aggregate index of democracy that does not exclude St. Kitts and Nevis.

the cluster of most democratic countries in the world (Freedom House 2012).[43] With federal parliamentary elections being organized every five years under conditions of freedom and fairness, and the government of St. Kitts and Nevis being responsible and accountable to parliament, political contestation for the main offices of the state is definitely present. Active electoral rights are granted to every Kittitian-Nevisian citizen of at least eighteen years old, and every citizen who is at least twenty-one years of age has the right to be elected to the National Assembly. For Nevisian citizens, similar provisions apply with regard to voting rights for the Nevis Island Assembly.

Although many of my respondents complained about electoral 'tricks' such as the registration of voters in districts where they do not live, or the importation of expatriate supporters by the political parties, in line with the assessments of Freedom House the overwhelming majority of interviewees agreed that the process of voting itself and the counting of the votes occurs in conditions of fairness (cf. Hillebrands and Schwehm 2005b: 569). In order to fully comprehend the influence of size on politics and democracy in St. Kitts and Nevis, however, an analysis of the specific nature and quality of contestation and inclusiveness in the federation is offered in subsequent sections. The analysis will start off with two sections on contestation; one on the nature and contents of political competition (4.1.), and one on the balance of power between the various institutions of the state (4.2.). Subsequently, two sections are devoted to the effects of closeness and direct contact between citizens and politicians on inclusiveness (4.3.) and the characteristics of political participation and elections in the federation (4.4.). The findings are summarized and evaluated in the conclusion of the chapter.

5.1. Contestation: Personalism, Polarization, and Victimization

In the federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, political contestation occurs in the form of direct elections for legislative organs that are organized once every five years. Since the composition and authority of the government is dependent on parliament and continuing parliamentary support, contestation for the executive branch of government is indirectly present. In turn, the government (and especially the Prime Minister) has the competence to make appointments to a host of public institutions, and commonly has a decisive influence in the

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[43] The Freedom House-scale ranks from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating most 'free' and 7 indicating completely 'not free'. Since independence in 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis mostly acquired a score of 1 on political rights, and a score of 2 on political liberties. Since 2006, this latter score has however turned into a 1 as well (Freedom House 2012).

appointment of the Governor-General, who has the competence to appoint other public officials and to sign and thereby ratify proposals of legislation. As the elections results presented in table 6.1 (on page 9) demonstrate, political competition in St. Kitts and Nevis occurs primarily on the basis of political parties, and in the last two decades federal elections have been contested by four parties. In each of the two islands (and federal states) two parties contest elections, which means that *de facto* two separated spaces of competition exist, with actually no political party vying for nationwide support.

In terms of the indicators of contestation that were outlined in the methodological chapter, on the basis of table 6.2 it can firstly be noted that alternation in office through the ballot box does occur in the federation, although it does not happen very often. The Labour-government that ruled the country from the introduction of universal suffrage until 1980 was removed from office by means of a peaceful transition of power that resulted from a defeat at the polls, and a similar alteration occurred in 1995, when Labour took over power from the PAM-NRP government. Regarding party system-fragmentation and the presence of an opposition, it can be seen in table 1 that the number of parties that are represented in parliament has grown from two to four over the past couple of decades, and the effective number of parties (ENP) has grown from below 2.0 over the 1960s and 1970s to mostly over 2.0 from the 1970s onward.[44] Despite the lopsided proportion of seats in relation to vote-percentages that results from the majoritarian electoral system, there has always been a parliamentary opposition in the National Assembly.

When it comes to the substantial and programmatic differences between the four parties and the degree to which they represent political alternatives in contesting political offices, a major political cleavage can evidently be observed between the parties that are based on St. Kitts and those based on Nevis. In addition to primarily representing and addressing the demands of constituents on their particular island, this cleavage brings along a programmatic difference between the parties with regard to the issue of (increased) autonomy for Nevis. Whereas the NRP and especially the CCM strongly oppose the union of their island with St. Kitts, Labour and PAM have at various times assumed either an

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[44] As a result of the distorted election outcomes under the plurality rules, the ENP-figure can differ markedly between elections even if the respective proportion of votes for political parties has not shifted much. Whereas PAM in the 2000-elections managed to obtain almost 30% of the votes, this was not translated in a single parliamentary seat, thus leading to a historically low ENP-figure of 1.30.

ambiguous or outright negative stance towards more autonomy for Nevis.[45] Due to the fact that the two parties of each island however do not express markedly different viewpoints about this issue, this programmatic difference is much less salient at elections than it is in the federal parliament or in the public debate. Furthermore, as Midgett argues, the desire of secession among Nevisians originates primarily from their historical antagonism towards St. Kitts, and is not fueled by a distinct Nevisian identity or sense of community (2004: 44).[46] This means that this cleavage cannot be identified on the basis of ethnicity or religion, but that it can instead be classified as a centre-periphery cleavage, in which Nevisian parties can be seen as regionalist, nationalist, and secessionist parties that oppose the central authorities on St. Kitts.[47]

With exception of the Nevis secession-issue, substantial differences between the political parties actually appear to be marginal (cf. Griffin 1994: 231, 235). In terms of the indicator of the articulation of political interests by political parties, it therefore seems to be the case that this hardly occurs in St. Kitts and Nevis. On the basis of a review of the most recent political programs of the four parties, I found that election manifestos hardly contain any policy goals or proposals, and that parties primarily use them to denounce the opposition and emphasize how they do things better. Whereas the Sammarinese political parties did outline policy proposals in their manifestos, this cannot be said of the Kittitian-Nevisian parties. Furthermore, in the context of personalistic contestation, election manifestos appear to be hardly relevant, as one of the academics I interviewed points out;

> "The manifestos that are put out are hardly read; people collect them as memento. (...) Election campaigns are typically eighteen to twenty-one days; the manifestos come out maybe only ten days before the election. And we don't have debates between the candidates and between the parties to discuss the policies (...). We don't have that, so the policies to me only play a second role to personalities and party."

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[45] The impression that I obtained from my field research is that Kittitians are not so much opposed to increased autonomy for Nevis, but primarily dislike the contemporary set-up of the federation, in which Nevis has its own political institutions whereas St. Kitts does not.

[46] Specifically, Midgett points out that "Nevisians are not imagining "community" leading to some nationalist impetus, but rather imagine a release from something they do not want to be, but without a necessary conception of what they might become" (2004: 44).

[47] Again, a comparison can be drawn here between St. Kitts and Nevis and its former colonizer, the UK. The position of the NRP and CCM in many ways appears to be somewhat similar to that of the Scottish National Party (SNP) or Plaid Cymru in Wales, which also primarily advocate nationalist and regionalist sentiments, and vie for more autonomy of Scotland and Wales. Whereas these parties however also adopt a certain (left-wing) position on for example socio-economic issues, the Nevisian parties really are not classifiable in this sense.

Whereas the names, symbols, and rhetoric of the parties on St. Kitts are based on a class cleavage, with Labour claiming to represent working class-interests and PAM supposedly representing the middle-class and business owners, all thirteen of my respondents (and even politicians) agreed that the parties are more or less similar with regard to their political orientation, as the following politician argues:

> "The difference now between the parties is individual, personalities. If you look at both parties, what is now the PAM party actually operates under the principles of the old Labour Party."

According to Griffin, the Labour Party traditionally primarily claimed to represent workers' interests in order to stigmatize and criticize the opposition, thereby more or less artificially cultivating the notion of a class cleavage (1994: 235).[48] Instead of ideology, the differences between Labour and PAM now appear to be primarily personal, and both parties primarily appear to serve as platforms to support individual politicians. On the question whether it would make a difference if PAM would be in government now, one of the journalists illustratively asserted that:

> "All that would happen is that you would have a different set of persons benefiting. But basically their ideology is the same. I don't know one thing that is different."

Whereas the Kittitian parties however still uphold the image of representing different interests, the Nevisian parties cannot even be distinguished in this sense.[49] Respondents were unable to say whether one of the Nevisian parties is more right-wing or left-wing than the other, or more progressive or conservative. The absence of ideological demarcations between the parties in the federation can in large part be attributed to the homogeneity of the population and the lack of major socio-economic or ethno-linguistic cleavages (Griffin 1994: 233, 235, 242).[50] In combination with smallness, which creates more intimate and direct linkages between citizens and politicians, homogeneity in St. Kitts and

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[48] Griffin states that "the Labour Party defined the political battle along class lines (…). The task of the opposition, consequently, was quite formidable – erasing the stigma of being elitist in a society that was overwhelmingly rural and working class" (1994: 235).

[49] The only potential difference between the NRP and the CCM is that the NRP has historically been slightly more open to cooperation with the parties on St. Kitts (for example during the coalition government), whereas the CCM has always principally rejected this.

[50] In Alesina et al.'s fractionalization index, which measures ethnic, religious, and linguistic fractionalization, St. Kitts and Nevis receives a score of 0.18 (Alesina et al. 2003). Since the index ranges between 1 and 0, with 0 indicating the absence of fractionalization and 1 indicating a completely fractionalized society, this score is rather low. Whereas 90 percent of the population has African ancestry, the remaining 10 percent has a mixed African and European ethnic background, but this difference does not appear to have been politicized in any way.

Nevis appears to create an environment of contestation that focuses primarily on personalities instead of policies. This is not only the case with regard to the aspects of inter-party competition, but according to almost all respondents also applies to voting behavior among the Kittitian-Nevisian electorate, as the following politician points out;

> "In St. Kitts and Nevis you find that people are largely homogenous. Yes, you have people who are more affluent than others, but there is not a huge distinction; the lawyer or the politician or the doctor's kids go to the same school as the farmer or the fisherman's kids. And so the divisions we see are largely along family lines. (…) People vote NRP because it's a traditional NRP family, and it happens like that."

Whereas several scholars have supposed that homogeneity and the absence of cleavages that follow from a small size generate less polarization and a spirit of consensus (Anckar 1999: 30), the case of St. Kitts and Nevis demonstrates that the opposite is true. On both islands, virtually all respondents confirmed that partisan competition is marked by a rather extreme degree of polarization, to the extent that people refer to it as political tribalism. As one senior public official points out;

> "The politics is very divisive; sometimes we refer to it as tribal politics. Each political party becomes so obsessed with the righteousness of its own cause that the only thing it sees that the other side should be or should do is to be destroyed. What we see happening now in St. Kitts –Nevis is that both of the major political parties practice the same divide and rule."

As Peters argues, Eastern Caribbean governments have taken the concept of partisan politics "to its zenith", since "when a party is elected to power, it virtually eliminates the opposition" (Peters 1992: 9). My various interviewees pointed out that marriages and friendships between supporters of the different parties are uncommon, and that the partisan divide reverberates throughout society and has a profound impact on social relationships of any kind. Since people also commonly display their partisan affiliation by wearing symbols and colors of the party that they vote for, partisan loyalty appears in many ways comparable to support for a sports team.

In such a polarized environment, supporters of the opposition are recurrently harassed and bullied by the party that is in power. Indeed, political victimization of opposition leaders and supporters is another characteristic feature of Eastern Caribbean politics (Peters 1992: 178; Sutton 1999: 75-76), and according to virtually all respondents St. Kitts and Nevis is no exception in this regard. One journalist pointed out to me that:

> "You have a tremendous amount of victimization. If a politician feels that you don't support him, and you have a business, they victimize you. They ensure that you don't get any of the government services, and you don't get any chance to get any of the government work."

With regard to victimization, the small-scale environment and intimate social relationships certainly facilitate the identification of supporters and opponents. As one prominent politician of the Labour party explained:

> "In St. Kitts, we know who is Labour, and we know who is PAM. And we know the families who are Labour and the families who are PAM; most of them. And the same thing in Nevis."

Political victimization creates a climate of anger and fear that further stimulates polarization and partisan loyalties. In addition, victimization and polarization strongly determine the actions and attitude of the government vis-à-vis individual citizens, as one of the scholars I talked to highlighted;

> "If someone goes to a minister and says: "minister, I would like to buy a piece of land to build a house or to do some farming", what will happen (…) is that the minister will find out who that person who wants the land is related to. What is their political affiliation? How many people in the family or in that genealogical stream are members of my party or the other party?"[51]

In terms of the indicator of the freedom to support the opposition, it can therefore be concluded that in the polarized and victimization-prone environment of St. Kitts and Nevis, actively supporting the opposition can and will have negative consequences. Paradoxically however, victimization does not appear to limit people's eagerness to display their partisan affiliation, and this goes as much for government as for opposition supporters. Based on my own observations, Kittitians and Nevisians commonly and continuously wear clothes and accessories that express their partisan affiliations, and therefore also explicitly support the opposition.

Due to the size of the country and the limited number of people who are qualified to assume political positions, the political elite of St. Kitts and Nevis is inherently small. Both my interviews and political developments in the federation however reveal that victimization, antagonism, and feuds also determine intra-elite relations, and opposition politicians claimed to be ignored or pestered by the government. Various interviewees confirmed that policy proposals of the opposition are mostly ignored or immediately rejected without

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[51] During my field research, when asked about instances of victimization several citizens mentioned that the government had recently shut off electricity in a district in which many opposition supporters are known to live.

considering their quality or value, as the parliamentary leader of the opposition remarked;

> "It is incredibly debilitating, I will tell you that candidly. Because our politics is not about ideas; it is about personalities. (...) And so there is no evaluation of ideas; they start thinking "who did the idea come from; who do they support, and what is their agenda? (...) The victimization is rampant."

According to the MPs I was able to talk with, parliamentary debates are also characterized by the prevalence of *ad hominem* attacks, just like the public debate in the media.

Just like in San Marino, the presence of partisan competition in St. Kitts and Nevis obscures the fact that contestation is essentially personalistic rather than programmatic. With exception of the Nevis secession-issue no major substantial points of contestation exist between the four parties, even though the labels and rhetoric of the Kittitian parties may suggest otherwise. To a greater extent than in San Marino however, personalistic competition in the federation leads to political polarization and the victimization of opponents. This generates a political environment characterized by fear that has the potential to impede on the freedom of expression or the freedom to form and join organizations (cf. Dahl 1971: 3). In combination with the absence of major politicized cleavages and the interconnectedness of the microstate's society that results in personality-oriented voting behavior, contestation in St. Kitts and Nevis is thus in conclusion characterized by personalism, polarization, and the victimization of opponents.

5.2. Contestation: The Balance of Power Between Institutions

In the tremendously polarized political environment of St. Kitts and Nevis, politically independent, neutral, and impartial institutions are hard to find. In terms of political contestation, this means that there are only a very limited number of checks on the power of elected politicians, and that non-elected political institutions assume a subordinate position vis-à-vis the politically contested bodies. In addition, in a small and close-knit society where people are generally well aware of each other's political affiliation, maintaining the *image* of neutrality and impartiality is often even harder than actually being and acting as such, as an academic mentioned;

> "At times our democracy then becomes a fight between a government view and an opposition view, and no views in between. I think if you had more views or more people and groups with different views, then you wouldn't be so polarized and you give people almost a sense to find where the truth lies."

Regardless of whether it is accurate or not, institutions like the judiciary, the media, the civil service, the ombudsman, and the electoral commission are easily and frequently branded as being politically biased, and according to a majority of respondents this impedes on their authority and performance.

Like in the rest of the Eastern Caribbean, in the St. Kitts-Nevis political system the Prime Minister wields an extraordinary amount of power. Various persons I interviewed called the Prime Minister "the king", "el supremo", "a powerhouse", "a little Caesar" and "an elected dictator".[52] One of the scholars I talked to told me that:

> "Our politics, our political democracy has been personalized. The Prime Ministers want to get their hands on every single thing in the Caribbean, so they have awesome powers. And because they have such awesome powers, it often dilutes the true picture of democracy."

In the absence of term limits Prime Ministers often remain in office for a very long period of time, which enables them to establish and expand their power base.[53] The omnipotent position of the Prime Minister is legally fixed in the constitution, which explicitly confers powers to him or her individually, and not to the government or the party that controls a majority of parliamentary seats.[54]

With the constitution bestowing such vast powers on the Prime Minister, the other ministers in the government are in a subordinate position to their head of government. The Prime Minister can virtually alone appoint and dismiss ministers,[55] which creates political dependency and inequality within the cabinet. As one former minister argues;

> "In our electoral process, a number of people get elected to office who are not people of independent means. So that when they get elected or nominated to office, they are also dependent on the Prime Minister who already has so much constitutional power (…). And he has these people almost in a state of subservience to him."

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[52] According to Peters, "[t]he constitutions of the independent Windward and Leeward islands (…) cover all the symbolic apparatus of a democracy, but concentrate power in the hands of one individual – the Prime Minister." (1992: 89).

[53] In St. Kitts and Nevis, Prime Ministers Bradshaw (1952 – 1978), Simmonds (1980-1995), and Douglas (1995 until the present) all remained in office for at least fifteen years.

[54] According to some of my interviewees, the constitutionally supreme position of the Prime Minister in is no coincidence: "[w]e believe that it was by design. The British did not want to totally and absolutely give up these territories. They could not take on the hassle of politically and administratively running these islands, so they gave political independence. But this constitution would give you [the political leaders, WV] vast and unhindered powers, knowing that you will abuse the power."

[55] According to article 52 of the Constitution, "[a]ppointments to the office of Minister, other than the office of Prime Minister, shall be made by the Governor-General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, from among the members of the National Assembly" (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 52).

Several of my respondents asserted that the Prime Minister occasionally interferes in the departments of his ministers, and that real executive power is only to be found in the Prime Minister's office, whereas the other government departments are largely empty vessels.[56] With regard to contestation, this presents an additional dimension to the personalized nature of Kittitian-Nevisian politics, as political parties appear to be primarily used as vehicles to develop and sustain the power base of individual politicians (cf. Peters 1992: 38-39, 90, 109-111).

The power and influence of the Prime Minister is also visible in his relation with the Governor-General. Although the constitution grants the Governor-General a large number of competences, the Prime Minister has a large influence on these because 1) he has a decisive say in the appointment of the Governor-General, and 2) many of the Governor-General's decisions constitutionally need to occur 'in accordance' with the Prime Minister. Almost all my respondents agreed that in practice, the Governor-General can be seen as an extension of the government of the day, and as someone who always acts in line with the Prime Minister's interests.[57] As one senior legal official emphasized;

> "Each party is going to appoint a Governor-General who is going to do what it wants. And the Prime Minister can dismiss him; he has that power. (…) They are a rubber-stamp, they just rubber-stamp the bills."

In similar fashion as the Governor-General, almost all interviewees alluded to the parliament in terms of a rubber-stamp legislature. Due to the fact that every MP from the governing party is also a government minister, in parliament no group of critical backbench-parliamentarians exists. In terms of the effects of size on executive-legislative relations and the indicator that refers to the status of the legislature, it can therefore be noted that the smallness of the federation's parliament severely weakens its autonomy and authority in relation to the government. One journalist I interviewed illustrated how the absence of a backbench generates executive dominance:

> "Because you don't have a big parliament, the government or executive is always in control of parliament. In small countries you don't have a backbench, so every elected member is a member of cabinet. And so there is not any buffer there, there is no call to account, because every elected member is looking after his own interests. So the government is really secured."

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[56] In this regard, Peters points out that "the other members of the party executive perform a mere symbolic and clerical role" (1992: 108).

[57] The current Governor-General, who is an active member of the Labour Party, mentioned to me that in the sixteen years that he is in office now he has never refused to sign a law proposal.

Since ministers are highly unlikely to reject their own policy proposals or bring down their own government, and since the speaker of parliament is also perceived to be acting in the Prime Minister's interests, with one exception my respondents agreed that government controls and dominates parliament. As one of the academics I interviewed asserted:

> "The truth is that the government controls parliament at the end of the day. The speaker, who is the person who is in charge of parliament, ultimately cannot be elected speaker without the support of the members of the government benches, and invariably is someone who the government has sort of hand-picked. And so the government has a disproportionate amount of influence; I have in my own experience never seen a bill brought by the government which has been defeated."

This obviously also has an impact on the role and functioning of the political opposition, as virtually all my respondents agreed that its role in the Kittitian-Nevisian system is marginal. One of the journalists pointed out that:

> "The opposition can make noise and kick up whoever they want, but they have basically no input in terms of changing any laws or anything. They sit there and make noise and wait until hopefully their time comes."

And this view was shared by politicians affiliated with the opposition;

> "In some countries the opposition might not be very powerful, but at least it has influence, it has a voice. When the government is as powerful as it is here (…) then whatever the opposition says can be totally ignored."

Since the current opposition consists of three parties that do not exactly maintain cordial relations, it is divided and therefore further weakened.[58] The powerless and docile position of parliament and especially the opposition in relation to government was confirmed to me by supporters of both the government and the opposition parties.

As one of the few institutions, most of my interviewees asserted that the judiciary of St. Kitts and Nevis is free from government influence, even though it is sometimes under formidable pressure. Since high court judges are foreigners who are appointed by the executive organs of the ECSC, both in terms of perception and with concern to their actual court rulings they have increased opportunities to be impartial and free from political interference.[59] Magistrate-court judges are appointed by the public service commission, which in turn is

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[58] Whereas the Kittitian opposition party can at least hope to be able to form a government after the next elections, the Nevisian parties know that they can only be a junior coalition partner (and that there will therefore never be a Nevisian Prime Minister) and that their only chance to govern arises if no Kittitian party acquires a majority in parliament (Nisbett 2004: 11).

[59] However, according to one of my respondents the Prime Ministers of the OECS-member states have a strong say in the appointment of ECSC-judges, and will generally not appoint a judge against which one of the Prime Ministers has strong objections.

appointed by the Governor-General, who does so "in accordance with the Prime Minister" (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 77, 83). This can obviously lead to problems with regard to (the perception of) their neutrality, according to one of the journalists I interviewed:

> "There are problems in terms of perception, because of course if one party nominates somebody to be a magistrate, then the perception is that because this party nominated this individual, that person favors this party."

Regardless of these problems, and despite the pressures that the judiciary may experience on the part of politicians, most of my respondents argued that the judiciary is actually one of the very few politically impartial institutions in the country. This is confirmed by Freedom House, which asserts that "[t]he judiciary is largely independent" (Freedom House 2012). In light of the pervasiveness of government vis-à-vis other institutions that other scholars have observed in small states (cf. Sutton 2007a: 210), the hiring of foreign judges appears to contribute significantly to the autonomy and independence of the judiciary.

Since the ombudsman, the electoral commission, and civil servants are all either directly appointed by the Governor-General or appointed by the public service commission, all these appointments are in the end open to pressure and influence from the Prime Minister. In the politically polarized and charged society of St. Kitts and Nevis, this inevitably creates accusations of partiality. Furthermore, interviews revealed that a free and impartial media landscape also does not really exist in the federation. Whereas St. Kitts and Nevis acquires a Freedom of the Press-score of 20 on a 100-point scale in which 100 stands for 'least free' (Freedom House 2012), my interview data and other secondary sources point to a somewhat different conclusion. The only television station of the country, ZIZ National Broadcasting Corporation, is government-owned and is broadly believed to be exclusively articulating government views (cf. Griffin 1994: 240). According to members of the opposition;

> "The government is the owner of the television station, ZIZ. And you find that nobody in the opposition can get any airtime on the station. ZIZ is basically a mouthpiece for the government and the governing party."

The limited access of the opposition to ZIZ is confirmed by both Commonwealth election reports and Freedom House, which, referring to ZIZ, argues that "[t]here are some restrictions on opposition access to the medium" (Freedom House 2012). However, Freedom House also asserts that "foreign media are available", which means that the condition of alternative sources of information is definitely at hand.

In addition to ZIZ, several private radio stations like Winn FM, Kiss FM, and Voice of Nevis (VON-) Radio are broadcasting in the federation, but these have to apply for a broadcasting license from the government, which can be withdrawn. Four newspapers constitute the written press of the federation, of which two operate on St. Kitts and two on Nevis, and each of these is associated with one of the four political parties.[60] Finally, several internet-based weblogs and newspapers are available, among which SKNVibes.com and SKNList.com. Whether correctly so or not, due to the polarized environment that results from the small size of the federation, all these media sources are routinely branded as being supportive of a certain party or certain politicians, and journalists complained that this puts pressures on their capacity to deliver the news objectively and impartially.

When discussing the effectiveness and neutrality of the media in the federation, the journalists that I interviewed referred to media financing as a major obstacle to objective reporting. Due to the population size and ensuing limited revenues from publishing a newspaper, newspapers are largely dependent on sponsors and other donors. As a consequence, newspapers will be very cautious not to publish stories that might offend their financers, which mostly are private sector organizations (which in turn are often managed by people with extensive political connections). These restrictions can impede on journalistic freedom:

> "We have an independent media, but this is such a small community that media houses are even reluctant to critique the financial records of major companies, because they don't want to lose the corporate sponsorship for the radio programming. So media houses here operate with some degree of apprehension with regard to possible consequences from the government or from some bigger private sector organizations."

Another problem with the media of St. Kitts and Nevis, which is also related to smallness, is that newspapers and radio stations lack journalistic professionalism and quality. This problem is amplified by the lack of resources, which means that newspapers cannot afford to hire competent journalists. Just like in San Marino, it primarily leads to frustration on the part of politicians;

> "I find the media here very irresponsible if you ask me. (...) I think the media is not mature and not professional; that is my personal view. The media have to play a

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[60] *The Labour Spokesman* is openly affiliated with the Labour Party, *the Democrat* is aligned to PAM, *the Leeward Times* is mostly seen as supportive of the NRP, and *the Saint Kitts and Nevis Observer* is usually seen as leaning towards the CCM. There are no figures on the reach of newspapers, but both respondents and my own observations indicate that almost all citizens read one or more newspapers.

better role in terms of information; I think the media is really biased (...) and could do a much better job."

Since the government of St. Kitts and Nevis is thus able to dominate or overrule institutions that are supposed to function as a check on its power, a scholar that I interviewed pointed to a lack of transparency with regard to the actions of the executive:

"What is lacking in St. Kitts and Nevis is transparency and accountability. (...) There are no sunshine laws to keep the politicians' fingers to the fire. And so what you find is that people are in the dark in terms of how government is really functioning."

In terms of the effect of size on the balance between both elected and non-elected institutions in St. Kitts and Nevis, it can be concluded that the position of neutral, independent institutions that ought to function as a check on governmental power is undermined by the smallness of the country. Due to a lack of professionalism and resources that follow from size, especially the role of the media is undermined. Now that the characteristics of political competition and the balance between institutions for the case of St. Kitts and Nevis have been analyzed, the following sections will pay attention to the nature and degree of inclusiveness in the federation.

5.3. Inclusiveness: The Consequences of Closeness and Direct Contact

Like in San Marino, the relations between citizens and politicians of St. Kitts and Nevis are marked by proximity, direct contact, and multiple-role relationships. Politicians and citizens can and do communicate directly with each other, and they continuously meet each other in bars and restaurants, the supermarket, on the beach, or in a sports club. In addition, they know each other through multiple societal roles, since it is common for politicians to be active in various organizations in addition to their political office, and because the proximity increases the chances that there are politicians in people's families, friend groups, or neighborhood. According to many people I discussed the matter with, this closeness between citizens and politicians is a positive characteristic of the country's politics, because it is much easier for citizens to express their demands and concerns to their political representatives. As one journalist explains;

"It [closeness, WV] makes you feel that you could reach your representative. You know you could touch them; you could call them on the phone. In most cases we have their cell number. The home numbers are listed in the phone book, so we are able to call and reach them."

As a consequence of direct contact and communication, politicians are deemed to be more aware of the political preferences of their constituents, which offers

them enhanced opportunities for political responsiveness. Politicians in St. Kitts and Nevis claimed to spend a great deal of time on relationships with their supporters, which means that they basically know every individual in their district;

> "When I was campaigning and representing a constituency here, I went into just about every home in my district, many times over. And everybody knew me personally."

Whereas the frequent contact between citizens and politicians may obviously benefit democratic representation and responsiveness, it also means that politicians have less time to actually govern and run the country. According to one of the politicians in the federation;

> "The country is a small country, but it's nonetheless a country which has to be run and has all the important issues of crime, health, education, and the economy, that bigger countries have. And so it can be difficult at times when so much time is consumed by having to continually interact on a one-on-one basis."[61]

In addition to this drawback, to an even greater extent than in San Marino politics in St. Kitts and Nevis appears to be characterized by the prevalence of patron-client relationships. Although no data on voter attitudes are available, the primacy of personalistic competition over programmatic contestation seems to entail that Kittitian-Nevisian voters are generally not very interested in policies or the public good, but primarily support politicians because they can provide them with personal favors. Because of the small size, particularistic relations between citizens and politicians can become very intense, as one politician clarifies:

> "People feel that as their representative you become their friend, you become in many respects a figure that they can turn to if they have difficulties, and it's not always money. Oftentimes if they are having a problem of some kind, you become the priest, you become the doctor, you become the lawyer, you become the brother, you become the confidant, you become someone in the community that people look to. And that obviously can be difficult, because it creates immense pressure."

Since, as Donald Peters accurately summarizes (1992: 9), the goal of a party in office is to 1) reward its own supporters and 2) demolish and victimize the opposition, clientelism in St. Kitts and Nevis essentially entails boosting one's own political tribe at the expense of the other(s). Since respondents assert that voters expect their party leaders to provide them with benefits, and would most likely cease voting for them if they stopped doing this, politicians can only

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[61] In this respect Peters says that, "[p]olitical leaders normally spend such a disproportionate amount of their time campaigning and improving their image that they neglect major national issues (Peters 1992: 184).

survive politically if they abide by these expectations. Even though the citizens I talked to were extraordinarily cynical about the intentions of their political leaders, and incessantly accused them of corruption, self-enrichment, and other forms of misbehavior,[62] conversations with ordinary voters reveal that their own political demands are also basically individualistic, as they demand and expect politicians to circumvent the law and the institutions in their favor.

In St. Kitts and Nevis and the Eastern Caribbean in general, clientelism is also broadly seen as a redistributive mechanism of social welfare (Duncan and Woods 2007: 211). This means that many citizens are economically and financially dependent on government, and that a change in office can also bring about dramatic personal consequences. In terms of inclusiveness, one former politician emphasizes that this dependence on government also impedes on the ability of people to freely and consciously express themselves;[63]

> "What is different between St. Kitts and a number of other countries is that government controls the majority of the resources. (…) So people tend to toe the line when it comes to criticism of government; very few people can criticize and be able to withstand the backlash of being too critical of government."

This dependency on government can also explain why people, despite all the criticism of their politicians, continue to vote for the same parties and their leaders. Due to the fact that parties in power primarily transfer resources to their own supporters and constituents, and due to the fact that governments are mostly formed by one of the Kittitian parties, the Nevisian perception that federal governments tend to disregard their island financially is further strengthened by particularism.

In addition to clientelism, a wide majority of my interviewees asserted that political patronage in the public sector of the federation is rampant. According to an interest-group representative, this has major negative consequences for the functioning of the civil service:

> "The civil service has really become an extension of whichever party is there. It is routine that people are transferred and humiliated; it is customary that the government would take people who are supporters and fit them into positions for which they don't qualify. (…) It's all patronage, it's all an attempt to farm out and say "well, you supported me so here is a job", which means a few thousand dollars every month, even though you don't have anything to do."

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[62] People in the federation commonly refer to this as 'politricks' – hence the title of this chapter.

[63] One of the academics I interviewed claimed that this dependence on government was also harmful for democracy in the country; "[t]his sense of entanglement in government (…) muzzles people's willingness to express themselves. In other words: it impinges on the freedom of speech, and as you and I very well know, once you impinge on the freedom of speech, you actually impinge on one of the principles of democracy".

Government is by far the largest employer in St. Kitts and Nevis, and jobs in the civil service are commonly distributed to reward supporters.[64] After elections bring a new party to power, the civil service is usually completely turned over, which means that the institutional memory and experience is drained (cf. Baker 1992: 14, 18; Sutton 2007b: 220). Furthermore, as a consequence of patronage the civil service cannot function impartially, and also does not aspire to do so. As one private sector-spokesperson declared;

> "Many of the activists of both parties are well-known civil servants, and it is a badge of honor in their view. It is a badge of honor for them to be known to be supporting this party because of course the party will reward them."

In addition to diminishing the quality, efficiency, and neutrality of the public administration, patronage also leads to an oversized and therefore highly costly public sector. Since both clientelism and patronage are primarily financed with state resources, St. Kitts and Nevis has an immense national debt of three billion US dollars, which equals to 198% of its gross domestic product.[65] Seeing that the country is largely dependent on foreign investments, external actors are indirectly financing domestic particularism in the federation.

The size and influence of the public sector of St. Kitts and Nevis has a number of consequences for the country's private sector. As in San Marino, the separation between the sectors is often somewhat fuzzy, since part-time public officials often are concurrently active in a company or business, as a result of which conflicts of interest can and do arise.[66] In addition, the independence of the private sector is compromised by the fact that patronage and clientelism also play their part here. Because of the authority and control of government, the success of Kittitian and Nevisian businesses largely depends on their relationship with the politicians and party in power. As one representative from the private sector emphasizes;

> "A number of businesses, they get concessions from government, from various taxes. For example for investment, when they try to invest in a property, government may give them a special incentive (...), duty-free concessions. So even the private sector has to sort of have a harmonious relationship with government, for them to also benefit."

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[64] According to World Bank statistics, 41.6 percent of the labour force in the federation works in the public sector (Carrizosa 2007: 4). However, according to Sir Probyn Inniss, in the beginning of the 1980s at least ninety percent of jobs in the country are either directly or indirectly controlled by government (1983: 80).

[65] After Japan, St. Kitts and Nevis has the highest public dept as percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the world (CIA World Factbook 2011).

[66] Most of the MPs in the National Assembly have secondary professions, and among the MPs are attorneys, physicians, businessmen, and bankers (source: www.gov.kn).

Whereas clientelism and patronage are common features of politics in larger Caribbean states as well, the smallness of St. Kitts and Nevis unquestionably increases the likelihood of particularistic relations, and also provides these with specific dynamics. In the small-scale Kittitian-Nevisian society where everyone knows each other and each other's political affiliations, particularistic relations are established on a one-on-one basis, and augment the personalistic nature of politics (Griffin 1994: 233). Furthermore, Griffin points out that particularism and personalism in St. Kitts and Nevis lead to the undermining of formal structures.[67] Since elected officials are able to assemble detailed information on all their constituents, their control on the fulfillment of obligations that follow from the clientelistic bonds is enhanced. Correspondingly, because of the availability of direct contact, voters have increased opportunities to pressure their representatives to present them with favors of all kind. On both sides of the particularistic linkage, the smallness of St. Kitts and Nevis therefore creates a greater inducement to establish patron-client relationships.

5.4. Inclusiveness: Participation of Citizens

Whereas the academic literature lists increased political participation of citizens as one of the major advantages of smallness, in St. Kitts and Nevis and the Eastern Caribbean island states in general, political participation is essentially limited to expressing a vote once in four or five years. According to Peters "[d]emocracy means to the Eastern Caribbean people the freedom to elect their leaders, but immediately after the elections their political participation ceases. They withdraw from the political process completely and assume their status as subjects of the leaders" (Peters 1992: 133). In terms of inclusiveness, the opportunities for citizens to participate in Kititian-Nevisian politics appear to be rather restricted, but my own observations demonstrate that both politicians and citizens seem to be satisfied with this situation. Since there are no data on indicators like party membership or participation in demonstrations and rallies in the federation, this conclusion is primarily derived from my interviews and the secondary literature.

Apart from ubiquitous face-to-face contacts between citizens and politicians, political participation in St. Kitts and Nevis seems largely confined to the electoral process. When it comes to election campaigns, the involvement of

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[67] Griffin argues that "[t]he intrinsic relationship between structure and function that is clearly discernible in larger, more developed, majoritarian systems, however, is not as clear-cut in small, developing countries. While the political structures do exist, personality often preponderates over structure, and, consequently, function devolves more from personal loyalty and patronage than from the roles that the structures should perform" (Griffin 1994: 232).

citizens is overwhelming; all parties organize mass rallies in which their leaders hold strident and vociferous speeches, and famous Caribbean musicians are invited to energize the crowds.[68] Virtually the entire electorate seems to eagerly participate in the carnival-like election campaigns. Whereas citizens are keen to display their partisan affiliation and political preferences during campaigns, their willingness and capacity to actually have an influence on politics appears very much restricted. Since election manifestos are shallow and voting behavior is essentially personalistic, by casting their ballot voters also do not really have the opportunity to voice their substantial political attitudes. In the absence of ideological representation, most respondents I interviewed explained that citizens typically vote for a person they know personally, or for the candidate who they expect to provide them with the most personal benefits.

Elections in St. Kitts and Nevis are held under the rules of the first-past-the-post plurality system, with the country being carved up in eleven single-member constituencies. Since the entire electorate consists of around 35.000 people, this means that there are on average around 3.000 voters per constituency, although this number varies strongly between districts. Since turnout however generally reaches between sixty and eighty percent, in each district between 2.000 and 3.500 votes are normally expressed. Because the electoral commission also publishes the expressed votes per polling station, and each district consists of between six and thirteen polling stations, politicians can to a large extent estimate who voted for them and who did not, and therefore also which voters or families kept their promise and fulfilled their clientelistic obligations. The size of electoral districts therefore enables politicians to directly sense the benefits of patron-client links, and stimulates them to create such relations.

Since most politicians try to visit all voters in their electoral district in advance to the election, they can with a great degree of accuracy estimate and calculate the size of their support, and hence how many votes they need to win their district. This leads to a number of electoral 'tricks' that parties use to increase their chances, such as the registration of voters in districts where they should not legally be voting, as one of the academics I talked to pointed out;

> "There is what we call "constituency-shopping". So for example in the Prime Minister's constituency he wins with enormous margins. When a voter turns eighteen, they don't let him register there where he is supposed to be, but they took him to an area where the margins are smaller."

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[68] In the 2010-elections, the Labour Party for example succeeded in attracting Haitian superstar Wyclef Jean to participate in its election rallies.

As can be seen in table 6.3, in the most recent election the support of the Labour Party in three districts (Basseterre West, Newton Ground - Harris, and Belle Vue – Ottley's) was so overwhelming that the party could indeed encourage its supporters here to vote in a different district. On Nevis, this was in one district the case for the CCM.

Table 6.3: Vote Differences between Parties on the District Level in 2010 Elections

District St. Kitts	Labour Party	PAM	Difference
# 1 (Basseterre East)	1.777	1.536	241 (7.2 %)
# 2 (Basseterre Central)	1.907	1.476	431 (12.7%)
# 3 (Basseterre West)	1.306	545	761 (41.2%)
# 4 (Challengers – Half Way Tree)	1.185	1.156	29 (1.2%)
# 5 (St. Anne Parish)	985	1.128	143 (6.8%)
# 6 (Newton Ground - Harris)	1.905	179	1.728 (82.8%)
# 7 (Belle Vue - Ottley's)	1.635	570	1.065 (48.1%)
# 8 (Ottley's - St. Peter's)	1.527	1.803	276 (8.2%)
Total St. Kitts	**12.686**	**8.607**	**4.079 (19.2%)**

District Nevis	NRP	CCM	Difference
# 9 (St. John's and St. Paul's)	1.335	1.481	146 (5.2%)
# 10 (St. George's)	225	665	440 (49.4%)
# 11 (St. Thomas's and St. James's)	979	714	265 (15.6%)
Total Nevis	**2.805**	**3.128**	**323 (5.4%)**

In addition to constituency-shopping, just like in San Marino political parties try to use the votes of expatriate citizens to win elections, and several scandals about the importation of emigrant voters from the UK and the US have surfaced. Since over 30.000 Kittitians and Nevisians live abroad, the potential electoral influence of this group of voters is highly significant, and as one academic argued;

> "One year ago on Election Day, the Labour Party brought in roughly five thousand people to vote by plane. The party paid the plane, they got a free ticket. And they were housed at hotels and left the next day. They were from England, North America, and the Virgin Islands, you name it. Some of them came in the morning, voted, and left the same day."[69]

Although it is hard to say to what extent these practices occur and have an influence, many ordinary Kittitian and Nevisian citizens at least believe that they do, which already challenges the legitimacy of the election results. Since

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[69] Since the Labour Party is now in office, it may appear that this party to a larger extent engages in particularism and the domination of other institutions than the PAM, but most of my respondents asserted that this latter party would not hesitate to do the same if it were to win the next elections.

expatriate voters are however not separately registered, in contrast to San Marino the size and influence of emigrant votes in the federation cannot be estimated. In the 2004 Commonwealth election report, a number of irregularities at elections are repeatedly noticed, among which the fact that 1) a number of eligible voters are not on the electoral roll, 2) a number of overseas voters return to the federation to vote, 3) more than one person votes under the same name, and 4) a number persons vote in districts were they are legally not allowed to vote (Commonwealth Expert Team 2004).[70] The report on the most recent elections however notes improvements in this respect, even though it continues to emphasize the differences in media access between the ruling party and the opposition (Commonwealth Expert Team 2010). Despite these shortcomings, the reports conclude that elections are generally fair, and reflect the will of the people.

Table 6.4: Voter Turnout in Kittitian-Nevisian Federal Elections[71]

Election Year	Voter Turnout
1952	95.7 %
1957	n.a.
1961	68.8%
1966	73.4%
1971	87.9%
1975	72.1%
1980	74.5%
1984	77.7%
1989	66.8%
1993	66.4%
1995	68.4%
2000	64.2%
2004	59.0%
2010	83.5%
Average	**73.7%**

In terms of the participation rates, voter turnout in St. Kitts and Nevis varies strongly (between sixty and ninety percent), but the average of 73.7 percent is in line with Eastern Caribbean standards and is relatively high among the developing-world (International IDEA 2011). In table 6.4, the turnout rates of elections since the introduction of universal suffrage have been presented. It can be seen that there is not really a detectable pattern in turnout figures, and that

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[70] Although the Commonwealth election team treats these irregularities as (minor) incidents, it must be emphasized that due to the smallness of electoral districts, a very small number of votes can alter the election result.
[71] Data retrieved from the turnout database of International IDEA (International IDEA 2011).

turnout in the most recent elections has been markedly higher than in the five preceding ones. This is probably the result of new and stricter registration rules, as a consequence of which the number of registered voters has decreased by more than fifteen percent in relation to the 2004-elections.[72] In table 6.5, turnout levels and averages of the independent OECS-countries have been presented, and it can be seen that turnout figures in St. Kitts and Nevis are comparable to the rest of the region.

Table 6.5: Voter Turnout in the OECS-Countries: the Five Most Recent Elections[73]

	1	2	3	4	5	**Average**
Antigua and Barbuda	60.7%	62.3%	63.6%	91.2%	80.3%	**71.6%**
Dominica	66.6%	65.2%	60.1%	59.1%	54.9%	**61.2%**
Grenada	68.4%	61.8%	56.7%	57.4%	80.3%	**64.9%**
St. Kitts and Nevis	*66.4%*	*68.4%*	*64.2%*	*59.0%*	*83.5%*	***68.3%***
St. Lucia	60.7%	62.8%	66.1%	53.7%	58.5%	**60.4%**
St. Vincent - Grenadines	65.6%	67.4%	69.2%	63.7%	62.3%	**65.6%**

With regard to the fairness of elections, both the election reports and my interviews point to concerns about the appointment and composition of the electoral commission. According to the constitution, this commission is appointed by the Governor-General and consists of three members, of whom two however can be expected to side with the governing party.[74] Therefore;

> "We have always had a contention that it is the persons or the political party who controls the electoral office, will control who will win elections."

In addition to the electoral office there is a Supervisor of elections, who is appointed by the Governor-General and commonly is a high-ranking public official; since 2004 it is a pastor who has become rather controversial, and the opposition parties have recurrently demanded his resignation. The two most recent Commonwealth election reports have pointed to changes in the appointment of the Supervisor and the electoral commission as primary

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[72] In 2004, 22.922 out of 38.865 registered voters cast a ballot, whereas in 2010, 27.364 out of 32.766 registered voters did so (International IDEA 2011). Among the names that were removed from the list of registered voters were probably a lot of deceased people or people who had been registered twice.
[73] Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) website (2011).
[74] The constitution stipulates that the electoral commission "shall exist of: a) a chairperson appointed by the Governor-General, acting in his own deliberate judgment, b) one member appointed by the Governor-General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, and c) one member appointed by the Governor-General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Leader of the Opposition." Since "any decision of the commission shall require the concurrence of a majority of all its members", no unanimity is required and the opposition-aligned member can therefore be ignored by the other two members (Constitution of Saint Christopher and Nevis 1983: Art. 33).

recommendations to improve the conduct of elections. As a consequence of the fact that the incumbent party controls state resources and can influence a number of these institutions (and also to a large extent controls the news media), incumbency is a major and perhaps excessive political advantage at the polls (Peters 1992: 112). When it comes to estimating the influence of size on political participation and elections in St. Kitts and Nevis, it can be concluded that the absence of programmatic contestation leads to voting on the basis of individualistic and personalistic concerns, and that the smallness of electoral districts leads to a number of specific particularism-related electoral dynamics and problems.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

In terms of the nature and quality of contestation and inclusiveness in St. Kitts and Nevis, this chapter has revealed a disparity between formal institutional structures and informal political practices. In this sense, the chapter confirms the observation of Hinds, Peters, and other scholars who have noted that Caribbean politics is a mixture between democratic institutions and a more top-down and sometimes authoritarian political reality. Whereas institutionally-oriented scholars and organizations like Freedom House continue to classify St. Kitts and Nevis as a full-fledged democracy because all the necessary conditions for political contestation and inclusiveness are present, the political reality of the federation offers an entirely different impression.

As a general conclusion, in line with the academic literature it can be remarked that the Westminster system seems unsuitable to the polarized, personalized, and particularistic socio-political environment of the federation, as it appears to exacerbate its centrifugal tendencies. Due to the absence of cleavages and the prevalence of personality-driven politics that results from size, in St. Kitts and Nevis the likelihood of personalistic conflicts and interpersonal polarization is higher than in larger states. Furthermore, as this chapter also underlines, due to smallness microstate-governments control the majority of their countries' available resources, which goes at the cost of the autonomy and impartiality of other societal and political institutions. If the winner-takes-all elements of the Westminster system are applied to such a political environment, the functioning of these institutions and the political opposition are further undermined, and the negative consequences of smallness are further enhanced (Ryan 1999; Hinds 2008).

In table 6.6, a summarized overview of the scoring of St. Kitts and Nevis on the indicators of contestation and inclusiveness has been offered. On the basis

of these scores, a number of general conclusions about the effects of size on contestation and inclusiveness can be drawn. First of all, political contestation in this microstate revolves primarily around personalities, and parties are primarily used as vehicles to support individual politicians. Secondly, despite the absence of ideologies and programmatic contestation the Kittitian-Nevisian society is heavily polarized, both between and within the two islands of the federation. Thirdly, in relation to other institutions, the government and especially the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis occupy a supremely powerful position. With regard to inclusiveness, the closeness and direct contact between citizens create various forms of particularism and dependency on government, as a result of which political participation occurs due to individualistic rather than public or programmatic considerations.

These findings are in line with some of the major publications on the relation between size and democracy, whereas they contradict others. In particular, the notions that increased homogeneity leads to a culture of consensus (Anckar 1999; Congdon Fors 2007: 3-4) and the idea that citizens of small polities are more aware, interested, and willing to participate in politics (Ott 2000: 202-203; Anckar 2002b: 386-387; Srebrnik 2004: 331-332) cannot be confirmed. By contrast, studies that have emphasized the preponderance of personalistic over ideological contestation (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 92-93; Sutton 2007a: 203-204), the omnipotence of government (Sutton 1987: 12-14; Gerring and Zarecki 2011: 9), and the prevalence of particularistic relations (Srebrnik 2004: 334) in microstates are confirmed by the current analysis. With regard to the hypothesized advantages of smallness in part of the academic literature, Peters accurately notes that there is "potential for positive results", which however essentially does not materialize in practice (1992: 185).

Although there are a number of obvious differences, the similarities between the political systems of San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis are quite striking. In light of their entirely different political histories and contemporary political institutions, these similarities can largely be explained by the diminutive size of the countries. In both microstates, partisan competition obscures personality-driven politics, and in both countries non-elected political and societal institutions are only to a limited extent able to function as a check on governmental power. In similar fashion, in both cases closeness and direct contact between citizens and politicians lead to particularistic forms of representation, which in both countries is fostered by the smallness of the electorate and other electoral dynamics. The most remarkable similarity

between San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, however, is the discrepancy between formal institutional structures and the every-day political reality.

Table 6.6: St. Kitts-Nevis' Scores on the Indicators of Contestation and Inclusiveness

Dimension	Section	Indicator	Classification of St. Kitts and Nevis
Contestation	Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition	Free and Fair Elections	Present, with minor limitations
		Party System	Two-party system on each island (ENP around 2.0)
		(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Sporadically
		Interest Articulation by Parties	Barely; parties primarily denounce the opposition
		Freedom to Support the Opposition	Has major negative consequences; victimization
	Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions	Freedom of the Press	Press free (FotP-score 20), but weak, polarized, and unprofessional
		Status of the Legislature	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government
		Status of the Judiciary	Impartial but sometimes pressured; mostly ECSC-judges
		Status of the Bureaucracy	Oversized, ineffective, and influence by government due to patronage
Inclusiveness	Relations between Citizens and Politicians	Contact with and Access to Representatives	Continuous contact and access
		Nature of Citizen-Politician Contacts	Particularistic and personalistic
		Political Awareness and Feelings of Efficacy of Citizens	No data, but appears to be high
	Political Participa-tion of Citizens	Universal Suffrage	Present
		Turnout at Elections and other Plebiscites	Mixed (between 60 and 80%)
		Party Membership	No data available
		Participation in Political Activities	No data, but appears to be high

CHAPTER SEVEN

En Nouvo Sesel?

The Republic of Seychelles

Figure 7.1: Location and Map of Seychelles[1]

1. Introduction: Lingering Vestiges of Authoritarianism in a Tourist Paradise

The opening of Seychelles International Airport in March 1972 signaled a revolutionary change for the population of the tiny country. Whereas the archipelago of Seychelles was previously only accessible by boat, the construction of the airport initiated a rapidly growing influx of tourists, and in due course the country became known among wealthier European travelers as a tourist paradise. This did not change when, within one year after the attainment of independence in 1976, a coup d'état installed a socialist one-party regime on the islands. The tourism industry has turned Seychelles into one of the wealthiest countries of Africa, and more than seventy percent of the country's gross national income now derives from tourism (Campling and Rosalie 2006: 116).[2] Although the microstate is mostly categorized as part of the African continent, in terms of its culture and society it is an amalgam of multiple world regions and civilizations. This is most clearly visible in Seychelles' demographic structure,

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[1] Retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (CIA World Factbook 2011).
[2] In 2011 Seychelles has a GDP-per capita figure of US$ 24.700, which is the highest in Africa (CIA World Factbook 2011).

since the population consists of a diverse mix between European, African, Indian, Chinese, and Arab ethnic groups. Although Roman Catholicism is clearly the dominant religion, significant Protestant, Muslim, and Hindu communities exist in the microstate as well.[3]

In comparison to other African countries, the Republic of Seychelles is the smallest state according to both population and territorial size. The country consists of 115 islands that are scattered over a vast maritime territory in the Indian Ocean, located to the north of Madagascar and to the east of Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania. Although about twelve islands are inhabited, more than ninety-eight percent of the approximately 90.000 Seychellois citizens live on the islands of Mahé (80.000), Praslin (6.500), and La Digue (2.000).[4] Seychelles has a landmass of only 451 square kilometers, but its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) is 1.336.559 square kilometers, which is more than twice the size of metropolitan France (CIA World Factbook 2011). Attaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1976, the microstate is one of the youngest independent states of Africa. Although it is mostly classified as part of this continent, historically and culturally Seychelles shares a lot of features with Caribbean island states, of which the population was also for the largest part brought to the islands as slaves from mainland Africa.

Whereas multiparty-democracy was officially reinstalled on the islands after the end of the Cold War, in Freedom House-rankings Seychelles continues to acquire 'partly free'-scores on both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2012).[5] Although the archipelago is classified by Freedom House as an electoral democracy and therefore attains a more positive score than most African mainland states, in comparison to African island states like Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Mauritius, Seychelles lags behind when it comes to

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[3] According to the World Factbook, over 82 percent of the Seychellois population is Roman-Catholic, 7,5 percent is Protestant (mostly Anglican and Evangelical), 2.1 percent is Hindu, and 1.1 percent is Muslim (CIA World Factbook 2011). In addition to ethnic and religious pluralism, virtually the entire population of the country speaks the languages of Seychellois Creole (*Kreol*), English, and French.

[4] The islands of Seychelles are generally clustered into the Inner Islands Group (which consists of the granitic islands where most of the Seychellois population lives), and the Outer Islands Group (*Zil Elwannyen Sesel* in Creole), consisting of the coralline island groups of the Amirante Group, the Alphonse Group, the Aldabra Group, the Farquhar Group, and the Southern Coral Group. In addition to the inhabited islands, a number of Seychellois islands are either privately owned or only have private resorts that are primarily advertised as honeymoon destinations (Franda 1982: 2).

[5] In the last ten years, Seychelles has consistently acquired a score of 3 (on a 7-point scale with 7 being 'least free') for both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2012). Freedom House is the only aggregate index of democracy in which Seychelles is included.

democratic development.[6] According to Freedom House reports, the governing party of Seychelles continues to maintain an all-powerful position in Seychellois politics and society, with the opposition party and other political and societal institutions playing a subordinate role (Freedom House 2012). This assessment is broadly confirmed by the scarce academic literature on Seychellois politics, in which especially the fusion of the microstate's government and its ruling party is repeatedly cited as a major obstacle to further democratization (Hatchard 1993; Ellis 1996; Scarr 2000; Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007; Baker 2008; Yoon 2011).

In the current chapter, the influence of size on politics and democracy in the Republic of Seychelles is analyzed and evaluated. The findings of the chapter are for the main part based on field research that was conducted in the archipelago in February and March 2011, during which thirteen semi-structured interviews were held with Seychellois government ministers, members of parliament, party leaders, journalists, academics, legal officials, and the ombudsman.[7] The chapter commences with an overview of the political history of Seychelles, and a synopsis of the country's pathway to democratization and the re-establishment of multiparty-democracy in 1993. After this, one section is devoted to explaining democracy in contemporary Seychelles by pointing to a number of potential contributing factors, which is followed by a paragraph in which the political structure of the country is outlined. Subsequently, in four sections the influence of size on politics and democracy in Seychelles is examined along the lines of Dahl's dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness. In sequence, attention is paid to the role of cleavages and political parties, the balance of power between institutions, the effects of closeness and direct contact, and the characteristics of political participation and elections. The chapter ends with a summary and discussion of the findings.

2. Political History and Democratization of Seychelles

The islands of Seychelles geologically form part of the Mascarene plateau that originated when the Indian plate broke away from Madagascar approximately ninety million years ago. The Seychelles islands thus actually constitute a continental fragment or 'micro-continent' on their own, and due to their isolated

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[6] In fact, among the five small African island states only Comoros has a less democratic Freedom-House score than Seychelles.

[7] A complete list of the people I interviewed can be found in the Appendix. Throughout the chapter I occasionally use interview quotes to underline or illustrate my findings and the analytical narrative. Due to the strong interpersonal relations and the smallness of the Seychellois society, I have decided not to disclose the names and professions of the persons to whom the specific interview excerpts belong.

location a completely unique flora and fauna has developed on the islands of the archipelago (Franda 1982: 2). Although Arab and Indian merchants and navigators were aware of their existence, the islands of Seychelles were never colonized or even settled until 1770 (Scarr 2000: 5-7). After several Portuguese and British discoverers and navigators had already visited Seychelles in the 16th and 17th centuries, the French navigator Lazare Picault was the first to extensively explore the archipelago and map its main islands between 1742 and 1744.[8] The exploration of Seychelles was organized by the French Governor of the nearby island of Île de France (contemporary Mauritius), which together with Île de Bourbon (contemporary La Réunion) had been occupied by France in 1715 (Franda 1982: 9). In 1754 the archipelago was given the name of *Séchelles*, in honor of the contemporary French minister of finance, Viscount Jean Moreau de Séchelles.[9]

On 12 August 1770, fifteen French colonists, seven slaves, five Indians, and one black woman established a small settlement on the island of Ste. Anne, and thereby finally ended the uninhabited status of the islands (Franda 1982: 5-6; Scarr 2000: 5-7). After the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, these settlers decided to establish their own Colonial Assembly, write their own constitution, and run the colony themselves. As a consequence Seychelles acquired *de facto* independence, and many of the policies of post-revolutionary France (such as the abolition of slavery) were not recognized on the islands (Scarr 2000: 14-16). In 1794 Chevalier Jean-Baptiste Quéau de Quinssy took over power in the colony, and through skillful diplomacy was able to preserve the autonomy of the islands (Franda 1982: 11-12). During the Napoleonic wars Seychelles hosted a group of French privateers,[10] but the British discovered this and forced De Quinssy to surrender. Since the British themselves however deemed occupation of the archipelago a waste of resources, the Seychellois colonists managed to retain their autonomy by remaining officially neutral, while supplying both French and British ships that passed by with goods (Scarr 2000: 19-20). Not only was this a successful strategy in diplomatic terms, but it also resulted in a period of increased economic activity and prosperity on the islands.

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[8] On his voyage to India, Vasco da Gama sighted the Seychelles islands in 1502. In 1608, the English East India Company-vessel *Ascension* got lost in a storm and reportedly anchored on a paradisiacal island with "land turtles of such bigness which men would think incredible". In the rest of the 17th century, the Seychelles islands were primarily used as a hiding place for pirates from different origins.

[9] The spelling was changed to *Seychelles* in 1814, after the British had gained control of the colony.

[10] A privateer was a private person or ship that had a government license to attack and capture enemy ships.

In 1811 Seychelles finally came under control of the United Kingdom, and after a major political struggle slavery was abolished in 1835.[11] Seychelles was united under colonial rule with the island of Mauritius, where the central administration of the colony was based, but the British largely allowed the white settlers (the so-called *Grand Blancs*) to preserve their French heritage and traditions. Although the colonial authorities were British and reported to London and Mauritius, the islands were largely ruled according to French customs and traditions, and (creolized) French remained the colony's common language (Scarr 2000: 54-55).[12] After decades of pressure and pleas, Seychelles finally was separated from Mauritius to become a Crown Colony on its own in 1903 (Franda 1982: 14; Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 142). Like the French, the British saw the islands as a useful place to exile political prisoners, and over the years such prisoners arrived from British colonies around the world. In addition to the *Grand Blancs* and the former slaves that had been imported from East-Africa, the British also imported indentured laborers from India, China, the Arabian Peninsula, and other British colonies to Seychelles, as a consequence of which in light of their size, the islands acquired their remarkably heterogeneous population (Franda 1982: 18-19).

After the end of the First World War, which not only had dramatic economic consequences for Seychelles but also led to the outbreak of diseases and rising crime levels, the *Grand Blancs* established the Planters' Association, which vied for greater representation of the plantocracy in governmental affairs (Scarr 2000: 113). In similar fashion, plantation workers in 1937 founded the League for the Advancement of Colored People, which primarily emphasized the need for minimum wages and better working conditions (Scarr 2000: 122-123). The first competitive elections in Seychelles were organized in 1948, when four of the twelve members of the legislative council could be elected by an electorate that was limited by property and literacy conditions (Franda 1982: 14; Campling et al. 2011: 14).[13] Since these restrictions implied that only the plantocracy could vote, the Seychelles Taxpayers' and Producers' Association (STPA), which had been established by *Grand Blancs* in 1939, easily won all four seats.

Despite restrictions on the franchise, in 1963 two political parties emerged in Seychelles. On the one hand, the socialist Seychelles People's United Party (SPUP) was established by France-Albert René, and this party vied for

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[11] British control over the islands was formalized during the Treaty of Paris in 1814.

[12] In an attempt to appease the settlers, the British appointed Quéau de Quinssy (now De Quincy) as *juge de paix*, which he remained until his death in 1827.

[13] Due to these restrictions, only five to ten percent of the Seychellois citizens could vote in these elections.

complete independence from the United Kingdom and international alignment with the Soviet block (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 142).[14] Its counterpart, the Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP) was founded by James Mancham, represented the business-oriented Seychellois middle-class, and desired closer political integration with the United Kingdom (Scarr 2000: 171-173; Campling et al. 2011: 14-15). Despite their differences, both parties called for the introduction of a Westminster political system and universal suffrage, which were finally realized in 1967. Elections that same year were won by the SDP, which together with an allied independent MP managed to secure a majority of five out of eight parliamentary seats (Franda 1982: 14; Campling et al. 2011: 15-16). In subsequent elections in 1970 and 1974 the SDP and Mancham managed to stay in power by marginal majorities, and the ideological divide between this party and René's SPUP rapidly became more profound.[15]

Since not only the public opinion of the Seychellois population, but also the attitude of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the British government became increasingly anti-imperialistic and pro-independence, Mancham realized that he would have to change his position on this issue in order to remain in power (Scarr 2000: 184-188). During the Constitutional Convention in London in 1975, the British (Labour-) government insisted on the formation of a coalition government between SDP and SPUP as a precondition for independence of Seychelles. After such a government was formed, and Mancham became President and René Prime Minister, Seychelles became an independent republic on 29 June 1976.[16] Although rumors of a potential *coup d'état* by the SPUP circulated and also reached Mancham, the President did not appear to take these very seriously (Scarr 2000: 193).

Within one year after independence, on 4 June 1977, Prime Minister René seized power in a bloodless coup while Mancham was on an overseas trip (Hatchard 1993: 601; Ellis 1996: 167). Aided by Tanzania, Libya, and other Soviet-aligned African states, René embarked on a socialist political program,

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[14] The SPUP was to some extent related to and aided by contemporary African liberation movements and socialist regimes, and was itself categorized as a liberation movement by the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in 1973. In addition, at least in the 1960s and 1970s René was supported by the French socialists and the British Labour Party, which both supported his anti-colonialist ideals (Campling et al. 2011: 14-15).

[15] The Mancham-governments successfully established a tourism industry in Seychelles, as a consequence of which the country rapidly became more prosperous. The SPUP however believed that foreign capitalists gained too much influence in the country's economy, and that the revenues from tourism were not equally distributed among the population (Campling et al. 2011: 18).

[16] Under the new constitution, Seychelles acquired a republican political system which included elements of both British and French political traditions.

suspended the constitution, and established a one-party state (Baker 2008: 297). With regard to international politics, Mancham's staunchly pro-Western position was substituted with a policy that aimed at closer cooperation with the African socialist states and the Soviet Union. Due to its strategic location in one of the main areas of Cold War-interest and due to its small size and vulnerability, Seychelles has always been exceptionally susceptible to foreign pressures, and even though the country's government was officially socialist, René skillfully maintained relatively harmonious relations with former colonizers Britain and France (Ellis 1996: 168).

Table 7.1 Vote Percentage and Seats of Seychellois Parties at Legislative Elections[17]

	SPUP-SPPF-Parti Lepep		SDP		SNP		PDM		Independent or Other		Total
Year	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	V%	S	S
1967	45.5	3	51.5	4	-	-	-	-	3.0	1	**8**
1970	44.1	5	52.8	10	-	-	-	-	3.1	-	**15**
1974	47.6	2	52.4	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	**15**
1979	*98.0*	*23*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*2.0*	*-*	*23*
1983	*100*	*23*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*23*
1987	*100*	*23*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*-*	*23*
1992	58.4	14	33.7	8	-	-	-	-	7.9	-	**22**
1993	57.5	27	32.8	5	9.7	1	-	-	-	-	**32**
1998	61.7	30	12.1	1	26.1	3	-	-	0.1	-	**34**
2002	54.3	23	3.1	-	42.6	11	-	-	-	-	**34**
2007	56.2	23	-	-	43.8	11	-	-	-	-	**34**
2011	88.6	31	-	-	-	-	10.9	1	0.5	-	**32**

Within Seychelles itself, the ruling SPUP, which in 1978 adopted the new name of Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF), dominated political life. Opposition parties were banned, criticism of government was not tolerated, there was very little room for political freedom, and human rights abuses were commonplace (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 148; Baker 2008: 280). Political patronage and nepotism were the main instruments of political control, but even though corruption flourished, tourism continued to generate vast economic development on the islands, and Seychelles became one of the most prosperous states of Africa (Campling and Rosalie 2006: 119-121; Yoon 2011: 101). In

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[17] **SPUP** = Seychelles People's United Party - **SPPF** = Seychelles People's Progressive Front - **Parti Lepep** = People's Party (socialist party), **SDP** = Seychelles Democratic Party (centre-right party), **SNP** = Seychelles National Party (liberal, democratic party), **PDM** = Popular Democratic Movement (former SNP-members). Data for 1979, 1983, and 1987 are presented in italics because these elections were conducted under the one-party regime. In 2011 the SNP decided to boycott the parliamentary election, but some of its members still ran as part of the PDM.

November 1985, one of the most prominent Seychellois opposition leaders in exile, Gérard Hoareau, was murdered in London by foreign assassins with numerous indications of links with the Seychellois regime (Baker 2008: 280).

Table 7.2: Vote Percentages of Candidates in Seychellois Presidential Elections[18]

	René (SPUP-SPPF)	Michel (SPPF-Parti Lepep)	Mancham (SDP)	Boullé (SNP-Ind.)	Ramkalawan (SNP)	Volcere (NDP)
Year	**V%**	**V%**	**V%**	**V%**	**V%**	**V%**
1979	*98.0*	-	-	-	-	-
1984	*92.6*	-	-	-	-	-
1989	*96.1*	-	-	-	-	-
1993	59.5	-	36.7	3.8	-	-
1998	66.7	-	13.8	-	19.5	-
2001	54.2	-	-	0.9	44.9	-
2006	-	53.7	-	0.6	45.7	-
2011	-	55.5	-	1.7	41.4	1.4

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, and the Harare Declaration of 1991[19] proved to be watershed moments for Seychellois politics. Many of the country's socialist allies and their vital investments in Seychelles disappeared abruptly, and increasing diplomatic pressure from France, Britain, and the United States eventually resulted in the return of multiparty-democracy in 1993, when free and democratic elections were organized (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 143; Baker 2008: 280; Campling et al. 2011: 32). Domestically, the influential Catholic and Anglican churches played a major role in advancing the democratization process, and clearly sided with the political opposition (Hatchard 1993: 606). Former President James Mancham returned from exile and reinvigorated the Seychelles Democratic Party, but suffered defeats in both the 1993 presidential and parliamentary contests, as a consequence of which René and the SPPF could remain in power.

As election results presented in tables 7.1 and 7.2 demonstrate, since the return of multiparty-democracy the SPPF has won all parliamentary and presidential elections and is presently ruling the country for thirty-five years. Having been defeated in the pivotal 1993 elections, the position of Mancham's

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[18] **NDP** = New Democratic Party (part of former SDP). Data for 1979, 1984, and 1989 are presented in italics because these elections were conducted under the one-party regime. René never obtained 100% of votes because the electorate could only cast a ballot 'for' or 'against' him; the percentage of the electorate that voted 'for' is presented here.

[19] The Harare Declaration of 1991 was a joint declaration of the member-states of the Commonwealth, in which (among others) the need for democratic and accountable government was being emphasized. The declaration was endorsed by the heads of government of all Commonwealth members.

SDP as the main opposition party has been overtaken by the Seychelles National Party (SNP) of the former Anglican priest Wavel Ramkalawan. In 2004, France-Albert René resigned as President after having been in power for over twenty-five years, and handed over power to his former Vice-President James Michel, who currently still is the nation's President and changed the name of his party into *Parti Lepep* (People's Party in Creole). With the same party and people remaining in power, critics assert that very little has changed in post-1993 Seychelles except for some institutional and cosmetic changes (e.g. Baker 2008: 280-281). Especially with regard to the freedom of expression and judicial neutrality the reputation of the regime has not been very favorable, and there is a perception that the distinction between the ruling party and the government remains hard to determine (Yoon 2011: 101). The 2011 parliamentary elections were boycotted by the SNP because of the government's refusal to revise existing laws on campaign financing, and out of frustration with the supposedly faltering democratization process in general. In table 7.3, the composition of Seychellois governments since 1970 has been presented.

Table 7.3: Composition of Seychellois Governments since 1970

Time Span	Government Party	President
1970 - 1975	SDP	James Mancham
1975 - 1977	SDP & SPUP	James Mancham (& France-Albert René as Prime Minister)
1977 – 2004	SPPF	France-Albert René
2004 -	SPPF – Parti Lepep	James Michel

3. Explaining Democracy in Seychelles

On the basis of the political history and other characteristics of the country, a number of factors that contributed to the present-day electoral democracy in the Republic of Seychelles can be listed. As opposed to St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles actually experienced two transitions to democracy; one with the introduction of universal suffrage in 1967, and one with the reinstallation of multiparty democracy in 1993. In many ways, the first Seychellois transition to democracy is comparable to that of the Eastern Caribbean microstates, in the sense that it was gradual and characterized by the interplay between the three groups of the British colonial authorities, the white local plantocracy, and the colored mass of (former) plantation workers. In contrast to St. Kitts and Nevis however, the influence and grip of the British administration on political developments in Seychelles was markedly less significant, as the colonial authorities often felt themselves "alien in their own colony" (Campling et al. 2011: 8). Instead, the

descendants of the French settler families (the *Grand Blancs*) were to a large extent able to rule the colony as they desired. With regard to the influence of colonialism on democratization, the three-hundred years of socialization in the Westminster system that the population of St. Kitts and Nevis experienced is not matched by an analogous process in Seychelles. In comparison, colonialism in the latter microstate was shorter, less intensive, and consisted of the interplay between French, British, and *Grand Blanc*-political cultures.

Whereas St. Kitts and Nevis upon independence undisputedly retained both its Westminster-modeled democratic institutions and its pro-Western foreign policy orientation, Seychelles acquired a political system that incorporated both French and British elements, and faced a great divide between its two main political parties with respect to economics and the country's position in the Cold War-conflict. While the survival of (capitalist) democracy in the Caribbean was furthermore not only closely monitored by the United States, but also by other countries in the generally democracy-friendly region (cf. Domínguez 1993),[20] Seychelles is located in one of the most undemocratic parts of the world, and not in the proximity of any major democratic power. As a matter of fact, nearby regimes like the Nyerere-government of Tanzania actually supported and contributed to the downfall of the democratically elected government in Seychelles (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 143). In light of these contextual factors, the initial survival of democracy in Seychelles was uncertain from the start, and the 1977-coup d'état was hence maybe not an improbable development.

Both my own interviews and the secondary academic literature on Seychelles explain the country's return to democracy in 1993 largely on the basis of international factors. Not only in Seychelles, but on the entire African continent, the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War generated the demise of Soviet-aligned one-party regimes, and instigated a shift to democracy.[21] Authoritarian socialist regimes in other small African island states like Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe crumbled in the first years of the 1990s as well, and in these countries a successful transition to democracy

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[20] In the previous chapter, it was described how various far-reaching judicial, monetary, security, and economic cooperation agreements have been established between the small island states in the Eastern Caribbean. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States of which St. Kitts and Nevis is a member has for example played a significant role in the preservation of democracy among its members. Seychelles, by contrast, is only a member of the Indian Ocean Commission (together with France, Mauritius, Comoros, and Madagascar), which is a much less formalized and less active organization.

[21] Together with Latin American, Asian, and Southern and Eastern European states, these African states form part of Huntington's third wave of democratization (1991).

subsequently unfolded. Since the financial and economic support from the Soviet Union and its allies suddenly subsided, and in light of the international economic dependence of small states in general, the attainment of aid from Western donors at once became a crucial factor for these African microstates. [22] With regard to Seychelles, multiple publications assert that French, British, and American diplomats in 1991 pressured the regime to organize free and fair elections, and threatened to suspend their provision of aid to the country (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 143; Baker 2008: 280).[23] Being crucially dependent on foreign investments and especially tourist inflows, it appears that the 1993-return to multiparty elections in Seychelles was primarily a result of international developments (Hatchard 1993: 602).

Just like St. Kitts and Nevis and most other microstates in the developing world, the foreign policy of Seychelles can by and large be identified according to the international patron-client model (cf. Carney 1989). Already in the early 19th-century De Quinssy-era, Seychellois leaders proficiently and advantageously played out Britain and France against each other, and in the 1970s and 1980s the René-regime played the same game with the two Cold War-superpowers (Ellis 1996: 166-168; Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 152). In the past two decades, Seychelles has acted as a client state of among others the United States, the United Kingdom, France, South Africa, India, China, and most recently the United Arab Emirates.[24] Since it is not located in the sphere of influence of a major international power, Seychelles arguably has a greater degree of freedom in the formulation of its foreign policy than for example the Caribbean and Pacific microstates. Seeing that Seychelles' most important international partners are

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[22] Hatchard specifically points out that "René acknowledged the increasing linkage of aid to democratic change by Western donors" (1993: 602).

[23] Specifically, Baker asserts that President René "was confronted with the resident ambassadors of Britain, France and USA who handed him a letter giving him until 5 December 1991 to announce the restoration of the multiparty system or else they would denounce him in public in Seychelles itself. Under political pressure, therefore, from the Commonwealth, exiles and domestic critics, and with the economy in trouble, President René announced a return to multiparty government at the Extraordinary Congress of the SPPF in December 1991" (Baker 2008: 280).

[24] The UAE have become an important trading partner of Seychelles, especially with regard to oil and gas, and their national airline company (Emirates) has become the second most significant airline serving Seychelles. Most significant, however, is the recent construction of a colossal six-storey palace on the site of a former US satellite tracking station on Mahé, which was built as a secondary residence for the President of the Emirates and the Emir of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa. Not only are the dimensions of the palace and the surrounding land gigantic in proportion to the size of Mahé itself, but the behavior and influence of Sheikh Khalifa have caused a lot of antagonism among the Seychellois population. Many people I talked to fear that the Emiratis will attempt to impose Islamic rules and traditions on Seychellois society, and opposition parties and newspapers have turned this into one of their most prominent political tools in attacking the ruling party.

however Western democracies, especially since these deliver the wide majority of tourists, these countries now function as major promoters of democratic government in the microstate.

Whatever the reasons for the 1993-return to democracy and the current status of Seychelles as an electoral democracy may be, various scholars point to a number of considerable deficiencies in the archipelago's democratic system. First of all, the ruling party of Seychelles (the Parti Lepep) is now in office for thirty-five years, and a political change through the ballot box has as of yet never occurred in the country. As Van Nieuwkerk and Bell argue, this means that "the ghost of Seychelles's one-party past lingers on" (2007: 146), primarily because the ruling party continues to dominate the opposition and various elected and non-elected institutions. According to Yoon, the Parti Lepep uses state resources to finance its election campaigns and distributes government jobs as part of political patronage, which provides the party with excessive advantages at the polls (2011: 101). In addition, restrictions on the freedom of the press and the freedom of assembly are believed to impinge on political rights in the microstate (Baker 2008: 288). Last but not least, Baker asserts that electoral district administrators are commonly confusing their role with support for the governing party, the Seychellois army plays an excessively dominant role in the country's public life, and "judicial abuse now arguably constitutes the single most serious governance issue requiring reform" (2008: 282). In short, on the basis of secondary sources the political system of Seychelles appears rather distant from democratic ideals.

4. Political Institutions of Seychelles

The mixed French-British colonial heritage of Seychelles is clearly visible in the country's present-day political-institutional structure. The country had a Westminster-modeled parliamentary system during the decade that is now known as the 'First Republic' (1967-1977), but upon independence this was changed to a semi-presidential system that aimed at power-sharing between the SDP and SPUP (Campling et al. 2011: 17). During the so-called Second Republic (1977-1993) power gradually became more and more concentrated in the hands of René, who in addition to President also became Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and headed a cabinet of only five members. The new constitution of the Third Republic (1993 until the present) that was adopted after the return to multipartyism turned Seychelles into a presidential republic, with a directly and separately elected President and legislature (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 144;

Campling et al. 2011: 32). As in other presidential systems, Seychellois government ministers are appointed by the president, who is both head of state and head of government of the country (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Art. 50).

According to the Constitution, presidential elections are organized once every five years, and the same person cannot be President for more than three subsequent terms (1993: Art. 52). In 1996, a constitutional amendment established the office of Vice-President, and prospective Vice-Presidential candidates have to be announced by presidential candidates (as 'running mates') in advance to the presidential election (1993: Art. 66A). The additional ministers in the executive are appointed by the President, and have to be approved by a majority of the members of the National Assembly.[25] Ministers are accountable to the President, and can also be removed by the President (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Art. 71, 73). In addition to the ministers, the President has the duty to appoint the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the electoral commission, judges of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, and the ombudsman of Seychelles.[26] According to the Constitution, the President furthermore has the competence to dissolve the Seychellois legislature and to declare the state of emergency (1993: Art. 41, 110; Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 144).

Presidential elections in Seychelles are organized under the rules of the two-round runoff system that is also used in France, but as table 2 demonstrates so far no second rounds in presidential elections have been necessary, since SPPF-Parti Lepep-candidates have always obtained an absolute majority of votes in the first round. For legislative elections a mixed electoral system is being employed, in which the country is divided in at least twenty-two single-member constituencies, in which the first-past-the-post plurality system is used.[27] In addition, political parties that acquire at least ten percent of the nationwide votes have the right to nominate one additional member of parliament for every

[25] In addition to the President and the Vice-President, there are currently eleven ministers in the Seychellois government (source: www.gov.sc).

[26] Most of these appointments are based on candidates proposed by the Constitutional Appointments Authority (CAA), which consists of 1) one member appointed by the President, 2) one member appointed by the leader of the opposition, and 3) one member (and chairman) appointed on the basis of consensus between the other two members. If the two members however disagree on this last appointment, they have to propose a list of potential candidates to the President, who then can appoint the chairman (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Art. 143: 3). Until 2007, the chairman of the CAA was also a member of the executive committee of the ruling party.

[27] In the four most recent parliamentary elections (since 1998), the country was carved up in twenty-five constituencies that each delivered one MP. Of these constituencies twenty-two are located on Mahé, two on Praslin, and one remaining district for the Inner Islands (among which La Digue, Silhouette, and some smaller islands).

ten percent of the votes that they obtained (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Schedule 4; Yoon 2011: 100).[28] In practice this has mostly lead to a total number of nine 'proportionally elected' MPs, but due to the opposition's boycott of the last election, only seven additional MPs were appointed. Whereas the Seychellois National Assembly thus used to consist of thirty-four members, after the 2011 elections it has only thirty-two MPs. This means that each MP on average represents nearly 3.000 Seychellois citizens.

The legislature of Seychelles, the National Assembly,[29] is a unicameral parliament that is directly elected once in every five years. Under the rules of the presidential system with its strict separation of powers, MPs can since 2007 not be simultaneously members of the executive branch, and vice versa. The National Assembly selects a Speaker and a Deputy-Speaker from amongst its members, and the MPs who are not member of the party that nominated the President have the right to select the leader of the opposition. Subsequent to a referendum on the issue,[30] the approval of two-thirds of the members of the National Assembly is necessary for constitutional amendments. Since 1993, all Speakers have been members of the SPPF-Parti Lepep, and this party has always managed to obtain more than two-thirds of parliamentary seats at elections. Furthermore, since all presidential and all parliamentary elections since the return of multiparty democracy have been won by the SPPF-Parti Lepep, the executive and legislative branches of government have always been dominated by the same party, and a situation of divided government has so far never occurred.

In addition to the national layer of government, Seychelles consists of twenty-five local administrative divisions, which also function as electoral districts. Since the 1990s local governments have progressively gained more power, and they have generally been a-political (Commonwealth Secretariat 2010: 178). Since 1991, each district has obtained its own elected council, but from 1999 onwards the members of these assemblies are appointed by the Minister of Local Government (ibid.). The judicial branch of the Seychellois government consists of the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, and several

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[28] Although various academic publications and reports discuss these appointments as if it were a separate election under PR-rules, they are actually *post hoc*-appointments by political parties, especially since the candidates for these appointments are unknown in advance to the elections.
[29] *Lasanble Nasyonal Sesel* in Creole.
[30] According to the Constitution, a referendum in which a constitutional amendment is proposed needs to result in approval of at least sixty percent of the votes cast (1993: Art. 91). Since the reintroduction of multiparty democracy, two such referendums have been held (in 1992 and 1993).

subordinate courts,[31] of which the magistrates are all appointed by the President upon the advice of the Constitutional Appointments Authority (CAA). Many of the Seychellois judges are foreign nationals, and in contrast to Seychellois judges they are appointed for a specific term, which can be prolonged by the President (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Art. 131: 134).[32]

When looking at the constitutional arrangement of Seychelles, and the structure and institutions of its presidential republican system, no antidemocratic elements can be observed. This however contrasts markedly with reports from organizations like Freedom House and the Commonwealth as well as with the academic literature on the political system of the country, in which quite a few reservations about the democratic nature of the Seychellois system are being expressed (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007; Baker 2008; Yoon 2011). In previous chapters on San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, it was demonstrated how the size of these microstates creates certain political dynamics that are hard to notice if the institutional structure of the country alone is taken into consideration. For the political system of Seychelles, however, it is the question whether the non-democratic features that have been observed in the scholarly literature are a consequence of the small size of the country, or whether they are a legacy of the one-party era instead, and are therefore also similar to less democratic characteristics of larger states. In the analysis in following paragraphs, an attempt will be made to find answers to this question.

5. The Influence of Size on Democracy in Seychelles

When the political system of Seychelles is measured up to Dahl's conditions for polyarchy, it can firstly be remarked that Freedom House's classification of the microstate as an electoral democracy can be considered justifiable. Presidential and parliamentary elections are organized and held at regular points in time, and according to Commonwealth-reports elections are "credible" (Commonwealth Expert Team 2006), "well organized and peaceful" (Commonwealth Expert Team 2011) and are "generally viewed as having met basic international norms" (Freedom House 2012). Despite these positive qualifications, none of these reports uses the labels of 'free' or 'fair', and all of them express major concerns and list quite a number of recommendations for future elections. According to

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[31] Five magistrate courts that deal with lesser criminal and civil cases exist, of which four are based in the country's capital Victoria on Mahé, and one on Praslin.

[32] Freedom House-reports stipulate that "the impartiality of the non-Seychellois magistrates can be compromised by the fact that they are subject to contract renewal" (Freedom House 2012). At present, the President of the Seychellois Court of Appeal is a Mauritian citizen, whereas the Chief Justice originates from Uganda.

the Constitution however, all registered Seychellois citizens of at least eighteen years old who reside in Seychelles have active voting rights (1993: Art. 113, 114), and similar conditions apply to passive suffrage rights (1993: Art. 80). This means that the inclusiveness of Seychellois citizens is at least legally safeguarded.

In the following sections, an in-depth analysis of the influence of size on the nature and quality of contestation and inclusiveness in the Republic of Seychelles will be offered. First, attention is paid to the role of socio-political cleavages, ideology, and political parties in the archipelago. Subsequently, the balance of power between different political and societal institutions will be highlighted, which is followed by an analysis of the effects of closeness and face-to-face contacts on the characteristics and quality of political inclusiveness. The final section is devoted to an assessment of elections and the degree and nature of participation of citizens in Seychellois politics. On the basis of these four paragraphs, in a concluding section the main findings are summarized and an assessment of the influence of size on Seychellois politics is provided. In addition, the conclusion briefly draws a comparison between Seychelles and the two microstates that were analyzed in earlier chapters.

5.1. Contestation: Cleavages, Ideologies, and Political Parties

Political contestation in Seychelles occurs in the form of parliamentary and presidential elections that are organized once in every five years. Since the elected President has the constitutional duty to form his own cabinet and appoint government ministers, the presidential election can actually be regarded as a vote for the entire executive branch of government. Furthermore, since public officials in the most important non-elected bodies of the Seychellois political system are also appointed by the President and some of them by the leader of the parliamentary opposition, political contestation for these institutions is indirectly present as well. Active and passive suffrage rights for Seychellois adults furthermore ensure that every eligible citizen can take part in contestation, either by influencing the outcome of political competition (by casting a ballot) or by entering the competition itself. Whereas all the conditions for political contestation are therefore constitutionally upheld, it is necessary to also examine the nature and content of political competition in order to fully comprehend the influence of size on political contestation in Seychelles.

As Dahl argues, contestation first and foremost refers to the "extent of permissible opposition" (Dahl 1971: 4). In this respect, it can be noted that alternation in office has occurred only once in post-independence Seychelles, but

this was thirty-five years ago and happened by means of a military coup. Since the same power is now in office for thirty-five years, political change through the ballot box has yet to occur for the first time. With regard to the presence of a parliamentary opposition, it can be noted that, since re-democratization in 1993, on average about one third of MPs in parliament has been affiliated with the opposition. The 2011-boycott of the parliamentary elections has however altered this balance, since at present the parliamentary opposition consists of only one out of thirty-two MPs. Whereas the effective number of parties (ENP; cf. Laakso and Taagepera 1979) since 1993 has always been around 1.80, after the 2011-election it has become 1.06.[33] This means that the extent of opposition in parliament has declined significantly since the last election, and it remains to be seen whether this will change after future elections.

As several of my respondents have emphasized, the Seychellois political system is characterized by the absence of major socio-political cleavages. Although the country's population is both ethnically and religiously rather heterogeneous,[34] ethnic and religious cleavages have remarkably never been politicized by any of the main Seychellois political parties. In this respect, Scarr's observation that "Seychelles never had a color question" (2000: 4) is accurate, and is remarkable especially in light of the historical tensions between the white plantocracy and the colored plantation workers. At present, Seychellois citizens and politicians I talked to proudly refer to their 'melting pot'-society, and although no data on this issue are available, people I talked to pointed out that interracial relationships and marriages are for instance relatively common.

As tables 1 and 2 demonstrate, political contestation in Seychelles commonly occurs on the basis of competing political parties. With exception of the one-party era in which no political parties other than the ruling party were allowed to compete for votes, in the First and Third Republics two parties have been represented in parliament most of the time, and at elections over ninety percent of the votes have usually been divided between only two parties.[35] In

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[33] Based on own calculation using data of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 2011).

[34] Seychelles has a rather low score of 0.20 in Alesina et al.'s fractionalization index, which measures ethnic, religious, and linguistic fractionalization, and ranges between 1 and 0 - with 0 indicating the absence of fractionalization and 1 indicating a completely fractionalized society (Alesina et al. 2003). Since 'Creoles' are however treated as one group here (constituting almost 90% of the population), in my opinion this index fails to recognize the significant differences between the various segments of the Creole population (i.e. Creoles from mixed African, Arab, Indian, Chinese, or European descent).

[35] Although small parties and independents (such as the NDP or the independent Presidential candidate Philippe Boullé) have contested elections, this has never led to actual representation in either the legislature or the executive.

this two-party system, the left side of the political spectrum has always been occupied by what is now the Parti Lepep, but used to be the SPUP (1963 - 1977) or SPPF (1977 – 2006). Founded as a pro-Soviet socialist party, the Parti Lepep ruled Seychelles during the one-party regime and has continued to win elections after the restoration of multipartyism in 1993. At present the party continues to present itself as a spokesperson for the common people, and emphasizes socio-economic equality and the redistribution of welfare in its election manifestos. In addition, in the 2011 elections the party claimed to be the party for the 'true Seychellois', and thereby tried to portray the opposition as outsiders.[36]

Even though the party changed its name twice and transformed from an authoritarian, antidemocratic, and pro-Soviet grouping into an allegedly pro-democratic and ideologically more pragmatic party, key functions in the Parti Lepep- apparatus are still occupied by the people who headed the one-party regime (Yoon 2011: 102). Former President René still is the chairman of the party, and in this role continues to exercise a great degree of influence within not only the Parti Lepep but also the Seychellois government (Baker 2008: 290). In addition, the current President also had a prominent role in both the 1977-coup and the subsequent authoritarian regime, as one of the officials I talked with aptly points out;

> "The Parti Lepep has been in power for over thirty years. (…) And even though they have changed from SPUP to SPPF and now to Parti Lepep, it's the same leopard, the same people. James Michel, the current President, took part in the coup d'état; there are pictures of him with his Kalashnikov."

While the leadership and internal organizational structure of the Parti Lepep have in several ways remained similar, the party has experienced a major transformation in terms of its ideology and economic orientation. Originally founded as a socialist party with a Soviet-style economic program, the party is now persistently advocating and acting upon free-market principles, and has therefore become as capitalistic as the opposition (Campling et al. 2011: 33-34). According to an academic I interviewed;

> "I must say that the main differences have slowly merged, in the sense that we have seen the ruling party moving from being a communist party to adopting a Western-style economy."

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[36] The slogan of the Parti Lepep in the 2011-elections was *'En Nouvo Sesel'*, which translates into "a new Seychelles", and is also the title of this chapter. Members of the opposition and the general public with whom I discussed it pointed to the irony of this slogan, as they did not expect the development of a new Seychelles to arrive at the initiative of the party that has been in office for thirty-five years.

Whereas the party historically opposed the influence of foreign companies and governments in the Seychellois economy, the present government actively supports this, and Chinese companies and workers have for example executed momentous land reclamation projects that were deemed necessary due to urban sprawl.[37] In terms of the indicator of interest articulation by political parties, it can therefore be noted that the Parti Lepep has moved from a staunchly left-wing ideological position to a much more pragmatic and capitalist party.

The right wing of Seychellois politics used to be occupied by James Mancham's Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP), which initially was opposed to independence from the United Kingdom, advocated business interests, foreign investments, and the development of tourism to the country, and promoted a pro-Western foreign policy orientation. After disappointing election results in the early 1990s, the party was however surpassed by the newly established Seychelles National Party (SNP) as the leading political opposition group, and this latter party has since 1998 been the main opposition party of Seychelles.[38] In contrast to the center-right SDP, the SNP is generally considered to be a center-left liberal party that primarily advocates greater transparency and accountability in politics, and opposes the alleged abuses of power and exploitation of state resources by the Parti Lepep (Campling et al. 2011: 32-33).[39] Instead of emphasizing and advocating a specific socio-economic platform, the party can therefore primarily be perceived as a pro-democracy or anti-Parti Lepep grouping, as one of its supporters mentions;

> "The current main opposition party came about primarily in 1993, with the return of multiparty-democracy, and they were designed primarily in my opinion to basically deal with all the thing the government was not doing right. So there is not really an ideological aspect to it, it is more pragmatic."

Rather than advocating a substantially different policy-orientation than the ruling party, the SNP therefore primarily emphasizes more meta-political issues about the functioning and legitimacy of the political system.[40]

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[37] In the last decade the new islands of Île Aurore, Île du Port, and Île Perseverance were in the process of being reclaimed from the sea, and two Chinese construction companies constructed a new National Assembly-building and new houses on Île Perseverance.

[38] Even though the party boycotted the 2011-parliamentary elections, the presidential election that same year demonstrates the continuing electoral appeal of the party and its leader Wavel Ramkalawan.

[39] The SNP also has formal links to the British Liberal Democrats (Campling et al. 2011: 32).

[40] In countries that are in transition to democracy, it is common to find that the opposition is primarily vying for liberalization and democratization, and that its position on more substantive (socio-economical) political issues is either undefined or of lesser importance. If the transition to democracy is successful, this united opposition often falls apart in multiple factions with differing

Although the two Seychellois parties thus formally or rhetorically advocate and articulate different policies and claim to represent different socio-economic interests, according to all respondents whom I asked the question, the substantial political differences between them have decreased significantly over time. On the basis of a survey of their election manifestos for the 2011-election, the differences between the Parti Lepep and the SNP indeed appear to center on the organization of politics and the country's institutional-political structure, whereas no major differences can be noted with regard to other issues. At present, twelve of the thirteen respondents argued that no clear programmatic differences between the parties exist, and as the following academic points out;

> "One party was based on a socialist ideology, the Parti Lepep, whereas the SNP tended to follow the liberal-capitalist kind of ideology. But at the end of the day it seems that both of them are merging. It is pretty much blurred now, the only difference being that one bears the green color and the other one bears the red color."

Just like in San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, the absence of ideological demarcations between the parties of Seychelles seems to induce a personality-focused form of contestation. Like in the other two microstates, the preponderance of personalistic over programmatic politics seems to primarily be a causal effect of the country's population size. As a consequence of the small size of Seychelles, people know their politicians personally, which means that style and personality become key aspects of politics, as one of the journalists points out;

> "I don't think there are great differences between parties, but everything is in how you behave, you see? It's the personal touch."

In the absence of ideology, personalistic intra-elite relationships in Seychelles also determine the conduct of politics. This sometimes obstructs a rational political debate about problems and potential solutions, and an example is offered by one the country's senior political officials:

> "In the political arena here, if I come and talk about climate change, nobody will come and debate carbon emissions. Instead they will attack my personal life, which is totally not the way we should do it."

As the following minister argues, the fact that people within the Seychellois elite also know each other through multiple roles has significant consequences for the conduct of politics;

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political platforms (Huntington 1991: 122-124). The current situation in Seychelles to a certain extent appears to resemble this pattern.

> "Because people know each other personally, the politicians that are your adversaries – you went to school with them. You know a lot of funny stories about them. So the politics can be more personal sometimes than it needs to be."

Although some scholars who study the effect of size on democracy have suggested otherwise, the small size of Seychelles and the absence of ideological demarcations does not bring about a more consensus-oriented or harmonious conduct of politics. Due to the intimacy and interconnectedness of Seychelles society, and the prevalence of multiple-role relationships, people are generally well aware of each other's political adherence, as one of the journalists I interviewed explained to me;

> "With such a small population, it's the case that everybody knows everybody. So if somebody has political affiliations then that person will basically be known for being supportive of such and such party. So as opposed to bigger countries where you would not easily know where ones interests or loyalty lies, here you do."

Since eleven out of thirteen respondents pointed to either personal connections or (family-) traditions in explaining party loyalties, Seychellois society appears to be by and large divided in two groups that support the two main political parties. As in St. Kitts and Nevis, a quite extensive degree of polarization appears to exist between these two groups. In such an environment, people are also recurrently branded as belonging to one of the two sides, which means that a neutral position in politics is hard to maintain. As one public official asserts;

> "People are cast as supporting one party or the other. In the eyes of normal people (...) you are either this or that. You know, you are automatically classified as one or the other. (...) Remaining independent is almost a new concept here. What is independence? We are all political. And when you say you are political, you are either or."

The smallness of Seychelles facilitates the broad public awareness about people's individual political preferences, which means that political privacy and anonymity are much less easily maintained, as a result of which political branding and the treatment of people on the basis of their partisan affiliation becomes more common. In fact, because of these reasons most respondents stressed that Seychellois politics is highly divisive and polarized, especially because personal conflicts can be a lot more emotional and bitter than substantive political ones. Furthermore, just like in St. Kitts and Nevis strong and personality-based polarization sometimes leads to the victimization and pestering of political opponents, as an opposition supporter told me;

> "You see, if you are being told – maybe not directly but indirectly – that if you want a scholarship you need to be careful, that is a form of victimization, a form of harassment. If you are in a government job and you are working for promotion,

again there is pressure. If you are in the private sector and apply for a license or want to diversify your business, again you have to be careful. So there are many subtle ways in which people are checked in order to ensure that they are toeing the party line."

Although many political similarities can thus be observed between St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, a major difference can be observed with regard to the freedom to support the opposition. Whereas Kittitian-Nevisian opposition supporters might be victimized for their political preferences, I observed that these people nonetheless (proudly) display their partisan affiliation and also participate in opposition rallies and meetings. In addition, due to the intermittent alternation of power, these people were convinced that a change in their situation would arrive somewhere in the future. In Seychelles, the freedom to publicly support the opposition seemed markedly less present, and the opposition supporters I talked to generally appeared fearful or at least hesitant to express their support for the SNP. As the 2011-Commonwealth election report notes, the only party that organizes campaign rallies is the Parti Lepep, as the SNP-campaign appears more focused on one-on-one campaigning and canvassing (Commonwealth Expert Team 2011: 16). In conclusion, the political climate of Seychelles, to a greater extent than its Caribbean counterpart, appears to be characterized by fear and the unequal position between the parties.[41]

In conclusion, the Seychellois case demonstrates that the predominance of personalistic contestation over ideological and programmatic competition leads to a rather divisive political environment. In effect, this is essentially caused by the small size of the country, and the close and direct interpersonal (political) and multiple-role relationships and that evolve from it. Although Seychellois politics in this sense shares many features with St. Kitts and Nevis, a major difference is that whereas Kittitian and Nevisian parties have at various points in time alternated in government, and therefore more clearly assume a somewhat equal position with regard to their chances of gaining office at elections, the Seychellois parties have been unequal in this sense, as alternation of power has so far never occurred by means of free and fair elections, and the opposition is as of 2011 only marginally represented in parliament.

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[41] Since it is publicly known who supports the opposition, it might seem illogical that opposition supporters are hesitant to openly support the SNP, especially in comparison to the vocal and visible PAM-supporters in St. Kitts. This can however possibly be explained as a legacy of the authoritarian period, in which a climate of fear existed due to human rights abuses and torture. Baker argues that this climate of fear has not ceased to exist after the return to multipartyism (2008: 286).

5.2. Contestation: The Balance of Power between Institutions

In light of Dahl's condition of 'institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference', the present section will discuss the horizontal balance of power between both elected and non-elected political and societal institutions in the Seychellois system. In the previous two chapters, it was shown that the theoretical expectations with regard to the supreme position of government in small states and the absence of institutions that can effectively function as a check on governmental power were largely corroborated for the cases of San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis. As the preceding section has illustrated, the Seychellois socio-political environment is characterized by a great degree of polarization between supporters of the two main political parties in the system. In combination with the effects of the small size of the archipelago, this characteristic means that Seychelles is no exception when it comes to the supreme position of government in the microstate's political structure, and the shortage of neutral and autonomous institutions that can effectively restrain the power of the executive.

According to the Constitution, the President of Seychelles is the head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the defense forces (Constitution of Seychelles 1993: Art. 50). In addition however, the President has the constitutional prerogative to appoint the members of the executive, and to make appointments to a host of other positions. Although some of these appointments require the consent of the CAA, as described before, the President has a decisive vote in the composition of this institution itself. As a consequence, the President of Seychelles occupies a supremely powerful position in the country's political system, and his powers are only to a very limited degree controlled or counterbalanced by other institutions or players in the country (Hatchard 1993: 607). Furthermore, because of their political dependence on the President, the other ministers appear to be mostly in a subordinate position to their head of government. As one minister illustratively explains:

> "I think the President is clearly the authority. As a minister I am conscious that the President is elected by the people; he chose me to be in his cabinet, and he can fire me. And basically that's it; you have to follow his guidance, try to understand where he wants to go, and try to align yourself with a direction that he has set as the leader, as the President."

Whereas the preeminence of the President vis-à-vis other members of the executive is a common feature of presidential systems, the one-party legacy and in many ways still uncompleted transition to democracy of Seychelles means that the President continues to wield great and virtually unchecked powers, that

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according to some scholars are disproportionate for a democracy (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 146; Baker 2008: 280-281). In some ways, the size of Seychelles exacerbates the pervasiveness of government, in the sense that the resulting weakness of other institutions enables the Parti Lepep's continuing domination of Seychellois society.

According to both academic case studies on Seychelles and country reports of international organizations, the primary legacy from the one-party era in the country is the persistently blurred boundary between the ruling party and the government. The synthesis between the Parti Lepep and the state primarily manifests itself in the functioning of institutions that are controlled by the state, such as the Seychellois army, the police force, the civil service, local governments, and the state broadcasting channel, which all are perceived to operate primarily in the interests of the Parti Lepep (Yoon 2011: 101-102). Just like in St. Kitts and Nevis, the perception of partiality of these institutions is further exacerbated by the previously discussed personalization, polarization and divisiveness of the Seychellois society, as a consequence of which institutions and persons are rapidly and constantly branded as supporting one side or the other. Other than its Eastern Caribbean counterpart, however, the partiality of Seychellois institutions is broadly seen as persistently favoring the same party, and this partiality is also confirmed by multiple sources outside of Seychellois society (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 149-150; Commonwealth Expert Team 2011).

Primarily as a result of the fact that the Parti Lepep currently controls the government and parliament of Seychelles for over thirty-five years, the National Assembly of Seychelles is broadly seen as obedient and compliant with the agenda of the government (Baker 2008: 284). The Speaker of parliament remains a very active and prominent party member, and does not take the required distance from the party in order to be perceived as somewhat neutral, as one of the opposition members asserts:

> "The Speaker is an active member of the governing party, who is out campaigning against the member of the opposition sitting in parliament. He attends all the party caucuses, so basically he is also the coach of the members of the ruling party. He is both the coach and the referee."

In addition to the alleged partiality of the Speaker, both interviewees and secondary sources assert that parliamentary committees exist more in name than in function, and that MPs have a very limited amount of time to research and evaluate bills before they are put to a vote (Baker 2008: 284). During the interviews, a wide majority of respondents confirmed the superiority of

government in executive-legislative relations, as the following public official mentions;

> "I think the executive is much stronger than the legislature. Often the legislative branch of government is just an extension of the executive. If the executive wants something to become law, parliament usually just passes it through."

This finding is remarkably also supported by members of the ruling party itself;

> "Obviously in the history of Seychelles our party has traditionally always had a majority in parliament, so there has been a tendency to see that the executive can push things through the parliament."

Whereas MPs until 2007 were also allowed to occupy positions in government, a modification of the law has introduced more dualism in this respect (Yoon 2011: 101). Nevertheless, many MPs of the governing party continue to exercise many other societal functions, which contributes to multiple-role relations and potentially generates conflicts of interest. In summary, it can be concluded that the National Assembly is largely ineffective in controlling the actions of government.

Although the previous paragraph has determined that a political opposition does exist in Seychelles, as Yoon argues "the opposition cannot compete with the ruling party on a level-playing field" (2011: 101). This is not only a result of the fact that the government controls a large proportion of the country's resources and labor market, which will be discussed in further detail in the following section, but also because the opposition does not have access to state media, and cannot effectively exercise its parliamentary role in controlling the actions of government. This is of course especially true for the situation in the aftermath of the 2011 elections, which were boycotted by the SNP, as a result of which the Parti Lepep now controls 31 of the 32 parliamentary seats. However, also when a significant proportion of parliamentary seats were still occupied by the SNP, the opposition was mostly ignored by the ruling party, and the former opposition leader told me that their proposals were almost by definition voted down instantaneously:

> "Basically the assembly is a rubber stamp; whatever government wants is not questioned, it just goes through. What we have also realized is that when the opposition brings a motion to the House, their [the Parti Lepep MPs, WV] first reaction is to throw it out. But then a couple of years down the road, they will come back with those same proposals and accept them."

Although the 1993-return to multipartyism allows for the existence of a parliamentary opposition, both the enduring dominance of the Parti Lepep and

the ensuing inferior position of the legislature versus the government undermines its position as an effective counterbalance to the government.

The unequal position between government and opposition is primarily reflected in their uneven access to the media. The only television and radio station of the country, the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), is controlled by the government, and multiple sources confirm that the opposition has only very limited access to it (Baker 2008: 287; Yoon 2011: 101; Commonwealth Expert Team 2011: 17). In addition to the SBC, the government's newspaper (*the Seychelles Nation*) also reports primarily in favor of the government. This tendency was denied by respondent who are affiliated to the Parti Lepep, but was confirmed by the other respondents:

> "The state media, the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, is basically run by the ruling party. (...) Local news is dominated by the President, so it's very much a publicity tool for the ruling party. But in any democracy the state-sponsored media should be covering news and giving all opinions the possibility of being heard."

In addition to the government media, the main political parties of Seychelles publish their own newspapers; *The People* for the Parti Lepep, *Regar* for the SNP, and *Le Nouveau Seychelles Weekly* for the SDP and later NDP. Opposition newspapers (and especially *Regar*) have repeatedly been sued for libel, and have been intimidated in various ways as a result of which *Regar* eventually ceased to be printed (Baker 2008: 287; Freedom House 2012). Due to these pressures and in order to protect themselves, Seychellois journalists often maintain some degree of self-censorship, as one journalist explained to me:

> "Maybe the journalists need to stop self-censoring themselves, which happens a lot here. (...) There are things you just don't put in; you don't know who will be offended and what the consequences may be, so you just decide to leave it out."

In considering the shortcomings of media freedom in Seychelles, the country acquires a score of 56 (or 'partly free') in the Freedom of the Press-index (Freedom House 2012). [42]

In addition to the problems that were mentioned before, the freedom of the press in Seychelles is further undermined by the regulation that radio stations need a government license in order to be able to broadcast (Commonwealth Expert Team 2011: 17). The cost of such a license is US $80.000, which is exorbitantly high in light of the small revenues that an inexorably small audience could ever bring about (Yoon 2011: 101-102).[43] As a result, no other radio station than the SBC have so far acquired television or radio broadcasting

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[42] Based on a scale ranging from 1 (completely free) to 100 (completely not free).
[43] A Seychelles journal typically sells close to a thousand copies a day.

rights in the archipelago, which limits the availability of alternative sources of information. In 2010 a Seychelles Media Commission was established with the aim to preserve media freedom and a high quality of journalism in the country. All eight members of this commission are however appointed by the President[44], which has led to a great degree of skepticism about its neutrality among the opposition (Commonwealth Expert Team 2011: 17). In similar fashion as in the other microstates, the strength and quality of Seychellois newspapers is undermined by the country's smallness, in the sense that most journalists are not professionals (but mostly politicians instead), and therefore profess journalism only as a hobby or secondary line of work.

The position of the judiciary in the Seychellois system is also a source of concern. Whereas interviews revealed that the Sammarinese and Kittitian-Nevisian judiciaries are broadly believed to be impartial and neutral, this is not the case for the Seychellois judiciary. More than half of my respondents asserted that government interference in the judiciary does occur, and this idea is confirmed by secondary sources (Baker 2008: 282-283; Freedom House 2012). According to Baker, "certainly the pattern of judgments that have flowed from the judges suggests that they do what is expected of them" (ibid.). As one of the legal officials I interviewed explains;

> "Sometimes you will see a letter from a politician to the judiciary, saying something like how disappointed they are about how this case turned out, or politicians actually looking into the affairs of that case. And it happens a lot that the court's case file is then transferred to the executive branch of government for the executive to have a look at the proceedings, but it's really not in their place to look at these things."

Like in the other two microstates, due to size and ensuing interconnectedness, Seychelles primarily hires judges from other countries, primarily in Africa. Although this has the potential to augment (the perception of) their impartiality, various publications and interviewees argue that the principal motivation of this feature is that the government has a greater degree of control on the actions of foreign judges. This is primarily a consequence of the rule that the tenure of foreign judges subject to contract renewal by the government, whereas a Seychellois judge is appointed for life (Baker 2008: 282). According to a politician affiliated with the opposition;

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[44] The Commission consists of one chairperson and seven members, of which two are appointed directly by the President, and one each on the advice of the National Assembly, the Department for Information, the Seychelles Media Association, the Liaison Unit for Non-Governmental Organizations, and the Judiciary.

> "If according to the Constitution you appoint a Seychellois as Chief Justice, you appoint him for life, and he cannot be removed. And the danger with appointing this guy for life is that he might not toe the presidential line; he might assume his independence. And if you look at it carefully, since the reintroduction of multiparty democracy we have not had a Seychellois. It's just a shenanigan, the way things are being run here."

On the basis of this evidence, it can be confirmed that the judiciary of Seychelles not always acts free from government interference. In addition to the media and the judiciary, multiple sources confirm that local governments are dominated by the ruling party, which is a consequence of the fact that local assemblies are appointed by the government (Commonwealth Secretariat 2010: 178). According to one of the opposition supporters:

> "When you look at the local government, basically it is an organization which even though it is part of the civil service, is there to protect the ruling party. District administrators are chosen on their party affiliation, and they go out campaigning with the ruling party-candidate."

According to respondents from the judicial, journalistic, and public sectors, the autonomy and professionalism of the media, bureaucracy, and the judiciary of Seychelles is especially undermined by the lack of finances that these institutions have at their disposal. Due to the size of the country and the relatively small number of people that buy newspapers, the sales revenues of journals are inherently limited. Since *the Nation* however receives state funding, this ruling party-dominated newspaper has an unequal advantage in comparison with other newspapers. With regard to institutions like the judiciary, the ombudsman, and the police, of which the performance is dependent on state funding, both respondents and secondary sources assert that the professionalism of these institutions is severely weakened by the shortage of finances that they receive from the government (Baker 2008: 288). As one of the interviewees from the judicial sector points out:

> "I think the judiciary and police in this country have been neglected for years. I think that if the government would put more resources into the police and the judiciary, this would help them to function much more professionally."

The present assessment of the balance of power between institutions reveals that the Seychellois government, but especially the Parti Lepep and the President, assume an all-powerful position in the country's political system. This not only comes at the expense of the influence of the political opposition, but also of the autonomous and neutral functioning of parliament, the media, and the judiciary. The findings of my field research demonstrate that the presence of Dahl's requirement of 'alternative sources of information' can be severely

questioned, and the same goes for the existence of an impartial judiciary. When it comes to the question in how far this balance of power between institutions is a consequence of the size of Seychelles's population, it appears that the effects of smallness of the country (as they were also observed in the other microstates) in some ways facilitate the enduring control of the Parti Lepep. In light of the limited resources that are available to these institutions as a consequence of smallness, they are arguably more dependent on state financing than their counterparts in larger states, which gives the Parti Lepep additional instruments to influence their actions and diminish their power.

5.3. Inclusiveness: The Consequences of Closeness and Direct Contact

Although the population size of Seychelles is with 90.000 inhabitants somewhat larger than that of San Marino (30.000) and St. Kitts and Nevis (50.000), comparable phenomena characterize the contacts and relations between citizens and politicians. Because both the physical and psychological distance between voters and their representatives is small, direct and reciprocal communication between citizens and politicians is common and occurs constantly. Many Seychellois people have politicians in their families, as their friends and acquaintances, or as neighbors. Furthermore, because political jobs are mostly part-time, many politicians have secondary jobs in for example the private sector, as a result of which people may also know them as colleagues. This means that Seychellois politicians are continuously exposed to questions, demands, and pressure from citizens, as one minister explains:

> "Citizens stop me in the street, and they have my mobile number. As soon as one person has my mobile number, everyone has it. So I get calls in the weekend and in the evenings, I get calls all the time. I go to the beach and have somebody who is coming to talk to me. It's difficult because sometimes you can feel that you are always working."

Although several politicians indeed expressed reservations with regard to the desirability of these face-to-face contacts, with two exceptions all respondents emphasized the advantages it entails with regard to the quality of representation and Seychellois democracy as a whole, as one minister argues:

> "It [smallness, WV] puts government very close to the people. The public has very good access to the highest ranking officials in the government, and here I am talking about the President, Vice-President, and the ministers. We are in contact with our people and are connected very closely with our people."

In similar fashion, smallness offers increased opportunities with regard to the extent and quality of responsiveness, as the following politician explains;

> "I think the positive aspect of it [smallness, WV] is that you gain access. (…) You are very much aware of what is having a positive or a negative impact on the population in terms of the policies that you are implementing in your respective ministry."

As this quote demonstrates, direct contact and face-to-face relations between citizens and politicians definitely generate enhanced opportunities for politicians to estimate and be aware of the political demands of their constituents. Although no data are available to support it, all respondents furthermore argue that as an effect of multiple-role relations and the close contacts between voters and their representatives, Seychellois people are generally very much politically involved.

That being said, in light of the absence of programmatic contestation and the personalistic orientation of Seychellois politics it should come as no surprise that the political demands and preferences of citizens are generally personal and particularistic rather than policy-related. In that sense, the closeness between citizens and politicians as it evolves from the size of Seychelles can be asserted to stimulate the development of particularistic relationships. About three quarters of respondents underlined the particularistic nature of citizen-politician relations, and as one senior public official pointed out;

> "I think the average person sees politicians really as a means by which they can get something of a personal benefit, although you might hear debates about human rights and economy, and so and so. I think that the average person is more concerned with what immediate benefits they can derive, rather than whether someone they don't know is being treated well in prison."

When it comes to the issue of particularism in Seychelles, the situation in this microstate bears a number of resemblances to the state of affairs in San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis. The smallness of the country increases the proximity between politicians and their constituents, but this primarily appears to entice the Seychellois electorate to pressure their politicians and to demand personal favors from them:

> "Social relations might affect your work; friends and family members may put pressure on you. Sometimes, politicians or other officials do not have the capacity to resist to these pressures. People sometimes want to dictate: "if you do not give me this favor I will go to the President!" They just try, even though they know it's a hopeless mission."

Different than in the other two microstates, clientelism in Seychelles seems to occur primarily between supporters and politicians of the Parti Lepep, because the opposition lacks the resources by means of which to attract potential supporters (Yoon 2011: 101). It is broadly believed throughout Seychelles that the ruling party uses state resources to finance clientelism, which obviously gives

it major advantages at the polls.[45] Since only very few people whom I talked with believed in the possibility of an election victory of the opposition, clientelistic demands of citizens are evidently primarily directed towards the ruling party, and are also addressed to this party by people who actually support the opposition.[46]

In addition to clientelism, government patronage in Seychelles appears to be ubiquitous. According to many sources, the ruling party distributes civil service-jobs as a means to reward supporters, and to attract new ones (Baker 2008: 289; Yoon 2011: 101). Since the government employs more than twenty percent of the Seychellois workforce, and indirectly controls close to seventy percent of the economy, this also means that many citizens are economically and financially dependent on government (Van Nieuwkerk and Bell 2007: 146). As Baker points out (2008: 289), potential new employees in the civil service are screened on their political allegiance, and the existence of this process is confirmed by respondents from the opposition:

> "If a young person finishing his studies applies for a job in government, he goes for the interview and he might be successful. But that does not mean he gets the job. Having been found to be suitable for the post, his name is then sent to the State House, where they have a process of security clearance. And security clearance is not based on your academic ability or your ability to perform the job, but it is based on whether your parents supported the party, and whether you take part in party activities."

Since the civil service appears to be primarily recruited on the basis of allegiance to the ruling party, respondents who are not related to the ruling party expressed concerns about the partiality and independence of the Seychellois bureaucracy. In addition, since people are employed on the basis of party loyalty rather than expertise or capability, patronage can also be supposed to lead to a less competent and less effective administration. Finally, like in the other microstates patronage in Seychelles has led to an oversized public sector, which according to even government ministers whom I interviewed functions as a drain on state resources.

Another aspect of citizen-politician relations in Seychelles that follows from my interviews is that because of the proximity, citizens tend to ignore of circumvent official institutional channels, and directly contact the politicians

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[45] As a matter of fact, the absence of restrictions on campaign spending led the main opposition party to boycott the 2011-parliamentary elections.

[46] I gathered this information by talking to Seychellois students and other citizens, who privately told me that they supported the opposition, but actually invited me to come to a Parti Lepep-rally. These people told me that their primary goal of attending this rally was to demonstrate their presence to the MP from their district, in order to raise the chances of acquiring some money to renovate their houses.

they know, or directly write a letter to the President. According to the Seychellois ombudsman;

> "There is direct access to the President and the VP. People do not always consult the ombudsman when they should, but sometimes directly call or write to the President to complain about their situation. They do not always use the proper channels as established in the constitution".

Although face-to-face relations between voters and their representatives can be applauded from the perspective of the involvement of citizens in politics, according to respondents working for public institutions the propensity of voters to contact the President instead of these institutions undermines their functioning.

Patronage and clientelism are recurrent features in many African states, and in this light Seychelles is no exception from the rest of the continent (cf. Kopecký 2011). Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the size of this microstate contributes to the development of such relationships. First, it has been described before how the absence of political cleavages leads to a personalized and polarized political environment, in which interpersonal relationships determine the conduct of politics. The direct access of citizens to their representatives enables voters to directly demand personal benefits from politicians. As a consequence of the smallness of the electorate and the increased weight and potential decisiveness of a single vote, the incentives of politicians to construct particularistic relationships are also enhanced. Whereas a large part of the academic literature emphasizes the positive effects of close contacts between citizens and politicians, the Seychellois political dynamics reveal that these contacts can also obstruct the functioning of democracy.

5.4. Inclusiveness: Participation of Citizens and Elections

When it comes to the participation of citizens in Seychellois politics, all thirteen of my respondents confirm that levels of political interest, awareness, and efficacy in the microstate are very high, and many of them ascribe this to the country's size. Because of the presence and directly visible influence of politics in most of the citizens' daily lives, there is a very clear perception among citizens that politics matters, and although no data is available to support it, I gained the impression that levels of detachment or apathy with politics in Seychelles are lower than in larger states. It should come as no surprise that high levels of awareness, interest, and efficacy also result in high levels of political participation, and all the respondents confirmed this notion. One of them mentioned that:

> "People are more eager to participate than in larger states, primarily because politics affects people individually and directly. People are also generally more interested in politics than for example in the UK, also because every vote may count, so people are very concerned about election outcomes."

As the previous section has revealed, the fact that every vote may count can be imagined to stimulate clientelism and patronage, but it may also lead to higher participation levels through more conventional and institutionalized channels of participation. Like in San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, no data exist on membership of Seychellois political parties, attendance rates at demonstrations or rallies, and other indicators of participation, which means that election turnout data are the only available evidence. Nevertheless, my own impression and that of most of the people I interviewed is that participation rates at rallies and political meetings is high, although this appears to originate more from particularistic motivations than from an interest in substantial political issues.

Table 7.4: Voter Turnout in Seychellois Parliamentary and Presidential Elections[47]

Parliamentary Elections		Presidential Elections	
Election Year	**Voter Turnout**	**Election Year**	**Voter Turnout**
1967	72-77%	-	-
1970	82%	-	-
1974	84%	-	-
1979	*n.a.*	-	-
1983	*59.3%*	*1979*	*96.4%*
1987	*66.0%*	*1984*	*95.9%*
1992	85.3%	*1989*	*91.5%*
1993	86.5%	1993	86.5%
1998	86.7%	1998	86.7%
2002	84.5%	2001	93.3%
2007	85.9%	2006	88.7%
2011	74.3%	2011	85.3%
Average	**83.9%**		**88.1%**

In table 7.4, voter turnout levels at parliamentary and presidential elections have been presented, and an average figure has been calculated and presented in the bottom row. The table reveals that, with the exception of parliamentary elections in the one-party era, turnout in Seychelles generally reaches above eighty percent, which is especially high in comparison to African standards (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998: 243, 247, 250). Voter turnout in the 2011

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[47] The turnout figure for 1967 is disputed (Campling et al. 2011: 16). Figures for elections that were held under the one-party regime have been presented in italics. Averages have been calculated on the basis of post-1990 elections.

parliamentary election was markedly lower than in previous elections, and this is most likely a result of the SNP's boycott of the election. On average, it can also be seen that turnout at presidential elections has been higher than at parliamentary elections (reaching almost ninety percent), and that turnout levels have been rather stable throughout the 1990s and 2000s. In terms of political participation, the size of Seychelles therefore definitely appears to contribute to high voter turnout rates. It is important to mention here that in contrast to San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, expatriate Seychellois have no voting rights in the country (Hatchard 1993: 603).[48]

Although the election results presented in tables 7.1 and 7.2 suggest that the gap between the Parti Lepep and the SNP was declining, in the 2011-presidential elections this difference increased somewhat again. According to people from the opposition whom I interviewed, elections in Seychelles are not free and fair, and in various subtle ways the ruling party increases its chances at the polls. Whereas Commonwealth-election observers highlight a number of relatively minor irregularities, one opposition spokesperson argued that these observers miss the most blatant forms of electoral fraud because they arrive too late to be able to monitor the entire campaign;

> "It's what happens before the elections, and this is where too often election observers just miss their target because they come during the election campaign, when in fact they should have been here before the campaign to see what government is actually doing. How government is abusing the media, the state-funded media, how government is just basically abusing its power."

In fact, the election observers do highlight a number of circumstances that could potentially damage the freedom and fairness of the elections, such as the fact that "each party was distributing materials and money to voters as inducements", "a climate of fear existed within society, particularly among civil servants", and "there were allegations by political parties of unfair treatment in respect of coverage of their events and prejudicial portrayal of their views" (Commonwealth Expert Team 2006: 9-10). In the 2011-report, the role of especially the electoral commission, the state-owned media, and the lack of rules with regard to campaign financing are emphasized as problematic (Commonwealth Expert Team 2011: 30-31). The absence of campaign spending

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[48] This issue was one of the key points of contention at the drafting of the new constitution in 1992. Since many SDP-supporters had left the country after the coup d'état (primarily to London), the opposition was strongly in favor of granting suffrage rights to expatriate citizens. Because approximately 13.000 Seychellois live outside their country, the potential electoral influence of this group is highly significant. This is also the main reason that the SPPF opposed the proposition, and as a consequence of the fact that this party won the 1992 and 1993 elections, the Seychellois Diaspora at present still has no voting rights (Hatchard 1993: 603-604).

laws made the SNP decide not to contest the 2011 parliamentary election, and this issue was named as one of the primary faults in the system by members of the opposition:

> "The ruling party has the entire machination its hands; they are using the government institutions to win elections. You see, there is no control on the amount of money that any political party can use in a campaign. And this in itself puts the smaller parties with less funds or no funds at a great disadvantage."

According to Van Nieuwkerk and Bell, the party machinery of the Parti Lepep on the district level and its control and influence on district authorities represents a major additional advantage to this party (2007: 145).

Table 7.5: Vote Differences on the District Level in the 2011-Presidential Election

	Michel	Ram-kalawan	Boullé	Volcere	Diff. Michel-Ramkalawan
Anse aux Pins	**1.489**	1.096	35	65	393 (14.6%)
Anse Boileau	**1.552**	1.077	46	48	475 (17.4%)
Anse Étoile	**1.695**	1.506	57	53	189 (5.7%)
Anse Royale	**1.549**	1.030	47	29	519 (19.5%)
Au Cap	**1.386**	1.302	54	30	84 (3.0%)
Baie Lazare	**1.229**	893	47	32	336 (15.3%)
Baie Ste. Anne	**1.864**	859	27	14	1005 (36.4%)
Beau Vallon	1.236	**1.267**	71	55	31 (1.2%)
Bel Air	**1.105**	864	36	25	241 (11.9%)
Bel Ombre	**1.313**	1.149	59	40	164 (6.4%)
Cascade	**1.461**	785	34	45	676 (29.1%)
English River	**1.262**	912	49	30	350 (15.5%)
Glacis	**1.315**	1.169	50	41	146 (5.7%)
Grande Anse Mahé	**1.115**	721	43	34	394 (20.6%)
Grande Anse Praslin	**1.216**	883	17	25	333 (15.6%)
Inner Islands	**1.116**	509	12	10	607 (36.9%)
Les Mamelles	**1.018**	897	34	30	121 (6.1%)
Mont Buxton	**1.287**	1.124	27	30	163 (6.6%)
Mont Fleuri	**1.142**	995	40	46	147 (6.6%)
Plaisance	**1.416**	1.133	50	44	283 (10.7%)
Pointe Larue	**1.233**	672	22	16	561 (28.9%)
Port Glaud	**882**	614	30	27	268 (17.3%)
Roche Caiman	**1.019**	527	20	21	492 (31.0%)
Saint Louis	965	**1.146**	28	19	181 (8.4%)
Takamaka	**1.101**	748	21	24	353 (18.6%)
Total	**31.966**	23.878	956	833	8.088 (14.0%)

In table 7.5, the results of the 2011-Presidential election on the district level have been presented. In the last column, the difference between the top-two candidates (Michel and Ramkalawan) in terms of absolute votes and the

proportional difference as part of the total number of votes has been outlined. The table demonstrates that Ramkalawan only won in two districts (Beau Vallon and Saint Louis), which are located in the northeast of Mahé. By contrast, in especially the districts that are not located on Mahé (Baie Ste. Anne, Grande Anse Praslin, and Inner Islands) Michel wins by wide margins, as well as in districts like Cascade, Pointe Larue, and Roche Caiman. The table also shows that the electoral districts of Seychelles are of a relatively similar size, and that between 1.500 and 3.000 people voted in each district. As described before, this smallness allows citizens to directly access their representatives, and also allows representatives to have information on the preferences and demands of their constituents.

Although no data on voter attitudes are available, as a result of the relative insignificance of substantial political issues, the personalistic dynamics of Seychellois politics, and the prevalence of particularistic linkages between citizens and politicians, voting behavior in Seychelles appears to be primarily based on family traditions and particularistic motivations. Political affiliation in Seychelles is in large part determined along the lines of big families, and as one politician explains:

> "We [politicians, WV] know everybody, and for example in my constituency probably five or six groups compose the constituency, and they are all families. There are five big families which comprise the whole composition of the constituency."

When asked about explanations for voting behavior, one respondent from the legal sector illustratively answered as follows:

> "I think it all depends on (…) what they [voters, WV] can gain personally from whoever might be in power. I think when going to the voting stands in a few months, that will be the main thing that voters will be thinking of; "what can we gain personally from whoever gets in power?" (…) The other thing would be that one might have personal grievances against the people inside the parties; "it could be Johnson who was behind the move not to get a planning permission to get my house, so I don't like Johnson. Johnson is with that political party, so I am voting against that party."

Perhaps most tellingly, none of my respondents named programmatic or substantive political issues as a basis for explaining voting behavior.

Like in St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychellois election campaigns occur in the sphere of a national festival, albeit that the ruling party has more resources to finance its rallies than the opposition. Many of my respondents and ordinary Seychellois citizens argued that during campaign rallies and in advance to the

elections, gifts and services are commonly distributed to attract voters. According to one journalist:

> "It's a common thing to see before elections that lots of gifts start coming out, people get lots of things. Right now there is a housing scheme that opens or starts operations just before elections. This housing thing comes up every five years, just before elections. And it's the biggest tactic that the government can use to get people on their side."

The allocation of these gifts obfuscates the motivations behind political participation in Seychelles, because it is unclear whether high levels of participation can be explained by reasons related to size, or whether they are a consequence of the individual benefits that people can obtain by participating.

The present discussion reveals that in terms of inclusiveness, the smallness of Seychelles offers increased chances for citizens to participate in their political system, and that citizens also make use of these opportunities. Turnout at elections in Seychelles is high, and the same appears to be true for other manifestations of participation. However, non-conventional or non-institutionalized forms of participation like clientelism and patronage not only appear to be widespread, but in many ways also seem to fuel high levels of conventional participation. High levels of voter turnout, for example, are likely to be at least partially generated by the individual returns that citizens acquire in exchange for their vote. The findings described here are in line with much of the literature on politics and democracy in small states, in which the prevalence of particularistic relationships in small settings is emphasized as well (Parsons 1951: 508; Benedict 1967b: 7-8; Lowenthal 1987: 39; Srebrnik 2004: 334).

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Different from the two microstates that were discussed in previous chapters, the political system of Seychelles does not appear to fulfill all of Dahl's conditions of polyarchy. In several ways, the stipulations of alternative sources of information and free and fair elections are not fully adhered to, and this makes it hard to disagree with Freedom House's categorization of the microstate as only 'partly free'. This however makes Seychelles a deviant case in relation to the other three microstates that are analyzed in this study, and also makes it somewhat complicated to assess the influence of size on Seychellois democracy. Many of the features that have been described in this chapter are comparable to the observations that were made in the chapters on San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, but are also in line with characteristics of larger illiberal, semi-, or pseudo-democracies (O'Donnell 1996; Zakaria 1997; Levitsky and Way 2002).

Table 7.6: Seychelles' Scoring on the Indicators of Contestation and Inclusiveness

Dimension	Section	Indicator	Classification of Seychelles
Contestation	Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition	Free and Fair Elections	Disputed; governing party has significant advantage
		Party System	Two-party system (ENP < 2); opposition virtually absent after 2011-elections
		(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Never by peaceful means
		Interest Articulation by Parties	Does occur to some extent in manifestos, but political dynamics are person-oriented
		Freedom to Support the Opposition	Has major negative consequences; victimization and climate of fear hinders supporters of the opposition.
	Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions	Freedom of the Press	Press partially free (FotP-score 56), weak and unprofessional
		Status of the Legislature	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government
		Status of the Judiciary	Not impartial, often pressured by government
		Status of the Bureaucracy	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage
Inclusiveness	Relations between Citizens and Politicians	Contact with and Access to Representatives	Continuous contact and access
		Nature of Contacts between Citizens and Politicians	Particularistic and personalistic
		Political Awareness and feelings of Efficacy of Citizens	Appears to be high
	Political Participation of Citizens	Universal Suffrage	Present
		Turnout at Elections and other Plebiscites	(Very) high at elections
		Party Membership	No data available
		Participation in Political Activities	No data, but appears to be especially high in Parti Lepep-activities

In table 7.6, the main findings of this chapter are summarized on the basis of Seychelles' scoring on the indicators of contestation and inclusiveness. Like in San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychellois politics appears marked by the prevalence of personalism, polarization, and particularism. Although the two main Seychellois parties used to advocate entirely divergent ideological and programmatic standpoints, these differences now have all but disappeared, and the parties can primarily be distinguished on the basis of the different persons that lead them. Like in the Eastern Caribbean, the personalistic nature of politics leads to political polarization between the two Seychellois parties. Both because of the enduring dominance of the Parti Lepep and due to polarization and smallness, institutions that are supposed to function as a check on the power of the executive are either weak or to a significant extent controlled or neutered by the government. With regard to inclusiveness, higher figures of political participation can be observed in Seychelles, but participation appears to be to an extensive degree fueled by particularistic incentives.

At present, out of twenty-one microstates with less than 250.000 inhabitants, Seychelles is one of only two countries that are not classified as 'free' by Freedom House (the other one is the Kingdom of Tonga). As long as the Parti Lepep is not voted out of office this situation is unlikely to change, but perhaps it is telling that at least five respondents did not believe that the ruling party would ever accept such a peaceful transition of power. Whereas President Michel in his 2011-reelection campaign promised to work on '*En Nouvo Sesel*' (a new Seychelles), thus far the changes and reforms that his party has implemented have mostly been cosmetic rather than substantial. Although the analysis has revealed that Seychellois political dynamics are as a result of size in many respects comparable to those of the other two microstates, the country's authoritarian past and its enduring political legacy clearly set Seychelles apart from its European and Caribbean counterparts.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Ngelekel Belau

The Republic of Palau

Figure 8.1: Map and Location of Palau[1]

1. Introduction: The Pacific, an Ocean of Democracy

On 14 November 1993, in the eighth referendum that was held on the issue, 68.4% of Palauan voters cast a ballot in favor of the proposed Compact of Free Association (COFA) of their country with the United States. As a consequence of this result, on the first of October 1994 the Republic of Palau became an independent state, and the last trusteeship in the world finally ceased to exist (Leibowitz 1996: 199). In the preceding fifteen years, the procedure of approval of the COFA had spawned seven referendums, numerous lawsuits, at least two political murders, and the complete polarization of Palauan society (Wilson 1995: 34). Traditional leaders, women's councils, and international environmental organizations spearheaded the opposition to the Compact, which was in conflict with the antinuclear provisions of the Palauan Constitution and therefore required the approval of 75% of Palauan voters (Gerston 1990: 180). Only after the United States-government decided to repeal and modify some of the nuclear stipulations in the COFA as a result of which the approval of an

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[1] Retrieved from the CIA World Factbook (CIA World Factbook 2011).

absolute majority of Palauans became sufficient to ratify the agreement, independence could finally be attained. Palau is as of yet the last Pacific island nation to acquire statehood, and as such is one of the youngest sovereign states in the world.

With a total population size of around 20.000 people, the Republic of Palau[2] is the third smallest member-state of the United Nations in terms of population size.[3] Located directly to the east of the Philippine island of Mindanao and to the north of the Indonesian part of New Guinea, Palau is the westernmost island nation of Oceania, and of the Oceanian sub-region of Micronesia.[4] Whereas the country consists of more than 250 islands scattered over an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 629.000 square kilometers,[5] Palau's landmass covers a mere 488 square kilometers, and only about ten of its islands are inhabited (Davis and Hart 2002: 6-10). The largest island by far is Babeldaob, which occupies more than seventy percent of the country's landmass (331 square kilometers), but houses less than thirty percent of the population (approximately 6.000 people). The predominant part of the Palauan population lives in the village of Koror, which is spread out over the three islands of Koror, Malakal, and Ngerekebesang, and has about 13.000 inhabitants. Other inhabited islands are Peleliu (700 inhabitants), Angaur (300 inhabitants), Kayangel (190 inhabitants), and the remote southern islets of Sonsorol (100 inhabitants) and Hatohobei (or Tobi; 40 inhabitants).

Out of the total population of approximately 20.000 people, about seventy percent (or 14.000) are ethnically Palauan, whereas the remainder of the population consists of Asian (primarily Filipino) and other Micronesian immigrants and guest workers (CIA World Factbook 2011). The overwhelming majority of Palauans is Christian, but the number and share of denominations is quite extensive.[6] Almost all Palauans are bilingual and master both English and

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[2] Palau was formerly known under the name of 'Pelew', and in academic publications the country is occasionally alluded to as 'Belau', which is the name of the country in Palauan language. Since Palau is the archipelago's official English name, the country will be referred to as such in this chapter.

[3] The two smallest member states are Tuvalu and Nauru, which both have approximately 10.000 inhabitants (CIA World Factbook 2011).

[4] The islands of Oceania are commonly subdivided into the three geographically and culturally distinct sub-regions of Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia (cf. Levine 2009: 10). Together with the various island groups that now constitute the independent nations of Nauru, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia, as well as the US-controlled islands of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau is usually grouped in the region of Micronesia.

[5] This is comparable to the size of the U.S. state of Texas.

[6] According to the CIA World Factbook, 41.6% of the population is Roman Catholic, 23.3% is Protestant, 5.3% is Seventh-Day Adventist, and there are small groups of Jehovah's Witnesses,

Palauan language, and the islands of Angaur, Sonsorol, and Hatohobei each have their own languages. Economically, Palau has been more successful than its Micronesian neighbors, and standards of living are well above the Pacific or Micronesian average.[7] Because of overpopulation that is a consequence of increasing migration from other islands to Koror, and out of concerns about the dominance of this town in the country, in October 2006 the Palauan government decided to move the capital from Koror to the village of Ngerulmud (in Melekeok State on Babeldaob Island; Davis and Hart 2002: 8).

Together with the overwhelming majority of the other Pacific island nations, Palau is ranked as 'free' by Freedom House (2012). Out of the eleven independent island states in this region, eight are categorized as 'free', as a consequence of which some scholars refer to the region as an 'ocean of democracy' (cf. Reilly 2002: 355-357).[8] Together with the (Eastern) Caribbean, which also predominantly consists of democratic microstates, the Pacific thereby stands out as the most successful region in the developing world when it comes to democratic governance, and according to several academics this observation provides evidence for the hypothesized connection between smallness and democracy (Diamond and Tsalik 1999; Srebrnik 2004; Anckar 2008a). Whereas small Pacific island states have indeed scored remarkably well in Freedom House-ratings, the scholarly literature on Pacific democracy indicates that the political systems of these islands are also marked by a continuing struggle between traditional forms of leadership and modern democratic institutions (Ghai 1988; Larmour 1994; White and Lindstrom 1997; Levine and Roberts 2005; Duncan and Nakagawa 2006).

In the present chapter, the influence of size on politics and democracy in the Republic of Palau is examined along the lines of Dahl's dimensions of contestation and inclusiveness (1971: 3-4). The analysis is based on field research that was conducted in Palau in July 2011, as part of which semi-structured interviews were held with fifteen Palauan politicians, journalists, academics, traditional leaders, and legal officials.[9] The chapter commences with an outline of Palau's political history and democratization process, which is

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Mormons, and Latter-Day Saints (CIA World Factbook 2011). Less than ten percent of the population professes *Modekngei*, which is the indigenous Palauan animistic religion (Mita 2009: 112).

[7] The country has a GDP per capita figure of US $8.100, which is much higher than both small and larger countries in the region (CIA World Factbook 2011: ; cf. footnote #26).

[8] Whereas all states in this region are comparatively small, it should be noted that the two most populated ones – Fiji and the Solomon Islands – are among the "partly free" countries, together with the Kingdom of Tonga which is a traditional hereditary monarchy.

[9] A complete list of the people I interviewed can be found in the appendix.

followed by a section in which the presence of democracy in contemporary Palau is explained by pointing to a number of contributing factors. Subsequently, an overview is given of Palau's political-institutional structure. After this, four sections are devoted to an in-depth analysis of the effects of size on contestation and inclusiveness in Palau, and in sequence attention is paid to the role of cleavages, ideology, and political parties, the horizontal distribution of power between institutions, the relationship between Palauan citizens and politicians, and the characteristics of political participation. The chapter ends with a summary and discussion of the findings.

2. Political History and Democratization of Palau

The Republic of Palau shares the predominant part of its colonial history with the other islands of Micronesia. Like other islands in the region, a complex and well-developed culture and societal structure existed on the islands before the arrival of European navigators (Hassall 2009: 170). This social structure is primarily based on hierarchical relations between rivaling clans and extended families, and has to a significant extent remained intact throughout colonization (Gerston 1990: 178). At the heart of the traditional Palauan social system is the village, which was governed by a council of chiefs (the *klobak*). Each Palauan village was divided in two halves, which each were governed by half of the village-chiefs. Villages existed of between seven and eleven clans, which were ranked in hierarchy of importance, and of which membership was matrilineally determined (Wilson 1995: 4-5; Davis and Hart 2002: 40).[10] Relationships between the clans in the village were marked by competition and the formation of (shifting) alliances, as a result of which the hierarchy between clans was continuously challenged and called in question.

Due to the fact that some clans formed alliances with clans from other villages, as a consequence of which inter-village warfare started to occur, eventually two federations (or 'Kingdoms') emerged in Palau. One of these is the 'Kingdom of the West', which is headed by the *Ibedul* or High Chief of Koror, and the other one is the 'Kingdom of the East', which is led by the *Reklai* or High Chief of Melekeok (Leibowitz 1996: 9; Davis and Hart 2002: 39-41). The two Kingdoms and chiefs used to wage war with each other for domination of the islands, but neither succeeded in completely subordinating the other. In the traditional Palauan system village-chiefs are elected by councils of female elders (the *ourrot*), and decision-making is based on protracted discussions and the

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[10] Which means that membership of the clan was passed down from one generation to the next along the mother's blood line.

attainment of consensus between the chiefs in the village *bai er a rubak* (discussion house). From their hierarchically fixed seats in the *bai*, the chiefs whispered their opinions to messengers who transferred them to other chiefs, in a style that is known in Palau as the *kelulau* or 'way of whispers'.[11]

Although various ships from different European powers passed by the Palauan islands since at least the sixteenth century, the crew members of the British *Antelope* were the first Europeans to make contact with the Palauan population, after their vessel shipwrecked in Koror in 1783 (Leibowitz 1996: 10). The *Antelope*'s captain Henry Wilson established cordial relations with the Ibedul of Koror,[12] and the employment of British firearms against the forces of the Reklai altered the balance of power on Palau for good, as Koror became the dominant and most powerful village in the country. The Spanish and the Germans were however the first to actually claim and occupy the islands, and the Pope officially declared Palau to be Spanish territory in 1885 (Davis and Hart 2002: 47). In subsequent years, Palau and the other Micronesian island groups of the Carolinas and the Marianas were (to varying degrees) administered by Spanish authorities on the Philippines,[13] until the Spanish-American war of 1898. The Spanish colonizers did little to develop the islands economically, as they were primarily interested in converting the indigenous population to Catholicism (Wilson 1995: 21; Davis and Hart 2002: 44; Mita 2009: 79-80). The efforts of Spanish missionaries paid off, and up to the present day Catholicism is by far the most popular religion in Micronesia.

After the Spanish-American war, which was decisively won by the United States, many Spanish colonies[14] came under American influence, whereas the Carolinas, Marianas, Marshalls, and Palau were purchased from Spain by Germany in 1899, and became part of German New Guinea (*Deutsch Neuguinea*).[15] German interests in the islands centered principally on their natural resources, of which phosphate, bauxite, and copra were the most profitable ones (Quimby and Iyechad 1983: 107; Mita 2009: 80). During their

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[11] As a matter of fact, the name of Palau's present-day Congress is *Olbiil Era Kelulau*, which translates into "House of Whispered Decisions".

[12] The relations between Captain Wilson and the Ibedul were so friendly that the Ibedul's son Lebuu (Lee Boo) was subsequently brought to London by the Captain, where he learned English and eventually died as a consequence of smallpox (Davis and Hart 2002: 44). Wilson also gave the archipelago the name of "Pelew Islands", but the origins of this name are unknown.

[13] The name of this colony was the Spanish East Indies (*Indias Orientales Españolas*), and the Philippines had already come under Spanish control in the 16th century.

[14] Among these were the Philippines and Guam in the Asia-Pacific region, and Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.

[15] In addition to the Micronesian islands, the German colony of *Deutsch Neuguinea* consisted of the northeastern part of New Guinea (*Kaiser Wilhelmsland*), the Bismarck Archipelago (which presently belongs to Papua New Guinea), the northern part of the Solomon Islands, and Nauru.

relatively short administration of the islands, the Germans established a phosphate-industry on the Palauan island of Angaur, and the indigenous Micronesian population was deployed here to mine and transport phosphate. In addition, the Germans introduced a monetary system on the islands, in which money replaced the Palauan traditional currency of shells and corals (Davis and Hart 2002: 45).

Following German defeat in the First World War and the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, Germany's colonial possessions were reallocated to the various allied forces, and the separate parts of German New Guinea were distributed to Australia (*Kaiser Wilhelmsland*, the Bismarck Archipelago, and Nauru) and Japan (the Caroline, Mariana, Marshall, and Palau islands).[16] The Japanese turned out to have different interests in Micronesia than the European colonizers, as they used the islands as strategic geopolitical locations from which the emergent Japanese Empire in Southeast Asia was expanded. Palau's capital village of Koror became the administrative center and most important naval base of Japan in the Pacific,[17] and the Japanese swiftly modernized the islands by providing for education, hospitals, and infrastructure (Wilson 1995: 23-24; Leibowitz 1996: 14; Davis and Hart 2002: 45-47). Whereas the Japanese became notorious for their ruthless oppression of people in many other parts of Asia, Japan's island possessions were regarded as an integral part of the Empire, and the Japanese government aggressively promoted migration to Micronesia. As a consequence, at the dawn of the Second World War the Palauans were a small minority in their own islands, where many Japanese and Koreans had settled in the preceding decades.

Although Japan controlled the Micronesian islands for thirty years, the Second World War eventually terminated Japanese rule, when the islands were occupied by the American army in 1944. The battles for the Micronesian islands were particularly fierce and brutal, and since the headquarters of the Japanese navy in the Pacific were located in Palau, warfare reached its zenith here. From September to November 1944, Japanese and American forces fought over the southern Palauan islands of Peleliu and Angaur, which resulted in over 10.000 Japanese casualties and approximately 2.000 American losses (Leibowitz 1996: 19-22). The remaining native population of only 500 Palauans had fled into the

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[16] Although the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 formally granted the control of German New Guinea to Australia and Japan, these countries had already occupied the German Pacific territories in 1914, at the start of the First World War. After having been ruled by Spain and Germany, the Micronesian island groups (among which Palau), thus acquired their third colonial master within a few decades.

[17] In fact, Koror was known in Japan and the rest of the world as 'Little Tokyo' (Leibowitz 1996: 14).

rainforests of Babeldaob, and suffered from famine and starvation. The Americans were to become the fourth and ultimate colonial power of the islands, and succeeded in bringing them firmly under their sphere of influence. In table 8.1, the four colonial administrations that ruled Palau have been presented.

Table 8.1: The History of Palau; Four Colonial Administrations

Colonial Power	Time Span
Spain	1885 - 1899
Germany	1899 - 1914
Japan	1914 - 1944
United States	1944 - 1994

In 1947, the United Nations established the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) on the Micronesian islands, of which the administration was granted to the United States (Hinck 1990: 920; Hassall 2009: 171). The TTPI differed from other trust territories in the sense that it was explicitly a *strategic* trust territory, implying that the United States could use the territory for strategic goals and that the UN Security Council (instead of the General Assembly) was given the competence to formally terminate the trusteeship (Davis and Hart 2002: 50).[18] Managing the islands mainly from a perspective of strategic military interest and using them as sites for nuclear testing,[19] the United States initially did little to promote economic development on the islands. Only after mounting criticism from the United Nations and other international organizations in the early 1960s, Washington sharply increased its investments on the islands of the TTPI (Wilson 1995: 27-28).

In the 1950s Palau acquired its own municipal and national assemblies (the *Olbiil Era Kelulau*), of which decisions however had to be approved by the TTPI-administration (Davis and Hart 2002: 50-51). In accordance with the American determination to unify the Micronesian islands, the bicameral Congress of Micronesia was established in 1965, and throughout the TTPI elections were held that same year (Rosenberg 1996: 16). In advance to the elections the American administrators tried to establish political parties on Palau, but these were artificially imposed and therefore disintegrated within a

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[18] The TTPI-authorities were until 1951 based on Guam, but after that year moved to Saipan on the Northern Marianas.

[19] US nuclear testing in Micronesia centered on the Marshall Islands, where the atolls of Bikini, Rongelap, Utrik, and Enewetak were used as test sites. The heaviest detonation took place on March 1, 1954, when Castle Bravo exploded on Bikini atoll, of which nuclear radiation fallout poisoned the indigenous island population of nearby atolls for decades to follow. The Marshallese population still suffers from extreme cancer rates in comparison with the rest of the world, as well as birth deficiencies and impaired growth among children (cf. Sutow et al. 1965).

decade.[20] Under the leadership of Palau's most prominent politician, Roman Tmetuchl, a large part of the Palauan population opposed the establishment of the unified, federal Micronesia that was advocated by the Johnson and Nixon administrations (Leibowitz 1996: 27; Davis and Hart 2002: 56).[21] Already in 1972 the Northern Marianas decided not to seek independence but to forge closer relations with Washington instead, and these islands chose to become a commonwealth in political union with the United States. After fourteen years of negotiations and independence talks between the Congress of Micronesia and the US government an agreement for the Compact of Free Association (COFA) and Constitution of Micronesia was attained in 1978, but in referendums on the Marshall Islands and Palau this Constitution was rejected.[22]

After the referendum had gained approval in the Caroline island groups of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, these islands united to form the Federated States of Micronesia (Hanlon and Eperiam 1983: 88-89; Burdick 1988: 256-258; Petersen 2009: 46-47). Palau and the Marshalls, by contrast, entered separate stages of negotiations to establish their own Compacts with the United States.[23] As a consequence of the negative referendum outcome Palauans started drafting their own Constitution, of which the outcome was a definite blow to US-strategic interests. The draft Constitution prohibited the lease of lands to another power for military purposes and ruled out nuclear testing or the stalling of nuclear weapons on Palauan soil without the approval of three quarters of the Palauan people (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. II: 3; Wilson 1995: 31-32; Leibowitz 1996: 30-34). The United States immediately declared its opposition to the Constitution, and threatened to cancel all of its funding to Palau. Nevertheless, in a referendum the proposed Constitution was approved by 92 percent of the

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[20] In 1963, the contemporary American district administrator in Palau, Manuel Godinez urged for the creation of two political parties, named the Liberal and Progressive Party. The parties had their own candidates in the Congress of Micronesia, but could not be distinguished on the basis of different ideas or ideologies, even though this is suggested by their names. After the TTPI fragmented into four different polities, the Palauan parties disappeared from the political scene (Davis and Hart 2002: 118).

[21] The people on the various Micronesian islands speak different languages and have completely different cultures and traditions (Leibowitz 1996: 27). Therefore, the American policy of 'Micronization' (cf. Gerston 1990: 177) was artificial and doomed to fail from the beginning onward.

[22] In Palau Tmetuchl led the separatist group to victory, and the Constitution was defeated by 55 to 45 percent.

[23] Although nationalist sentiments evidently played a role in the negative referendum outcome in Palau and the Marshalls, there was an economical reason to it as well. The United States planned to continue using its strategic military bases on Palau and the Marshall Islands, and had no such bases in Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. The populations and politicians of Palau and the Marshalls were unwilling to lose or share the financial compensations that followed from the American use of their lands (Mita 2009: 96).

Palauan people, and in 1980 Haruo Remeliik was elected as the first President of Palau.[24]

Following ratification of the Constitution, difficult and protracted negotiations on a COFA began with the United States. Whereas Palau's most prominent politicians (Remeliik, Tmetuchl, and Salii) and the majority of citizens eventually declared their support for the proposed COFA, in seven referendums over a period of fifteen years it never managed to obtain approval of 75 percent of the Palauan electorate (Gerston 1990; Leibowitz 1996). Political tensions in Palau mounted, and various lawsuits accompanied by strikes, violence, and the division of the entire Palauan society ensued. President Remeliik was assassinated in 1985, and his successor, Lazarus Salii, committed suicide in 1988 after corruption allegations and mounting pressure and failure to gain approval for the COFA (Davis and Hart 2002: 73-75).[25] Whereas the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) obtained independence in 1986 subsequent to the approval of their respective COFA's with the United States, Palau remained the sole UN-trust territory in the world.

In 1993 the newly elected Clinton-administration in the United States repealed and modified some of the nuclear stipulations in the COFA, as a consequence of which only a simple majority was needed for its ratification. On November 14, 1993, a majority of over 68 percent of Palauan voters endorsed the Compact, after which the Republic of Palau became an independent nation and a UN-member on 1 October 1994 (Leibowitz 1996: 216; Davis and Hart 2002: 75-76; Hassall 2009: 170-171). Since then, Palauan politics have become more tranquil, although factionalism, polarization, and intrigues continue to characterize politics in the archipelago (Shuster 1994: 197-198). After having observed some of the errors that politicians in the nearby FSM and RMI made with regard to their COFA-funds, Palauan politicians have used their resources more shrewdly, as a result of which Palau is now economically much more successful than its neighbors (Mita 2009: 161).[26]

In recent years Palau has vied to establish a lucrative tourist industry, and the number of visitors to the islands rose sharply in the 1990s and 2000s. After brief negotiations, in 2010 the Palauan government agreed with a prolongation

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[24] Whereas Tmetuchl was still the country's most popular and prominent leader, various clans and interest groups opposed his dominant position, and supported the less sophisticated but more nationalistic Haruo Remeliik for President (Leibowitz 1996: 29, 36).

[25] In addition, 1982 an assassination attempt was made on Roman Bedor, a prominent Palauan lawyer and opponent of the COFA, that instead of him killed his father Bedor Bins.

[26] Whereas Palau has a GDP per capita-level of US $8.100, the figure for RMI is $2.500 and that for FSM $2.200. Palau's GDP per capita-figures are also much higher than those of larger neighboring states like the Philippines ($3.500), Indonesia ($4.200), and Papua New Guinea ($2.500).

of the COFA with the United States, which envisages the assignment of US $250 million in economic assistance up to 2024. The country briefly made it to world headlines in June 2009, when President Toribiong agreed to 'temporary resettle' seventeen former Uyghur detainees of Guantánamo Bay detention camp on Palau, whom the United States refused to repatriate to China. Since Palau has diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan and not with the People's Republic, resettling the Uyghurs on Palau provided a very practical solution to the US-government. In table 8.2, an overview is provided of Palauan presidential elections since 1980, in which votes and vote percentages of the winner and runner-up of each presidential election are presented.

Table 8.2: Presidential Election Results in Palau[27]

Year	Winner	Votes	Runner-Up	Votes
1980	Haruo Remeliik	1.955 (**31.2%**)	Roman Tmetuchl	1.608 (**25.7%**)
1984	Haruo Remeliik	4.050 (**50.9%**)	Roman Tmetuchl	2.482 (**31.2%**)
1985	Lazarus Salii	4.077 (**53.9%**)	Alfonso Oiterong	3.484 (**46.1%**)
1988	Ngiratkel Etpison	2.392 (**26.3%**)	Roman Tmetuchl	2.361 (**26.0%**)
1992	Kuniwo Nakamura	4.841 (**50.7%**)	Johnson Toribiong	4.707 (**49.3%**)
1996	Kuniwo Nakamura	6.052 (**64.3%**)	Yutaka Gibbons	3.356 (**35.7%**)
2000	Tommy Remengesau	5.596 (**53.2%**)	Peter Sugiyama	4.922 (**47.8%**)
2004	Tommy Remengesau	3.443 (**63.6%**)	Polycarp Basilius	1.960 (**36.4%**)
2008	Johnson Toribiong	4.942 (**51.1%**)	Elias Chin	4.726 (**48.9%**)

3. Explaining Democracy in Palau

Now that the most momentous events in Palauan political history have been outlined, in this section an attempt is made to list a number of factors that contribute to or explain Palauan democracy. Similar to St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, democracy was brought to Palau by Western colonial administrations; in this case the United States. As the eminent Pacific scholar Peter Larmour points out (1994), in this sense democracy in the Pacific region was imported as a 'foreign flower', that had to root in the soil of Pacific island states. Whereas pre-colonial systems of rule in the Pacific often allowed for a significant degree of participation of citizens, these systems were predominantly based on the authority of traditional leaders, mostly called 'chiefs' in the Pacific context (White and Lindstrom 1997: 1-5). The Palauan pre-colonial political system was democratic to the extent that decision-making was based on consensus and discussions between various chiefs, which means that minimum degrees of contestation and inclusiveness were present. Political participation

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[27] Data retrieved from the website of International IDEA (International IDEA 2011). A second round between the top-two candidates was introduced in 1992, as a result of which one candidate obtains the support of a majority of Palauans (cf. footnote #34).

was however limited to traditional leaders, whose chiefly titles were hereditarily passed on. This means that most of the people (the commoners) were excluded from participation.

Whereas St. Kitts and Nevis has been ruled by one colonial power and Seychelles by two, in approximately one hundred years Palau witnessed four colonial administrations. At least two of these colonial authorities were markedly non-democratic themselves (Germany and Japan), which means that the Americans were the ones who eventually carried democracy to the islands. The United States initiated and supervised the establishment of the Congress of Micronesia in 1965, which was the first democratically elected institution on the islands. However controversial the subsequent process of decolonization may have been, the establishment of a democratic political system based on the American model was never in question, and was also strongly encouraged by the United States (Wilson 1995: ix-x, 7). This is also strongly reflected in the extent to which the current Palauan political system resembles that of the United States, as will be demonstrated in the following section.

According to the academic literature, the process of decolonization in the Pacific took place on the basis of different logics and mechanisms than decolonization in Africa and Asia, which is primarily a result of differences in size (Baldacchino 1993: 31). In contrast to larger ex-colonies, Pacific island states had relatively weak independence movements, and the attainment of independence was more often a wish of the colonial power than of the people in the colony itself (Mita 2009: 188-189). As a consequence, the process of decolonization in the Pacific was much less confrontational, chaotic, and violent than elsewhere, and this has been advanced as a major factor in explaining the prevalence of democracy in the region (Baldacchino 1993: 30-34). In light of the problematic and often dramatic process of decolonization in Palau, this argument however appears to bear less relevance to this microstate.

Several scholars have sought to explain the prevalence of democracy in small states on the basis of their geographical proximity and linkages with larger democratic powers (Sutton and Payne 1993: 589; Masala 2004; Levitsky and Way 2005). Both because of its colonial history and the country's continuing strategic-military significance to the United States, democracy in Palau appears to be largely guaranteed by the scope of its economic and political relations with the US (Wilson 1995: 30).[28] In the academic literature, the autonomy of Palau

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[28] In fact, Wilson believes that the United States deliberately vies to ensure that Palau remains dependent on it, as she asserts that "[d]espite repeated critiques, US officials continue to

(and the FSM and RMI) is sometimes even questioned, because of the limits to sovereignty that follow from these countries' COFA's with the United States (Mita 2009: 98).[29] Under the rules of the Compact, the United States is the only nation that can have military access to Palau's territory and maritime zone, Palau has to consult with the United States about the conduct of its foreign affairs, and the country maintains the US dollar as its currency (Palau Compact of Free Association 1986: Sections 123, 251, 311, and 321). Because of these reasons, both the academic literature and respondents assert that Palau is financially, economically, politically, and in terms of security almost completely dependent on the United States, which means that the American influence on domestic Palauan politics is at least potentially quite significant.

Whereas military coups d'état or uprisings have in recent decades occurred in larger Pacific island states such as the Solomon Islands and Fiji (both in 2000), both Australia and the United States have declared their readiness to intervene should something similar happen in a smaller Pacific island state (Kabutaulaka 2005; Connell 2006b). Multiple Palauan respondents indeed asserted that the United States would indeed never accept the establishment of an authoritarian regime on Palau, especially because instability in Palau would imperil US strategic interests in the region.[30] Due to the stipulations and regulations of the COFA, the disciplining influence of the United States on Palauan democracy appears to be even greater than in St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles.

Like that of other microstates, the foreign policy of Palau can principally be understood according to the logics of the international patron-client model (cf. Carney 1989). The United States unmistakably functions as the main international patron of Palau, and by means of the COFA continues to support the microstate both economically and militarily. All my respondents and secondary sources confirm that in exchange for this support, Palau not only allows the US army and navy to use its territory, but also streamlines its foreign policy with

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implement policies that create economic dependency in order to ensure the United States' permanent access to the islands for military purposes" (1995: 29).

[29] According to Mita, "[i]t is controversial whether Palau is a full sovereign state or not. This is because Palau does not possess defense and security rights, which are crucial and fundamental elements of a modern sovereign state" (2009: 100). In fact, paradoxically in 1960 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution (no. 1541 XV) in which the political status of 'freely associated state' is not considered to be full independence. Nevertheless, upon ratification of their Compacts Palau, the FSM and the RMI were accepted as UN-member states.

[30] As one chief I discussed the matter with remarked, "[t]he politicians say that we are independent, but they are in the government. But the regular people and the chiefs don't feel that we are independent; we are still at the mercy of the United States. (…) They [the United States, WV] are controlling us."

that of the Americans. This is most clearly the case in the UN General Assembly, where Palau is in 2011 with over 96 percent of congruence the UN-member state whose voting behavior matches most closely with that of the United States.[31] In addition to the United States, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1999 has resulted in significant investments to Palau from this country, and also Japan has made noteworthy financial contributions to the development of the microstate.[32]

Even though democratic institutions have now been employed in Palau for a couple of decades, tensions continue to persist between democratically elected leaders and traditional leaders with hereditary titles (Shuster 1994: 202; Rosenberg 1996: 17; Mita 2009: 139-140). According to Erica Rosenberg, this actually means that democratic institutions are "not fully embraced by or assimilated into Palauan society" (1996: 17). This opinion is shared by Lynn Wilson, who asserts that the introduction of Western democratic institutions brought confusion to Palau, because there are now two sets of leaders who also derive their legitimacy from different sources (1995: 7). According to many sources, clan relations, traditional titles, and customs and rituals continue to determine the course of Palauan politics, and there is little evidence that the importance or relevance of these factors is declining as an effect of the introduction of democratic institutions. If this is indeed the case, the persistence of Western-style democracy appears to be primarily an effect of the continuing American influence and control on Palauan politics.

4. Political Institutions of Palau

Analogous to the extent to which the Westminster system of St. Kitts and Nevis resembles that of its former colonizer, Palauan political institutions are almost completely modeled on the American example. The microstate is a presidential republic, with a directly elected President as both head of state and head of government. Presidents can serve for maximally two terms of four years, and

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[31] According to Palau's Ambassador to the United Nations, in 2011 Palau in this regard overtook Israel, as 96.5 percent of Palau's votes were in line with the Americans against 91.8 percent of Israel's votes.

[32] Like other microstates among which St. Kitts and Nevis, Palau endorses Taiwan's bid to become a UN-member state, and the country receives ample financial and economical aid in exchange for doing so. In this sense, Palau is playing what Stringer calls 'the two-China game', as part of which it plays out the two Chinas against each other by occasionally threatening to switch its support for either of them (Shuster 2000: 219; Stringer 2006). Partly as an apology for the past and partly in exchange for political support for issues such as whale-hunting, Japan's government has also been very generous to Palau since the microstate's independence. The main example in this light is the fact that Japan paid and constructed a new bridge that links Koror to Babeldaob, after the former bridge collapsed in 1996.

presidential elections are traditionally held on exactly the same day as in the United States (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 4). Unlike the United States, with the exception of the most recent presidential election (in 2008) separate elections are held in Palau to elect a Vice-President (Hassall 2009: 173).[33] Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections are held under the two-round runoff system, with the two candidates receiving most votes in the first round progressing to the second round.[34]

As in other presidential systems, the ministers in the government of Palau are appointed by the President upon the advice and consent of the Senate (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 5). Ministers cannot combine their function with membership of one of the two Houses of parliament, and according to the Constitution they "shall serve at the will of the President" (ibid.). In addition to appointing ministers, the President has the constitutional authority to appoint judges, ambassadors, and the Public Auditor, to declare the state of emergency, to propose the annual budget, to sign and ratify laws, and to establish agreements with other nations (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 7). In contrast to Seychelles, the Palauan President however does not have the competence to dissolve the legislature, and has less influence in the appointment of the commissions that nominates people to important posts.[35]

The Palauan legislature (the National Congress or *Olbiil Era Kelulau* (OEK) in Palauan) is bicameral, and consists of a thirteen-member Senate and a sixteen-member House of Delegates (Davis and Hart 2002: 167-168; Hassall 2009: 170). In contrast to the United States the Palauan House of Delegates is devised for the representation of states, and each of Palau's sixteen states is represented by one delegate in the House, elected under the rules of the first-past-the-post plurality system in single-member constituencies (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. IX: 3; Levine and Roberts 2005: 280-281). The thirteen senators, by contrast, are elected in one nation-wide constituency under the block vote (plurality-at-large) system. Palauan presidents, senators, and delegates all serve four year-terms, and presidential and parliamentary elections are held simultaneously. Each

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[33] During the Second Constitutional Convention of 2005, the regulation that provided for separate Vice-Presidential elections was modified, and it was decided that candidates should run on a joint ticket. The elections of 2008 occurred under this new rule, but since many people were unsatisfied with it, the modification was repelled immediately after the elections.

[34] Until the 1992 elections Palau employed the first-past-the-post plurality system to elect its President, but in advance to this election the two-round system was introduced in order to ensure that one candidate obtains at least a majority of the expressed votes.

[35] The Judicial Nominating Commission, which has the task to nominate judges, consists for example of seven members, of which only three are appointed by the President, and the others are appointed by judicial officials (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. X: 7).

House of parliament elects a presiding officer (or Speaker) from amongst its members, and there are no fixed rules on the division of tasks and competences between the two Houses. If the combined number of MPs from both Houses is taken, twenty-nine MPs represent Palau's population of 20.000 people, which translates into a ratio of less than 700 people per Member of Parliament.[36]

Similar to several other countries in Micronesia and the Pacific, no political parties exist in Palau (cf. Anckar and Anckar 2000; Rich et al. 2006).[37] Whereas political groupings have existed in the past, these were enforced by the American administrators, organized primarily along clan lines, and disintegrated already before the attainment of independence (Davis and Hart 2002: 118-119). At present Palauan politicians all run and serve as independents, which means that there are no formalized government and opposition groupings in the Palauan legislature. Whereas this situation could be hypothesized to generate political instability, informal coalitions between MPs exist in the Senate and the House of Delegates, and these allegiances are primarily based on clan and family relationships (Shuster 1994: 197-198). In the subsequent section more attention will be paid to the role of cleavages and ideology in Palauan politics, and also to these informal political alliances.

The judicial sector of Palau also strongly resembles that of the United States, with a Supreme Court that is headed by a Chief Justice, and a number of 'inferior courts of limited jurisdiction' (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. X: 1; Davis and Hart 2002: 183-184). In addition, the Palauan Constitution calls for the establishment of a National Court, but this has proven not to be needed and has therefore never become part of the country's judiciary. Palauan judges are appointed for life by the President upon the advice of the Judicial Nominating Commission, and just like in the three previously examined microstates they have often been nationals of another country, most commonly the United States (Hassall 2009: 172). Since the ratification of the Constitution in 1981, Palau's Chief Justices have however been Palauans, who both received their education at American universities.

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[36] In most of such calculations for bicameral systems however, only the MPs from the lower House of parliament are taken in consideration. If the Palauan Senate can be seen as the lower House (since the House of Delegates provides for the representation of states), the number of citizens per each of the thirteen MPs would rise to a little over 1.500.

[37] In addition to Palau, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, and Tuvalu have no political parties, whereas loose groupings of parliamentarians that hardly deserve the label of political party exist in Kiribati, Samoa, and Tonga. The absence of parties in these democratic microstates disproves Schattschneider's thesis that "modern democracy is unthinkable, safe in terms of political parties" (1942: 1).

In addition to the three branches of government that have been adopted from the American presidential system, Palau has a fourth branch of government, which consists of the sixteen-member Council of Chiefs (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 6; Davis and Hart 2002: 159; Hassall 2009: 174-175).[38] Although this Council is often perceived to be a remnant of the pre-modern Palauan system, it was actually created by the American administrators. In the Council, which is jointly presided over by High Chief Ibedul and High Chief Reklai, the highest chief from each of Palau's sixteen states is represented. According to the Constitution, the Council of Chiefs has the competence to advise the President on matters of tradition and custom. In addition, High Chiefs Ibedul and Reklai typically accompany the President during official meetings and ceremonies, and are occasionally referred to as Palau's 'royalty' (e.g. Gerston 1990: 178). Whereas the constitutional role of the Council of Chiefs is restricted to advising the President on matters of custom and tradition (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 6), in practice the Council also often meets with senators, delegates, and ministers, either on the instigation of the Council itself, or on the initiative of elected politicians (Shuster 1994: 193; Hassall 2009: 175). The Council of Chiefs convenes at least once a month in sessions that are closed to the general public.

In addition to the national layer of government, in line with the American model Palau is subdivided into sixteen states, which have a fairly extensive degree of autonomy (Davis and Hart 2002: 199-200; Mita 2009: 135).[39] Every state maintains its own Governor, executive branch, state legislature, traditional leaders, state treasury, and bureaucracy, and as can be seen in table 8.3 the composition of state governments differs from state to state. In general however, it can be said that traditional leaders exercise much more power on the state level than on the national level, and in several states chiefs are clearly more powerful than elected officials (Shuster 1994; Rosenberg 1996: 16; Davis and Hart 2002: 202-204).[40] The fact that every state maintains its own set of institutions is often regarded as inefficient, since most states have less than five hundred inhabitants (Mita 2009: 135). An extreme example is the state of Hatohobei, which has a population of only around forty souls, but maintains a nine-member legislature, a Governor, a Lieutenant-Governor, traditional leaders,

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[38] This Council is called *Rubekul Belau* in Palauan.
[39] The Constitution determines that state legislatures have the power to impose taxes and to borrow money to finance public programs (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. XI: 3-4). In addition, the national government may constitutionally delegate powers to the state government. In comparison to US states the powers of Palauan states vis-à-vis the national governments are rather restricted, as will be explained in more detail in section 4.2 of this chapter.
[40] The most obvious example is the state of Ngatpang, in which the legislature is entirely and exclusively composed of chiefs.

a legislative clerk, a treasurer, a Hatohobei Island projects supervisor, and two officials in charge of Hatohobei Island maintenance.

Table 8.3: The Sixteen States of Palau and their Governments

State	Area	Population[41]	Elected MPs	Traditional Leaders
Aimeliik	52 km²	270	9	Council of Chiefs
Airai	44 km²	2.723	15	Council of Chiefs
Angaur	8 km²	320	5, + 4 chiefs	4 Chiefs in legislature
Hatohobei	3 km²	44	9	Council of Chiefs
Kayangel	3 km²	188	12	Council of Chiefs, Chief *Rdechor* is Head of State
Koror	65 km²	12.676	16	Male + Female Council of Chiefs
Melekeok	28 km²	391	5, + 10 chiefs	Chiefs are majority in legislature, Chief *Reklai* has executive power
Ngaraard	36 km²	581	10, + 5 chiefs	5 Chiefs in legislature
Ngarchelong	10 km²	488	8, + 8 chiefs	8 Chiefs in legislature, Chief *Uong-Er-Tei* is Head of State
Ngardmau	47 km²	166	9	Council of Chiefs
Ngatpang	65 km²	317	-, 10 chiefs	Only Chiefs in legislature, Chief *Rebelkuul* Head of State
Ngchesar	47 km²	464	9, + 8 chiefs	8 Chiefs in legislature, Chief *Ngirakebou* Head of State
Ngeremlengui	41 km²	254	11	Council of Chiefs
Ngiwal	26 km²	223	7, + 10 chiefs	Chiefs are majority in legislature
Peleliu	13 km²	702	10, + 5 chiefs	5 Chiefs in legislature
Sonsorol	3 km²	100	6, + 4 chiefs	4 Chiefs in legislature
Palau	**488 km²**	**19.907**	**29**	**Council of Chiefs**

As the present overview of Palau's political-institutional framework reveals, the country's (modern) democratic system is in coexistence with a centuries-old traditional system of government. Although the Constitution clearly establishes the supremacy of democratically elected institutions over traditional ones, both secondary sources and all my interviewees point to the continuing influence and authority of traditions and traditional leadership (Shuster 1994: 193; Hassall 2009: 174). In addition, academic publications about politics and democracy in the broader Pacific region highlight a number of political features and practices that can potentially harm democratic development, such as the prevalence of clientelism (Duncan and Nakagawa 2006), the lingering authority of non-elected traditional leadership (Haglelgam

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[41] According to the 2000 Palauan census (Davis and Hart 2002: 202-203).

1998), the pervasiveness of corruption (Larmour 2005), and authoritarian, Big Man-style leadership (McLeod 2007).[42] In the following sections, the applicability of this literature to Palauan politics will be examined by analyzing the influence of size on contestation and inclusiveness in this Pacific microstate.

5. The Influence of Size on Democracy in Palau

Whereas Dahl's dimension of contestation can be translated into the presence of a political opposition (Dahl 1971: 3-4), the absence of a party system in Palau obfuscates attempts to examine the opposition, if it exists in the first place. In addition, indicators like party system fragmentation and alternation in office are either hard or impossible to measure in a situation in which no parties exist. In spite of these conditions however, both parliamentary and presidential elections in Palau have been contested by multiple individuals, which indicates that voters do have the opportunity to choose between different alternatives. Since both secondary sources and all my respondents confirmed that elections in Palau are free and fair, it can furthermore be ascertained that contestation is sincere, and that challengers to the incumbent politicians have a real chance of gaining office. According to Freedom House, which is the only aggregate index of democracy that does not exclude Palau, the country acquires most favorable scores on both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2012).[43]

With regard to inclusiveness, the Palauan Constitution ensures that adult citizens have both active and passive suffrage rights. Whereas every Palauan citizen of at least eighteen years has the right to vote in both national and state elections, the minimum age for membership of parliament is twenty-five, and in order to contest presidential elections a candidate must at least be thirty-five years of age (Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. VIII: 3; IX: 6). Although the restrictions on passive suffrage rights are thereby somewhat higher than in the other microstates, in general it can be concluded that the Palauan system is, at least legally, inclusive to its citizens. In order to comprehensively investigate the effects of size on contestation and inclusiveness however, in the following sections an analysis is provided of the role of cleavages and ideologies, the horizontal balance of power between institutions, citizen-politician relations, and the characteristics of political participation and elections in Palau.

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[42] In addition, in a cautionary article that was published in 2000 and is ominously titled the 'Africanisation of the South Pacific', Ben Reilly observes a negative trend with regard to democratic development in the region (Reilly 2000).

[43] Since its independence in 1994, Palau has always received a score of 1 on both Freedom House-dimensions, based on a 7-point scale in which 1 is most free and 7 least free (Freedom House 2012).

5.1. Contestation: The Role of Cleavages and Ideology, and the Absence of Parties

In the absence of political parties, elections in Palau are exclusively contested by independent politicians. Parliamentary and presidential elections are held once in every four years, and on the state level elections are organized once in two, three, or four years.[44] Since the President of Palau has the constitutional right to appoint the ministers in his government, the presidential election indirectly also constitutes a vote for the entire Palauan executive. As a consequence of passive suffrage rights, which are however due to age limits somewhat restricted, most Palauans have the right to take part in contestation and to stand for election. This means that the Palauan constitutional framework offers virtually all the opportunities for meaningful political competition to occur, and that political alternatives are at least legally and formally available to the Palauan electorate.

The population of Palau is religiously and ethnically rather diverse, and the country receives a score of 0.43 in Alesina et al.'s fractionalization index (Alesina et al. 2003).[45] Since the thirty percent of non-Palauans however do not have voting rights, on the basis of my interview data it appears that these societal cleavages are not really politicized.[46] Since the articulation of interests on the aggregate party-level does not exist in Palau, individual politicians each campaign and fulfill their mandates based on their own political platforms. Fourteen of the fifteen respondents indicated that in doing so, individual politicians hardly campaign on the basis of substantial political issues, and often do not have a specific political program to run on. Whereas previous chapters have demonstrated that the absence of ideological demarcations in San Marino, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Seychelles has led to the prevalence of personalistic politics in these microstates, in Palau the absence of parties necessarily and automatically generates a personalized political environment as well. In contrast to the other microstates however, the Palauan political environment is primarily determined by clan-membership and inter- and intra-clan relationships, which according to Larry Gerston essentially assume the role of political parties (1990:

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[44] The states of Angaur and Kayangel organize elections every two years, Ngatpang and Peleliu once in three years, and the other Palauan states once every four years (Davis and Hart 2002: 206).

[45] This index measures ethnic, religious, and linguistic fractionalization, and ranges between 1 and 0, with 0 indicating the absence of fractionalization, and 1 indicating a completely fractionalized society.

[46] Whereas thirty percent of the Palauan population consists of foreigners, these people have no suffrage rights and are therefore not represented in Palauan politics. In recent years tensions have been growing between native Palauans and Filipino guest workers (Hassall 2009: 174).

178). This is also confirmed by one of the politicians whom I interviewed, who pointed out that:

> "They [the US TTPI-administration, WV] tried political parties, but it never really matured and did not become strong because of the clan system. The clan system is absolutely more predominant and stronger than parties."

The vision expressed in this quote is shared by all fifteen of my respondents, of whom many also indicated that political alliances between politicians are primarily based on clan and family relationships (cf. Shuster 1994: 197-198). As a consequence, the absence of political parties has not led to a hopelessly instable or unstructured political state of affairs in Palau, and virtually all of the people I interviewed could consistently indicate which MPs supported the government and which ones belonged to the informal 'opposition'. Because these political alliances are based on kinship- or clan-relations instead of ideological congruence or agreement, although invisible to an outsider these bonds are arguably even stronger than political parties. A wide majority of my respondents indicated that government-opposition dynamics are principally determined by clan relationships and the hierarchy between clans, and that politicians virtually never act against the interests of their own clans. In any case, on the basis of interviews it can be asserted that a political opposition has always been present in both Houses of the Palauan legislature.

Since interviews with Palauan respondents reveal that political dynamics and inter-elite relations are all primarily determined by clan membership, political ideas, programs, and policies appear to play an even more marginal role in Palau than in the other microstates. During my interviews, Palauan ministers and (former) members of the Senate and House of Delegates were unable to say which sort of ideology or ideas they supported and articulated, and could not even say whether they thought of themselves as being more left-wing or right-wing, or more progressive or conservative. In short, as one journalist mentioned;

> "It's really hard to pin them [Congressmen, WV] down on any particular ideology; they kind of move back and forth. I guess that is in a nutshell the whole politics of Palau."

According to some respondents, the formal institutional structure of Palau obscures the fact that politics is essentially personality-driven. As a high-ranking public official emphasized;

> "Many people say that in Palau you have an American system. But you know, it's sort of like a façade. You can't say that they don't follow the rules and regulations, but it's just that personal relations or clan relations are really, really more important."

Since clan relations are the driving factor of Palauan politics, political candidates are not induced to present any political platform or manifesto in advance to elections. Most candidates announce their candidacy in the (social) media, and in doing so make a number of pledges and promises on varying issues. Even if candidates do announce programmatic issues in their election campaigns, it appears that they are not really held accountable to them, as one politician and traditional leader explains:

> "Everybody has a platform and ideas, but they forget them when they come to office. (...) They are not elected because of this, but because of family and clan relationships, and their personality."

Since contestation is thus personalistic rather than programmatic, political representation is also not based on substantive responsiveness, but appears to be descriptive or symbolic instead (cf. Pitkin 1967). When asked about it, respondents pointed out that there are no substantial differences between clans in terms of political preferences, and that the competition is in that sense primarily a struggle for power and control among clans rather than for the realization of specific political interests. This means that the articulation of substantive political interests appears to be virtually absent in Palau, as no substantive political cleavages exist in the country.

Whereas various scholars hypothesize that small states have a more accommodating and consensus-oriented political culture, virtually all available sources indicate that Palauan politics is highly competitive, divisive, and polarized (Quimby and Iyechad 1983: 103, 108). According to the Palau-specialist Donald Shuster, "[c]ompetition, factionalism, and intrigue characterize nearly all political activity in Palau. (...) There have been intense clan rivalries" (1994: 197-198). Interviewees from different backgrounds confirm this observation, and also highlight how personal relations can impede on rational decision-making;

> "I would say that Palauan politics is very emotional, that the personalities are a very big part of the politics. (...) Interpersonal relations become part of how the discussion will be successful or not. So the success of policy-making is much more sort of a politicking process; all really depends on how well the people are cordial."

Within the clan-hierarchy some clans are traditionally more dominant than others, and members of the largest and most influential clans are usually most successful at the polls (Gerston 1990: 178). The current Palauan president Johnson Toribiong is for example member of one of the most prominent Palauan

clans and families,[47] and is presently supported by a majority of senators and delegates, many of whom are in some way related to him. Furthermore, multiple respondents emphasize that the sheer size of the clan in large part determines a candidate's electoral success, as the following politician points out;

> "It is very much those who have big families and clans, you know that they will win for sure. (…) A social network normally runs through the family and the clan, and so if you don't have that as your base to run, it's very slim to none for you to win".

This quote also accurately indicates that voting behavior in Palau is chiefly based on clan and family-relations, and more attention will be paid to this issue in section 4.4.

   While contestation for elected offices in Palau is thus strong and divisive, respondents asserted that the same is true for the selection of traditional leaders. Palauan chiefs are traditionally selected by councils of female elders (Wilson 1995: 5; Hassall 2009: 175), and usually a choice has to be made between a handful of potential heirs to a deceased chief. Although this selection is by no means democratic, various interviewees point out that a certain degree of contestation for chiefly titles is unquestionably present, and that this system ensures that only qualified individuals can acquire positions of traditional leadership. One of the male traditional leaders I interviewed said that;

> "If you want to become a traditional chief, you have to be smart and you have to serve the people. So people who become traditional leaders are also well-respected; they also perform. And so it's not enough that you are from a high clan and simply push your ideas around."

In its own way, the traditional system of leadership therefore also offers minimal degrees of contestation and inclusiveness, and chiefly titles are not just hereditarily passed on, but are only granted to persons who are seen as capable of being a chief.

   Although political ideas do not seem to play a large role in the Palauan political context, contestation for political offices is not only present, but is also fierce and divisive. Whereas the traditional clan-system is responsible for personalistic contestation and appears to have assumed the function of a political party system, the size of Palau facilitates and exacerbates this tendency. As a consequence of the smallness of electoral districts and the country as a whole, political candidates can win elections on the basis of their clan affiliations

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[47] Toribiong is the nephew of Roman Tmetuchl, who was Palau's most prominent politician for a large part of the 1960s and 1970s, and spearheaded the movement that advocated separation of Palau from the rest of Micronesia. Two of his closest political allies are Senator Joel Toribiong, who is a brother of the President, and the President of the Senate Mlib Tmetuchl, who is a cousin of the President.

alone, which would never be possible in a large country regardless of whether its society is clan-oriented or not. In similar fashion to the other three microstates, the size of Palau therefore generates the prevalence of personalistic over programmatic contestation. Furthermore, the personalistic politics and social interconnectedness that result from size can also be deemed to foster the polarization and divisiveness of Palau's society as a whole.

5.2. Contestation: The Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions

In line with part of the small-state literature, in earlier chapters the governments of St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles were found to occupy a supremely powerful position in their respective political systems, with very few checks and balances being provided by other societal and political institutions. In Palau a somewhat similar situation can be found with respect to Congress, state governments, and the media, whereas the judiciary and especially the Council of Chiefs do have the authority and independence to function as a restraint on executive power in the microstate. A first major similarity with the other three microstates can however be found in the difficulties that institutions face in trying to maintain an image of neutrality and impartiality. As a consequence of intimate social contacts and multiple-role relationships, the Palauan judiciary, media, and public service are repeatedly plagued by allegations of being biased, and this was confirmed in interviews with representatives and officials of these institutions, as the following quote from the Chief Justice shows;

> "You see, if I were having lunch with one lawyer more often than with others, that does not look good. So if that lawyer were to come to court and the case comes before me and he wins, now there is that perception; the appearance of impropriety. And that is what we are trying to avoid; it's not just the reality but also the appearance of impropriety that we want to avoid. And in a small state that's tough, it's very tough."

In line with other presidential systems, the President of Palau is as head of state a dominating factor in the country's political framework. Since they are appointed by the President and constitutionally serve at his will, other ministers in the government occupy a subordinate and dependent position in the cabinet. Interviews with Palauan respondents however reveal that most of the presidential power stems from his clan- and family-relations with other politicians, as one journalist pointed out;

> "You wonder if there are really checks and balances, because right now we have a lot of relatives of the President in parliament. The President is now so powerful and influential that the OEK at least comes out as being subservient to the President."

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As the quote above reveals, in terms of executive-legislative relations a wide majority of twelve out of fifteen respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the functioning of the Palauan Congress (the OEK). During interviews with Palauan citizens and politicians (including members of parliament themselves), Palau's legislature was mostly argued to be weak and submissive in relation to the government. According to most interviewees this situation is mainly an effect of personal relations, because as many Congressmen are related to the President or other government members through family or clan lines, they are supposedly unable or unwilling to effectively control government. As one politician remarked:

> "Well, there are supposed to be three equal branches of government. But the way the members of Congress are doing, I have not seen them to exercise their rights as an independent legislature. They have not exercised checks and balances with the executive branch. (...) There are too many friends of the President in the parliament, who are in the key positions."

The senators and delegates who are not aligned to President form the parliamentary opposition, but they are a relatively small minority.[48] Although opposition members are often outspoken and critical of government, due to the significance of clan relations they told me they had little hope of attracting the support of other MPs. In short, Palau's legislative branch appears to be not really independent from its executive counterpart, and the strict separation of powers that characterizes the American system on which it is modeled appears not to exist in Palau. More than the other microstates, the smallness of Palau appears to lead to political alliances based on relations and bloodlines, and this largely turns out to limit the capacities and autonomy of parliament. Although no data are available to prove it, my personal correspondence with ordinary Palauans furthermore reveals that people are very skeptical and suspicious of elected politicians, and trust in them in general appears to be quite low.

As an alternative to parliament, both the literature on Palau and my own sources reveal that the Council of Chiefs is the institution that most effectively controls the actions of government. Whereas this institution itself is not democratically elected, all fifteen of my respondents cherished and praised the role of traditional leaders in the Palauan system, and perceived the chiefs to be a highly valuable component of Palau's democracy. In this sense, some actually

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[48] Palauan citizens and politicians have been consistently able to name the persons that formed the opposition in the Senate. In 2011, four out of thirteen senators were identified as part of the opposition, among whom former President Remengesau and former Vice-President Chin.

perceive the Council to be a substitute for parliament, and as one of the members of the Council itself pointed out;

> "The Council of Chiefs is providing the check on the government; the one that our Congress is supposed to be doing, but is not doing".

Although the constitutional role of traditional leadership is quite restricted, all available sources confirm that the influence of chiefs on Palauan politics is really extensive. According to Shuster "[g]enerally few things of significance can take place in Palau without the advice and consent of chiefs" (1994: 193), and Mita argues that "[w]hile what is prescribed in the Constitution is only an advisory function to the President, no modern leaders in the governments within Palau can be oblivious to the presence and role of traditional chiefs" (2009: 139-140). Moreover, Hassall points out that "[i]n practice, the authority of the chiefs is respected in ways beyond those called for in the constitution. Government departments may for instance seek permission from chiefs before undertaking a major investment in a region" (2009: 175). This observation is confirmed by interviews with Palauan politicians, and one of the leading figures in the government highlighted that:

> "The traditional leaders and traditional women leaders are still meeting to make sure that we keep and maintain our traditional way of doing things. Sometimes they notice that they way we [elected politicians, WV] do things are a little bit excessive, because of the new way of life and doing things. So then they try to talk to people to slow it down."

As this quote exemplifies, in many ways the Council of Chiefs can be seen as a very influential interest group that every now and then attempts to correct or stop supposedly misguided politicians.[49] Conflicts between the Palauan government and traditional leaders often boil down to questions of modernization versus tradition, and the protection of Palauan identity, culture, and customs. Whereas the Council operates as a conservative entity that habitually opposes changes that affect Palauan society or lifestyle, the government appears to be mostly attempting to modernize the country and to stimulate economic growth and foreign investments. One general concern of Palauans that the traditional leaders often refer to is the fear of being taken over by foreigners and larger countries, and the ensuing weakening or disappearance of Palauan customs and traditions. In this sense a political cleavage that centers

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[49] A clear manifestation of this continuing influence is the Council's resistance and subsequent action concerning a bill that would allow for the establishment of a casino in the winter of 2010-2011. Whereas this bill was already approved by both Houses of the *Olbiil Era Kelulau*, the chiefs mobilized opponents to the bill to force President Toribiong to organize a referendum on the issue, in which an overwhelming majority of Palauans rejected the law proposal.

on the preservation of Palauan traditions appears to exist between the elected politicians and the traditional leaders.

Like in other Pacific island states, Palauan politics is thus characterized by friction between modern and traditional forms of leadership. This was confirmed during the interviews, in which politicians and chiefs repeatedly criticized each other's position in the Palauan system.[50] In short, the relations between the two forms of leadership are sometimes far from harmonious, and this was confirmed by both politicians and traditional leaders. As one high-ranking politician stated;

> "I think it's ongoing that the elected leaders want to assert themselves, trying to say that they are the legitimate ruling body, without being aware of it, or being aware of it without saying it. I think they [the two systems, WV] are competing; you cannot have two ruling entities in one society."

In this sense, the clash between traditional forms of leadership and modern democratic institutions that several scholars observe throughout the Pacific is therefore also clearly and continuously present in Palau.

In addition to the Council of Chiefs, respondents pointed to the Palauan judiciary as a strong, impartial, and autonomous institution that lives up to its constitutional role. In similar fashion as in St. Kitts and Nevis, the Palauan judiciary somehow manages to escape the microstate's polarized political climate, and with one exception all interviewees and other sources confirmed its neutrality (cf. Freedom House 2012). Whereas the pre-independence period in Palau was marked by strong political pressure on judges to rule in favor of the COFA, the country's judiciary retained its independence and appeared immune to pressure (Leibowitz 1996: 93-94). According to a journalist I talked with, this is contemporarily still the case:

> "In the past, when we were debating the Compact, there were citizen groups who were pressuring the former Chief Justice, late Chief Justice Nakamura. (...) But the court has been able to withstand those, and I think it is much stronger now because of that experience."

In a small society like Palau where everyone knows each other, judges have to be extremely cautious not to run into conflicts of interests. Whereas this is easier for foreign judges, native Palauan judges are likely to personally know many of the lawyers, plaintiffs, and defendants that appear before them. The Palauan Chief Justice explained to me that social isolation is the most practical strategy in this respect;

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[50] This was especially the case with regard to criticism from traditional leaders about elected politicians, and somewhat less so in the other direction.

> "In our private life, we [judges, WV] avoid controversies (...). If we are seen to be mingling with people and their cases would come to court, we would not be able to hear those cases. When you have a small island, that becomes really, really much of a problem. It means isolation for judges; our social life is pretty confined."

Like their colleagues in the other three microstates, in order to safeguard impartiality judges in Palau are often foreigners. In the Palauan case, the hiring of foreign judges however results in conflicts because these judges are not always familiar with, or do not always accept the influence of traditions and traditional leadership (Hassall 2009: 172).[51] Several Palauan chiefs that I talked to expressed discontent with the court's handling of cases involving custom and traditions, for example when it comes to clan rivalries, as one academic mentioned to me:

> "What preoccupies a lot of people today is that there is very fierce confrontation within clans and among clans. And they are bringing this to the courts, and the court system is beginning to realize that the template of the modern system is just not the cut that is required to totally resolve the nature and complexities of a different system."

In general, both interviews and secondary sources reveal that Palauan society is very litigious, which is mostly ascribed to the broader polarization of Palau's society, and the fierce inter-clan rivalries and competition for chiefly titles (Leibowitz 1996: 93).

The role of the media in the Palauan political system is in many ways similar to the other three cases that were studied. *Tia Belau* and *Island Times* are the two newspapers that are published in Palau, and both appear once a week and are confronted with financial troubles resulting from limited revenues and a small readers' public. Nevertheless, in the Freedom of the Press-index Palau has consistently received favorable ratings, and in 2011 the country obtained a score of 14 (or 'free') on a 100-point scale in which a score of 100 represents the least free situation (Freedom House 2012). In addition to the two newspapers, a handful of radio-stations are also active in Palau. One of these, WWFM 89.5, is owned by Senator Alfonso Diaz, who has used his broadcasts to draw attention to corruption and clientelism. Whereas Diaz' radio station was popular and played an important role in anticorruption awareness in Palau (Shuster 2004b: 17), after his election to the Senate Diaz was repeatedly accused of using his radio station for his own political gain, and many of my respondents blamed him for doing this as well.

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[51] As Hassall argues, "[d]omestic Palauan politics has in recent years featured clashes between American expatriates working for government agencies in Palau and Palauan high chiefs" (Hassall 2009: 172).

Due to an inherently small public and the relatively high costs of printing, publishing a newspaper in Palau is not a lucrative business, which is why most journalists are volunteers, or see journalism merely as a hobby. As a consequence, like in other microstates many people and especially politicians complain about the quality of the news, as the following MP argues;

> "Palauan media is sufficiently independent; my complaint is the quality of it. They can say whatever, but it's the quality you know; there are rumors and gossips and all that, and not so much informing the public. And you wonder, because some of our folks who are doing the media are not really journalists; they didn't get out of journalism schools and it's just a part-time job or a hobby."

The low quality of newspapers allows politicians to scorn and mock the media, as a result of which the position of journalists is further emasculated. Since there are no political parties in Palau, it would appear hard to pinpoint individual newspapers as being supportive of the government or the opposition. Nevertheless, in light of the polarization between individual politicians and especially clans, many respondents still complained about biases in news reporting.

The final institutions that at least constitutionally have the ability to restrain the power of the executive are the state governments of Palau. Although Palau is constitutionally a federation, most of my respondents argued that the state governments do not really serve a purpose, and primarily function as a massive drain on public resources. According to one journalist:

> "What makes the state governments not strong is that they don't serve a real function to improve the life of the people. (...) The thing that weakens them in the eyes of the public is that they bring this 250.000 dollars budget from the national government. Most of that will go to the legislators in the government and the employees, and less is available for the important projects in the states."

Whereas the Palauans adopted the federal model from the United States, it seems particularly inefficient and costly in a country with such small dimensions. The duplication of political structure from the colonial power was also observed for the cases of St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, and is discussed as one of the core features of microstate-politics in the academic literature (Sutton and Payne 1993: 586-587; Sutton 2007a). Many Palauans however believe that it was a mistake to create a federation in Palau, as the following senior public official notes;

> "I think the biggest mistake we made is that we did not change or modify the system to improve it to fit us. And we instead created I would say a monster; a system that is totally ridiculous, with two Houses in the Congress. I mean that is ridiculous, and then we have eight ministers, with a President and a Vice-President. We have sixteen traditional leaders and sixteen governors; sixteen speakers, and each state

has its own executive and legislative branch. This is stupid; it costs too much. How can you have thirty-five people staying in Sonsorol and they are considered as a state?"

Most of my respondents named financial arguments as the main disadvantage of Palau's federal system, as the leader of the Chamber of Commerce pointed out:

"Each Palauan state has a massive bureaucracy; massive in proportion to the population of that state. (...) You have a governor, their staff, their legislature; I mean it just doesn't financially make sense. It's not at all logical."

Since the national government has the final say with regard to the amount of money that state governments have at their disposal, state administrations are ultimately dependent on the generosity of the national executive, and therefore not as powerful as the label of 'federation' suggests (cf. Constitution of Palau 1981: Art. XI: 4).

In analyzing the relations between Palau's various political and societal institutions, the expectations that can be derived from the academic literature on politics in small states are partially confirmed. The governmental dominance that several authors refer to (e.g. Sutton 1987: 8; Sutton and Payne 1993: 592-593; Srebrnik 2004: 334-335) is found to exist in Palau as well, but to a lesser extent than in St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles. Palau's judiciary is an unquestionably independent and neutral third branch of government, and the Council of Chiefs also functions as an effective check on governmental power. At the same time, Palau's parliament, media, and state governments are weak or overshadowed by the national government. In large part, the weakness of these three institutions appears to be a consequence of the smallness of Palau, which leads to a lack of resources, a lack of professionalism, and the prevalence of personalistic over programmatic contestation. In short, the horizontal balance between Palauan institutions is still skewed in favor of the country's executive, but apparently to a lesser extent than in the Caribbean and African cases that were studied in earlier chapters.

5.3. Inclusiveness: The Relations between Citizens and Politicians

To even a greater extent than in the three previously studied microstates, citizen-politician linkages in Palau are marked by closeness, direct contacts, and multiple-role relationships. This is partly a result of the fact that the population size of Palau is even tinier than that of the other cases, but it also derives from the federal nature of the Palauan system, as a result of which the state politicians are even closer to their people than those in the national government. The five smallest Palauan states have less than 250 inhabitants, and it is not only evident

that the legislatures and executives of these states are highly accessible to their constituents, but it can also be assumed that political dynamics in such an environment are markedly different from those in larger microstates without noteworthy sub-national administrations (like Seychelles). As a general conclusion, it can be said that the findings of the field research in Palau reveal that the effects of size with regard to citizen-politician relations are stronger and more perceptible than in the other microstates that were analyzed.

In line with part of the academic literature, many Palauan interviewees highlight the positive consequences of closeness and face-to-face contacts with regard to the quality of political representation (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 87; Anckar 2002b: 387). As a result of proximity, Palauan voters appear to be generally aware and involved in politics, and according to many respondents talking and gossiping about politics is one of the favorite pastimes of the country's citizens. According to one politician I interviewed:

> "You can look at it [closeness, WV] as positive, because you have direct contact with your constituents; you know what they want and what their concerns are, so you can address those".

In addition to greater opportunities for responsiveness of politicians to citizens, closeness also has advantages in the opposite direction, and the following academic explained to me how smallness results in increased awareness among citizens:

> "It's good that everybody knows what's going on; I mean even taxi drivers. So the checks and balances are there, because even people who are at the village level talk about issues and they discuss among themselves".

Although no data are available to support it, on the basis of interviews and my own observations, levels of awareness and political efficacy appear to really high in Palau. Talking or gossiping about politics appears to be one of the favorite pastimes of Palauans, and social media have offered additional opportunities in this regard.[52]

Whereas citizens thus because of closeness have amplified opportunities to voice their political attitudes to their representatives, politicians on the other hand have the opportunity to know and talk to all their constituents. As one politician highlighted;

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[52] Palauans are especially active on facebook, which has become a forum to discuss political issues, declare candidacies for public office, announce political events, or spread rumors about individual politicians. Several facebook groups have become very big online communities, and have several thousand members, which in light of Palau's total population of 20.000 constitutes a major part of the population. One of the biggest facebook groups is *Ngelekel Belau*, which translates into "Children of Palau" and is also the title of this chapter.

> "I know maybe 95% of the people in the Republic. Now, I may not know their name, but when I see them I know their faces, and probably 80 – 85% of the time I know where that person lives. Because you campaign a couple of times and you meet these guys, the same people. And so these are our constituents, you know their mandate; they talk to you, get your number and talk to you, so it's very, very close".

Since politicians and citizens are in constant contact with each other, in interviews Palauan politicians confirmed that they are incessantly questioned or pressured to act according to these citizens' interests, and because the loss of a few supporters can make the difference at the polls the pressures by citizens can be more severe than in larger states.

As suggested by the academic literature, many prominent Palauans combine a number of societal and public functions, which leads to the emergence of multiple-role relationships. Most Palauan politicians and chiefs for example also have a private business, or are concomitantly active as journalists or interest group-representatives. Many of my interviewees combined several of such functions, and this evidently leads to problems, as one illustrative individual points out;

> "I have all these functions; I publish a newspaper, I have a traditional role, I have my own role in the court, a newspaper role; I run into conflicts all the time but I guess that's the nature of the business. It's a small country so we cannot afford to specialize in a particular mission or profession; practically all Palauan leaders are traditional leaders also, or church leaders, and they often have an own business."

In addition to having multiple jobs however, many politicians and citizens also know each other because of their connections and relations in the private sphere. Whereas this holds for the three other cases as well, in the Palauan case an extra type of relationship can be added: the clan or extended family. Respondents and secondary sources underscore that clan-relations are of tremendous significance in Palau, and clan-members have strong social obligations towards one another. This can generate an additional form of conflicting interests, as an interest group-leader mentions:

> "They [politicians, WV] are in constant conflict between their private businesses and the good of the country; and then confused by the good of their clan".

Indeed, virtually all my respondents – also the politicians themselves – named conflicts of interests as the primary negative effect of closeness and multiple-role relationships. Especially the combination between being a politician and owning a business was often cited as problematic, because it leads to bad decisions at both the political- and business-levels. According to a spokesperson for the private sector:

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> "From my personal perspective, it drives me crazy. Because consistently bad decisions are being made; both business decisions and political decisions. Just really bad because they [politicians, WV] are trying to protect their own interests."

In addition to politicians however, most traditional leaders also have their own business. This is especially problematic because their chiefly titles provide their businesses with unfair advantages, which undermines fair competition and efficiency, as the same respondent argues:

> "Most traditional leaders have businesses (…), they have been successful families for a long time and so they have first-movers advantage when it comes to business. But they are not particularly good at performing business, and they are not the best in class; it's just the status that got them the head start."

Just like in the other three microstates, patron-client networks and particularism are key characteristics of Palauan politics. For the specific case of Palau however, the general literature on Pacific politics and societies also mentions clientelism as a core aspect of the islands in this region (Larmour 2005: 4-5; Duncan and Nakagawa 2006). As for example various country reports of Transparency International emphasize, in Pacific countries the line between manifestations of traditional culture and corruption or clientelism is often difficult to draw, because the provision of money and gifts to clan members is an essential component of Pacific island cultures (e.g. Shuster 2004a: 8-10). In Palau wealthier individuals are expected to contribute and support their friends and families, and family occasions such as funerals, weddings, childbirths, or housewarmings are instances where politicians are expected to make donations to family members. This is however often linked to the substituted provision of political support, thereby creating a clientelistic exchange. As one politician mentioned:

> "In Palau there is a culture of offering food, this is a cultural tradition. An so they say that those who are affluent in terms of money or just other resources or wealth, tend to have a stronger influence because they have the capability of distributing food. And I have to admit, it's very hard to win votes without giving food."

Various non-public respondents also pointed to the pressures that politicians face in this regard, as one chief explained to me:

> "A lot of these politicians, especially senators, delegates, ministers, and the president, I think their feeling is: (…) "I have to show up and give money. If I want to get reelected, I have to go to all these people whose funerals come up, or first births, or a new house custom." And they have to give money, they have to represent."

The smallness of Palau can be argued to foster clientelistic tendencies, since candidates for public office are generally well aware of the size of their support

base, and can reasonably estimate how many and which people they have to convince to vote for them. Conversations with ordinary Palauans demonstrated that they also strongly expect their politicians to provide them with services and benefits, even though most of them (paradoxically) denounced clientelistic practices. In trying to gain the support of citizens in a specific district or state, politicians often turn to traditional leaders, who appear to have a large influence on the voting behavior of citizens, as one of Palau's academics told me:

> "They [the chiefs, WV] also control votes in their states, you know what I mean? Not so much control, but they have influence. (...) And when it comes to us [politicians, WV] and it comes to the President, he goes and says "ok, let's see who has the most population, which state". And then they kind of rub elbows with that particular chief in that state, and so on."

In addition to clientelism, patronage and nepotism (and mostly a combination of the two) also play a strong role in the Palauan political context, and again this can largely be ascribed to the smallness of the island state. As the literature on public administration in small states indicates, small-state bureaucracies tend to be oversized, dominated by government, and filled with political supporters, friends, and family members (Singham 1967; Sutton 1987: 12; Bray 1991: 25-26; Sutton and Payne 1993: 587). All this appears to be true for the Palauan civil service as well, at least according to a journalist whom I interviewed:

> "It [patronage, WV] is definitely expected; if I am going to support you, you better give me a job. And the benefits of working in government are actually really, really phenomenal compared to working in the private sector. (...) The public sector is huge. I mean it's ridiculous, it's almost 2.500 people employed just in the national government."

The absence of parties can be hypothesized to limit patronage, because the selection of civil servants cannot be controlled by a party apparatus. Instead however, it appears that clan- and family-relations - which as we have seen to a certain extent replace political parties – are decisive factors in the hiring of bureaucrats. Whereas nepotism and cronyism were not found to play a large role in the political systems of the other three microstates, at least five respondents stressed their negative influence on Palauan politics, perhaps due to the fact that this microstate is even smaller than the other ones that were studied. As one traditional leader highlighted:

> "That is the number one problem: nepotism. Man, I can name people; brothers and sisters and cousins and cross-relatives, but I don't want to name them. And people who are close political allies are not working and stay home while getting paid. The government is way too large for us; we are only a few people."

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The number of people working for the national government is deemed excessive by a clear majority of respondents, but in addition to that a great number of Palauans is employed in state governments. In this light, a great difference can be seen between ethnic Palauans and guest workers; whereas a significant majority of Palauans (57%) are employed in the public administration, most private sector-jobs (about three-quarters) are being exercised by Filipinos and other Asians (Mita 2009: 133-134). Political patronage clearly damages the quality and efficiency of the Palauan bureaucracy, as incompetent or even criminal persons are being hired (ibid.). The costs of running the overstaffed and overpaid Palauan civil service are excessive, and can only be paid with money that flows from foreign investments.[53]

In combination with conflicts of interest, the size of the public sector also entails a number of negative consequences for Palau's private sector. The absence of strict separations between the public and private sectors of Palau not only leads to politicians defending their private interests, but also to the establishment of an uncompetitive business climate. As one private sector-representative complains:

> "If you are in politics and you have a store or a tour operation, you're always going to be kind of mediocre. You're never going to best in class, because you are not operating in a competitive environment. And this has long-term devastating effects, because (…) you are thinking "oh, is my business not going to do well because I am making this decision?" I mean it all gets too convoluted."

Palauan politicians have personal and private reasons not to implement economic reforms, even though Palau's budget deficits continue to grow and the country's external debt is increasing as well. As Mita argues, Palau's economy is almost completely sustained by foreign investments and aid, which means that the country is almost completely dependent on external sources, especially the United States (Mita 2009: 3). In short, it can be concluded that the smallness of Palauan society has a mixed influence on linkages between citizens and politicians, whereas it appears to obstruct economic development in the microstate. Palauan traditional culture entails certain features that facilitate the development of particularistic linkages, as a consequence of which the pressure on politicians to bestow their constituents with favors is arguably even stronger than in the other microstates.

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[53] According to Mita, "[t]he structure of Palau's government and its national economy can only be sustained as long as foreign actors continue to invest capital in Palau, and if the scale of such activities were to shrink, Palau's economic and political situation would deteriorate" (2009: Abstract).

5.4. Inclusiveness: Political Participation and Elections

When it comes to the characteristics of political participation in Palau, it should first be mentioned that regrettably data are only available with regard to voter turnout, which means that the country's score on indicators like participation in rallies, campaigns, or demonstrations is unknown. The absence of political parties further entails that figures of party membership are evidently unavailable as well. By and large, conclusions about participation therefore have to be drawn from the available interview data, which like in the other microstates suggests high levels of political involvement among the Palauan citizenry. Politicians indicated that they were in constant contact with their constituents, either on their own instigation or upon the initiative of citizens. Most interviewees emphasized that higher levels of participation in Palau are a consequence of higher levels of awareness and attachment to politics among voters, which they believed to stem from the smallness of the country and the psychological and physical closeness between politicians and the electorate.

The heavy involvement of Palauan voters in their country's politics does not appear to result in the existence of an identifiable public opinion in the country. Several respondents indicated that citizens do not really have strong attitudes on substantive political issues, and that a public discourse about major substantive political or ideological issues is lacking;

> "One thing that Palauans have not reached is that they do not see how public opinion – individual and collective public opinion – is a critical component of a working political and democratic system. That is not happening here in Palau; there is no public discourse, for example when they brought in the Uyghurs there was no public debate on that."

Instead, political involvement of Palauan citizens appears to center on more particularistic exchanges with politicians, and on talking and gossiping about personal rivalries and intrigues. In light of the seeming insignificance of programmatic issues and the closeness between citizens and politicians, it is obvious that voting behavior or electoral participation is primarily motivated by personalistic concerns as well (Mita 2009: 24). None of my respondents named ideology or programmatic issues as a major source of voting behavior, but instead they named a whole list of other things;

> "We vote for people because of who they are, not for their performance. It's really because they came to your funeral, or they assisted your kids with some problem, or your relatives go for medical treatment, or you had a house party where they donated to you. There are just too many factors that kind of sway the people."

Because every Palauan citizen personally knows at least one but mostly a number of politicians, the tendency to vote on the basis of personal relationships is largely a consequence of the smallness of the country. Because of this reason, but according to multiple sources also as a result of the fact that the direct consequences of voting are more clear to voters than in larger states, as table 3 shows turnout figures in Palau have mostly been rather high. In most elections approximately 80 percent of Palauans have voted, but in the most recent two elections this figure has been markedly lower. Although I posed the question to various respondents, nobody had a clear idea why this was the case.

Table 8.4: Voter Turnout at Palauan Elections[54]

Election Year	Voter Turnout
1980	80.0 %
1984	84.0 %
1985	79.1 %
1988	82.5 %
1992	83.4 %
1996	79.3 %
2000	81.2 %
2004	74.8 %
2008	67.7 %

In addition to turnout at the election itself, nearly all respondents emphasize that Palauans eagerly participate in the pre-election campaigns. Like in St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, this appears at least partly a consequence of the many gifts and favors that are distributed by candidates for public office.[55] On the basis of interviews, it seems that the clientelistic link is hence most clearly visible in the campaign period:

> "I think quite a few people look forward to election time, because they look forward to making a lot of money. Because they know politicians will give them money to buy their fuel and their travels, they are trying to sell themselves. And some people are just very good at milking these politicians."

Although higher levels of participation at elections surely appear to be related to the size of the Palauan population, it appears that smallness primarily induces greater levels of particularism-based participation, and does not generate a greater interest in substantive political issues.

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[54] Source: International IDEA website (International IDEA 2011).
[55] According to Mita, "[i]n the last few weeks before an election, a carnival atmosphere takes hold. Some candidates hold campaign barbecues and rallies. At these events, voters are treated to free food, drink, entertainment, and gifts. Some Palauans are critical of this kind of campaigning, while others are more relaxed about gift-giving" (Mita 2009: 122).

Table 8.5: Results of the 2008 House of Delegates-Election in Palau

State	Candidate	Votes	Percentages
Aimeliik	K. Ngirturong	269	59.6
	W. Umetaro	182	40.4
Airai	T. Rengulbai	525	57.4
	N. Secharraimul	389	42.6
Angaur	H. Rafael	172	58.7
	N. Misech	121	41.3
Hatohobei	W. Andrew	40	37.0
	H. Hosei	33	30.6
	S. Marino	35	32.4
Kayangel	N. Kemesong	180	60.0
	J. Titiml	120	40.0
Koror	A. Merep	1.845	72.5
	S. Tellames	700	27.5
Melekeok	L. Basilius	171	41.6
	T. Rengulbai	99	24.1
	K. Asanuma	81	19.7
	D. Ongelungel	60	14.6
Ngaraard	G. Kanai	422	54.1
	S. Remoket	358	45.9
Ngarchelong	M. Madrangchar	203	27.2
	F. Rehuher-Marugg	191	25.6
	D. Saiske	188	25.2
	D. Bukurrow	164	22.0
Ngardmau	R. Kesolei	193	67.7
	B. Kumangai	92	32.3
Ngatpang	J. Nabeyama	97	52.2
	V. Emesiochel	89	47.8
Ngchesar	S. Eldebechel	112	30.2
	M. Uludong	99	26.7
	S. Hideo	52	14.0
	Z. Kotaro	44	11.9
	M. Ngirkelau	42	11.3
	B. Basilius	22	5.9
Ngeremlengui	S. Ongidobel	218	49.9
	P. Franz	136	31.1
	A. Kyota	83	19.0
Ngiwal	N. Idechong	125	57.3
	K. Termeteet	52	23.9
	F. Llecholch	41	18.8
Peleliu	J. Isechal	338	56.9
	S. Soalablai	256	43.1
Sonsorol	C. Yangilmau	61	45.9
	E. Mario	42	31.6
	M. Xavier	30	22.6

Furthermore, as Mita points out, the smallness of Palau provides politicians with better opportunities to control whether citizens actually fulfill the duties that follow from clientelistic linkages;

> "Toward the end of the voting day, tally-keepers check their lists to make sure that all known supporters of their candidates have voted. If some have not, they send out cars to bring those voters to the polls. This practice helps to maintain a high voter turnout in Palau" (Mita 2009: 125).

In table 8.5, the state-level results of the 2008 House of Delegates-Election in Palau have been presented. The table shows that at least two candidates contested elections in each of the states, whereas some states had four or even five candidates for office. According to several respondents, the limited number of candidates at elections can on the one hand be explained by the fact that people from the same clan mostly hesitate to run against each other, and on the other hand by the fact that candidates can often accurately estimate their chances of winning, which already discourages many less popular candidates from running. As one of the candidates in these elections explains:

> "Where I ran, there were four of us. And because of this it was really hard, since we all have connections; we are all related to one another at the same time, so that we kind of split the relationships in terms of the ones who are closer to me versus the ones closer to the others. If you are related and you run together, you sort of split the clan relations."

The table however also demonstrates that whereas in several states a few hundred voters participate in the elections, in the smallest states (Hatohobei, Ngatpang, Ngiwal, and Sonsorol) this figure is below 250. It is obvious that a single vote can make the difference in such elections, and also in some comparatively large states (like in this case Ngarchelong) a handful of votes determine the election outcome. In light of these factors, it is clear that the inclination of politicians to attract voters by means of material rewards is augmented in comparison to larger settings. The number of voters that have to be attracted by means of favors is never really high, which means that politicians can also afford to use their private resources to win elections.

In addition to elections the referendum is recurrently employed as a mechanism to obtain popular approval for policy proposals in Palau, and the country has had notorious experiences with it in trying to establish its COFA with the United States between 1980 and 1994. Since independence, four referendums have been organized (in 1996, 2004, 2008, and 2011) to gain approval for constitutional amendments, dual citizenship, and on the legalization of casino establishments in the country. In table 5, all Palauan referendums and

their respective levels of voter turnout have been presented, and it can be seen that turnout has generally reached above seventy percent. In the most recent referendum, this figure was markedly lower (31.3 %), which is probably a consequence of the fact that this referendum was not held in conjunction with a general election. Also with regard to referendums, Palau is therefore characterized by rather high levels of political participation.

Table 8.6: Referendums in the Republic of Palau[56]

Year	Issue	Voter Turnout	Yes	No
1979	Constitution of Palau	n.a.	92.0	8.0
1983	COFA	78.5 %	62.1	37.9
1984	COFA	71.3 %	67.1	32.9
1986 (Feb.)	COFA	71.3 %	72.2	27.8
1986 (Dec.)	COFA	82.0 %	66.0	34.0
1987 (Jun.)	COFA	76.1 %	67.6	32.4
1987 (4 Aug.)	Constitutional Modification	n.a.	73.3	26.7
1987 (21 Aug.)	COFA	74.7 %	73.0	27.0
1990	COFA	69.2 %	60.8	39.2
1992	Constitutional Modification	83.2 %	62.4	37.6
1993	COFA	64.4 %	68.4	31.6
1996	Constitutional Modifications	n.a.	46.2	53.8
			48.2	51.8
2004	Constitutional Modifications	74.8 %	n.a.[57]	n.a.
2008	Constitutional Modifications	67.7 %	n.a.[58]	n.a.
2011	Legalization of Casinos	31.3 %	24.5	75.5

As in San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis, Palauan expatriates also have voting rights. Most of the Palauan emigrant voters live on nearby islands like Guam, Saipan, and Hawaii, and respondents indicated that politicians always spend some time on these islands to campaign and appeal to voters who live there (Rechebei and McPhetres 1997: 354). In contrast to the other microstates however correspondence-voting is allowed in Palau, which means that irregularities such as paying for the travels of expatriates do not occur in this microstate. Nevertheless, Palauan politicians are aware of the potential influence of the external vote:

> "I have not really looked into it at the national level, but the number of external votes is a number to contend with, a significant number. So there are many who go to Guam and Hawaii to campaign, it can actually alter the balance."

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[56] Data retrieved from Nohlen et al. (2001), and Direct Democracy website (www.sudd.ch).

[57] Although the specific percentages are unknown, four out of the five proposed constitutional amendments were approved, whereas one proposal (the creation of a unicameral parliament) was rejected (Shuster 2006: 116).

[58] No less than twenty-three issues were at stake during this referendum, with varying results.

In summary, it can be said that the smallness of Palau creates a number of particular characteristics with regard to political participation. Like in the other three microstates, political involvement of Palauan citizens appears to be inspired by personalistic and individual consideration rather than out of a concern for public issues. Although political participation in Palau is generally quite high, this can primarily be interpreted as a manifestation of particularistic exchanges.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

As the smallest of the four microstates that have been analyzed in this dissertation, politics and democracy in the Republic of Palau are to a significant degree comparable to the other three microstates. When it comes to aspects like the absence of ideology and the prevalence of personalistic and particularized politics, it appears to be the case that these factors play an even larger role in Palau than in the other microstates. This is most clearly palpable with regard to the absence of political parties in Palau, since parties are, however personality-oriented and non-programmatic, still clearly at the basis of contestation in the three other examined cases. In addition, like in the other microstates the Palauan media and parliament are in a subordinate position in relation to the country's executive branch of government, whereas its judiciary appears to be neutral, strong, and virtually free from government influence. In table 8.7, Palau's scores on the various indicators of contestation and inclusiveness have been presented.

The key thing that sets Palau apart from the other cases is the ongoing significance of its traditional culture and the persisting authority of traditional leadership. The uneasy coexistence of indigenous traditional leadership and imported democratic institutions strongly characterizes Palauan politics, and the ongoing power struggles between chiefs and elected politicians bear witness to this. As Erica Rosenthal argues, "[s]ome elements of Palauan tradition remain strong, either coexisting or conflicting with the superimposed system, while others are adapted to or superseded by the new ways" (1996: 17). As this citation reveals, the introduction of Western institutions has not been able to supersede Palauan culture and traditions, and there are no indications that it will do so in the near future. Paradoxically, virtually all my respondents argued that the influence of non-elected chiefs actually increases the quality of Palauan democracy, and they extensively praised and cherished the role of traditional leaders in preventing for abuses of power and misconduct on the part of elected politicians. In this respect, the case of Palau underlines the tentative conclusion

that the democratic political-institutional structure as it exists in larger Western countries is largely unsuitable to the small-state social and societal context.

Table 8.7: Palau's Scoring on the Indicators of Contestation and Inclusiveness

Dimension	Section	Indicator	Classification of Palau
Contestation	Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition	Free and Fair Elections	Present
		Party System	Not applicable
		(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Hard to measure exactly, but present
		Interest Articulation by Parties	No parties, interest articulation by individual candidates minimal
		Freedom to Support the Opposition	Present, but political branding is common
	Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions	Freedom of the Press	Press free (FotP-score 14), but weak and unprofessional
		Status of the Legislature	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government
		Status of the Judiciary	Impartial, strong, and autonomous
		Status of the Bureaucracy	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage
Inclusiveness	Relations between Citizens and Politicians	Contact with and Access to Representatives	Continuous contact and access
		Nature of Contacts between Citizens and Politicians	Particularistic and personalistic
		Political Awareness and Feelings of Efficacy of Citizens	Appears to be high
	Political Participation of Citizens	Universal Suffrage	Present
		Turnout at Elections and other Plebiscites	High at both elections and referendums
		Party Membership	Not applicable; no parties
		Participation in Political Activities	No data, but appears to be high (especially in social media)

As Palauans themselves are acutely aware of, the economic and political future of the microstate is closely bound to that of the United States. Although the microstate is broadening its foreign policy objectives in the sense that it has

recently established international relations with the United Arab Emirates and is making cautious but definite apertures to mainland China, as one respondent remarked; "we live beyond our means, and the United States keeps the lights on". In this sense Palau is absolutely the least independent of the four microstates that are analyzed in this dissertation, and despite the persistence of traditional Palauan culture and leadership, democracy in Palau is safeguarded as long as the country is economically, politically, and militarily tied to the United States. Although friction between traditional and modern institutions is at the order of the day, on the basis of my interviews it paradoxically appears that through their continuing influence, non-elected leaders actually contribute to good governance and democracy in Palau.

CHAPTER NINE

The Political Effects of Size

Conclusion

1. <u>The Four Microstates: Similarities and Differences</u>

The four case study-chapters have clearly exposed the many differences between the four microstates under scrutiny. On virtually all imaginable background characteristics, large differences can be observed between the cases that were analyzed. With its impressive political history, high level of economic development, and centuries-old political institutions, San Marino is clearly a member of the Western European continent. By comparison, St. Kitts and Nevis' status as a former sugar colony run by the descendents of slaves, combined with its Westminster institutions adapted to the political culture of the Caribbean and the extreme polarization between parties and islands appears to constitute a political environment that could not be more unalike than that of San Marino. If the more authoritarian features of Seychelles, and especially Palau's system with its traditional leaders and clan-oriented political dynamics are added to this list, it therefore definitely appears to be the case that the examined microstates are 'most different' from each other.

In line with the method of agreement, the four cases under scrutiny however do score relatively similar on two key variables of this study; their small size and their democratic political structures. However, even though all four of the cases have less than 100.000 inhabitants and are classified as electoral democracies by Freedom House, also concerning these two variables there are considerable differences between them. For example, as the smallest case in the sample Palau has a population size (21.000) that is more than four times smaller than that of Seychelles (89.000), the largest of the four microstates. In similar fashion, although they can both be identified as electoral democracies, the political environment of Seychelles clearly diverges more from the democratic ideal than that of San Marino. In addition, major differences exist between the political structures of the microstates, for example with regard to parliamentary versus presidential forms of government, the role and variety of political parties, and the degree of decentralization and federalism.

In light of the numerous historical, geographical, cultural, economical, and institutional differences between the four observed countries, one would also expect to find completely divergent political dynamics and practices. However, the analysis has demonstrated that the four microstates are marked by surprisingly similar political dynamics and patterns, which in the absence of other commonalities appear to be principally understandable on the basis of their small size. In this sense, the political effects of size therefore appear to surpass those of geographical location and economic development, and the smallness of the microstates moreover appears to render institutional differences between them obsolete, since the analysis has revealed that political institutions are commonly ignored or circumvented in microstates. Since several political features have surfaced in all four microstates, and also emerge in the case study-literature on other microstates that was discussed in chapter 3, it can quite safely be assumed that smallness is at the basis of these patterns.

In this final, concluding chapter of the dissertation, the findings of the four case studies are united, summarized, and evaluated. In the following section, the research question and accompanying expectations of the study are briefly recapitulated, after which the answers and findings that have emerged from the analyses are presented. More specifically, this section aims to make some cross-case comparisons between the four microstates with regard to the characteristics of contestation and inclusiveness, which in line with the method of agreement serves to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Subsequently, in section 3 the implications of these findings for the broader academic literature on size and democracy are outlined, and attention is also paid to a number of more methodological implications. In the final two sections, the societal and scientific relevance of the findings of this study are discussed, and a number of potential options and alternatives for future research are presented.

2. Recapitulation of the Findings

The aim of the present study was to examine the effects of size on politics and democracy. In this regard, the central research question that was presented in the introduction of this dissertation was formulated as follows:

> "What are the consequences of a small population size for the nature of democratic contestation and inclusiveness?"

In order to find answers to this question, in chapters 2 and 3 the existing academic literature on the political effects of size was discussed. Whereas chapter 2 focused on the theoretical and variable-oriented literature on size, politics, and democracy, in chapter 3 attention was devoted to the more case-oriented, empirical literature on the characteristics of contestation and inclusiveness in microstates. On the basis of these two strands of literature, a number of expectations that together compose the theoretical model of this study were presented and discussed in chapter 4. These expectations accentuated the disparity between formally democratic structures and a more antidemocratic political reality that is also repeatedly observed in larger third wave-democracies. On the basis of the academic literature, it was theorized that the democracy-undermining political dynamics that plague many third wave-countries are further exacerbated by a limited population size. Regarding contestation, the primary expectations entailed that political competition is based on personalistic rather than programmatic or ideological differences, and that the executive branch of government assumes a dominant position in relation to other political and societal institutions. Concerning inclusiveness in microstates, it was expected that the proximity between citizens and politicians would primarily result in the development of particularistic role relationships, but would also generate higher levels of awareness, efficacy, and participation. In table 9.1, the expectations that were formulated as part of the theoretical model have been presented once more.

2.1. Characteristics of Contestation in the Four Microstates
On the whole, the theoretical model and accompanying expectations have been confirmed by the case study-analyses. With regard to the first sub-dimension, which measures the presence of political alternatives and a political opposition, in all four countries a tendency to personalistic instead of programmatic contestation was found, as a result of which the number of substantive, ideological, and programmatic political alternatives is inherently limited. In addition, in all four microstates a high degree of polarization between the different parties or factions was found, which suggests that personalistic competition can be more fierce than programmatic contestation, and which disconfirms the thesis of among others Katzenstein and Lijphart that small settings are characterized by increased consensus and accommodation (Lijphart 1977: 65; Katzenstein 1985: 87-94). Although two or three of the four

microstates[1] were found to have high levels of categorical homogeneity among the population, the analysis has shown that this does not generate higher levels of consensus. In all four microstates a political opposition can be identified in parliament, but in general it represents a personal rather than a substantive political or programmatic alternative.[2]

Table 9.1: Theoretical Model and Expectations of this Study

Sub-Dimension	Expectations
1: *Presence of Political Alternatives and a Political Opposition*	- Greater homogeneity of interests - Decreased number of factions and interests - Less political competition, weakened political opposition - Personalistic politics; strong person-based polarization
2: *Horizontal Balance of Power between Institutions*	- Executive dominance in relation to other institutions (parliament, media, judiciary, and civil service) - Infrequent alternation of power - Circumvention or ignorance of institutional structures
3: *Relations between Citizens and Politicians*	- Increased accessibility of politicians - Increased direct contacts and communication between citizens and politicians - Conflicts of interest due to multiple-role relations - Prevalence of clientelism, patronage, and nepotism
4: *Political Participation of Citizens*	- Increased opportunities for participation due to closeness - Equal or lower turnout levels in relation to larger states (on the basis of case study-literature) - Decreased political role for minorities and opposition

In terms of the influence of size on the presence of political alternatives and a political opposition, the findings of this study therefore indicate that whereas multiple political alternatives are unquestionably present in microstates, the appearance of political parties and partisan contestation should not automatically be interpreted as indicative of ideological contestation as it occurs in (Western) consolidated democracies. Although political parties do contest national elections in San Marino, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Seychelles, the

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[1] Seychelles is the exception, and Palau to a certain degree as well.
[2] To a certain degree Seychelles is an exception, since the opposition (SNP) here does represent an alternative in terms of the style and conduct of politics. However, since it has never been in power it is unclear to what extent this point would be realized if the SNP would be in office.

analysis has revealed that these parties essentially function as supporting vehicles of individual politicians, and that inter-partisan differences are based on personal rather than ideological variation. Whereas the number of relevant parties in these microstates varies, due to the prevalence of personalistic contestation these party-systemic differences do not have a significant influence on the nature of political contestation. In this regard, the complete absence of political parties in Palau most accurately illustrates the lack of programmatic competition in microstates.

Regarding the second sub-dimension of democracy, with the possible exception of San Marino the executive branch of government in microstates was to varying degrees found to dominate other institutions. More specifically, the lack of resources that result from smallness undermine the position of the judiciary and media, and as a result of government patronage the impartiality and autonomy of the civil service is in all four microstates affected. Furthermore, as a result of multiple-role relationships and the fact that government controls a majority of the available resources, the boundary between the private and public sector is in all microstates blurred, with conflicts of interest occurring constantly. As a result of government patronage, the public administrations of all four microstates are not only oversized and filled with government supporters and affiliates, but also largely incompetent and ineffective. Finally, the combination of executive dominance and person-oriented political competition entails that individual political leaders are often able to accumulate a large amount of power

This being said, notable differences were observed in the *extent* to which government was able to dominate other institutions in the four microstates, and *which* societal or political institutions were found to be subordinate to the executive. In this regard, only the Seychellois judiciary was found to be markedly influenced by the government, whereas the other judiciaries were largely free from government interference. Whereas a clear majority of respondents viewed the parliaments of St. Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, and Palau as inferior to the executive, this was much less clear for San Marino. In general however, with concern to the influence of smallness on the horizontal balance of power between institutions it seems fair to conclude that a clear tendency to executive dominance can be observed, which stems from the lack of (financial) resources of other institutions, and the resulting dependency of these institutions on their government. In addition, the social intimacy that results from smallness also entails that institutional boundaries often become less relevant, since public officials from different institutional backgrounds often know each other in multiple societal roles.

2.2. Characteristics of Inclusiveness in the Four Microstates

With regard to the relations between citizens and politicians, the hypothesized physical and psychological closeness, opportunities for direct and open communication, and open access to politicians were indeed corroborated. However, as expected in all four countries under scrutiny citizens tend to primarily use these opportunities to demand personal favors from their representatives, and much less so to address substantive political or public concerns. In this sense, the closeness between citizens and politicians was mainly found to stimulate the development of patron-client relationships, and as a result of constant access and the increased significance of single votes, microstate-politicians generally appear to be more susceptible to these pressures. Furthermore, the absence of programmatic or ideological contestation on the political level appears to reverberate on the societal level, which also explains the absence of a public debate on substantive political issues. If citizens interpret politics as a personalistic competition for office, it is reasonable to assume that their voting behavior is also primarily driven by personal and particularistic motivations, and this was confirmed by most respondents in all four cases.

The political effects of size can arguably be most closely observed when it comes to this particular aspect of democracy. In all four microstates, citizens and politicians were in constant direct contact and reciprocal communication, and encountered each other in numerous occasions and circumstances. Politicians from all four microstates asserted that this not only generates increased pressures to comply with the expectations of voters, but they also indicated that a disproportionate amount of their time is spent on the maintenance of these contacts, which comes at the cost of the time they have to govern their country. Furthermore, the citizens of all four microstates expressed a lack of confidence in their elected politicians and blamed them for misconduct and corruption, whereas they paradoxically did expect politicians to bestow them with favors in exchange for political support. Seeing that such circumstances were observed in all four cases under scrutiny, it can be concluded that smallness does indeed lead to increased proximity between citizens and politicians, but that the consequences of this closeness are apparently have a more negative impact on the quality of democracy than most of the academic literature assumes.

The final sub-dimension on which the four microstates were examined is the political participation of citizens. In each of the four cases this analysis was much hampered by data restrictions, which means that the conclusions are in large part based on my own impressions and the information that respondents

provided during interviews. The available data on voter turnout revealed a comparatively high level of electoral participation in all microstates except St. Kitts and Nevis, where the picture was more mixed. Whereas no data was available on membership figures of political parties, which do not even exist in the case of Palau, in all four of the microstates participation in political activities such as demonstrations, electoral campaigns, and politically-oriented social media networks appeared to be quite high. However, according to most respondents and my own observations this participation was also primarily understandable on the basis of particularistic incentives, and not so much out of public concerns.

In table 9.2 (at the end of this chapter), the scoring of all four microstates on the fifteen indicators of democracy that were presented in chapter 4 has been presented. Whereas the table confirms the many similarities between the microstates that have been discussed above, it also exposes some of the differences between the cases. These differences are especially prominent with regard to the first sub-dimension, which captures the nature of political contestation. For example, whereas San Marino and St. Kitts and Nevis were found to have categorically homogenous populations, this does not apply to Seychelles and Palau. Furthermore, although alternation in office as a result of elections occurs frequently in San Marino and Palau, it occurs only rarely in St. Kitts and Nevis, and has until now never happened in Seychelles. Finally, it can be observed that whereas political parties are completely absent in Palau, there are mostly two of them in St. Kitts and Nevis and Seychelles, and more than five in San Marino. However, it can clearly be seen that these differences between the microstates are mostly institutional in nature, and the effective number of parties can for example in large part be explained on the basis of these microstates' respective electoral systems. With regard to the more informal nature of politics and contestation, political institutions do not seem to be very significant, and the microstates are clearly more similar in this respect.

In line with the method of agreement (or most different systems design) that this study employed, the similar political dynamics in the four microstates can not be explained by another factor than their size, because the microstates have been selected with the purpose to ensure variation on all other potential explanatory variables. As a result, these political dynamics can neither be explained by the level of economic development, the political and colonial history, the political-institutional structure, or the geographical location of the microstates, nor by their own individual idiosyncrasies. As a consequence, it is highly plausible that these findings are exclusively caused by size, and that

similar findings would be observed in other microstates. This means that the results of this study can be incorporated into a general and universally valid theory on the political effects of smallness, which would presumably be extendable and generalizable to all other microstates in the world. This suggestion is confirmed by the case study-literature that was discussed in chapter 3, in which similar findings emerged.

3. Implications of the Findings for the Debate on Size and Democracy

The findings of this chapter have a number of significant implications for the more general academic debate on size and democracy. In a way, the results of this study offer a path to bridge the apparent gap between the statistical correlation between size and democracy on the one hand, and the more pessimistic theories on democratic development in small states on the other. By emphasizing the disparity between formally democratic structures and a more antidemocratic political reality, it also becomes clear why scholars have until now not found a convincing explanation of the prevalence of democracy in microstates, and in my opinion the further pursuit of such an explanation is fruitless and doomed to fail. By contrast, it appears more useful to compare microstates with (other) new democracies, in which scholars have found a comparable fusion between democratic structures and antidemocratic practices (cf. O'Donnell 1994, 1996; Carothers 2002; Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002). In publications on the politics of many Latin American, Eastern European, African, and Asian democracies, more or less similar political patterns appear to surface as in the microstates that were examined in this study.

On the other hand, it can also be ascertained that their smallness does have a significant impact on microstate-politics, which in this sense renders microstates different from larger third wave-countries. The analyses in the case study-chapters have clearly revealed how size leads to a personalistic instead of ideological competition, and how the absence of resources that results from smallness generates executive dominance in these countries. In addition, these analyses have also shown how smallness creates a society characterized by intimacy and multiple-role relations, which in turn stimulates conflicts of interest, the circumvention or disregard of political institutions, and various forms of particularism. Therefore, it can unquestionably be asserted that size is at the root of most of the political dynamics that have been discussed in the case study-chapters. This contention is also supported by the fact that more or less similar political dynamics were observed in San Marino, which is certainly no

new democracy. The case-oriented literature discussed in chapter 3 has revealed that these patterns can also be observed in the other European microstates of Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Monaco.

As Jefferson and Mill have argued, in larger settings democracy is only possible in the form of representation, since direct, participatory democracy requires a limited population size. However, on the basis of the observations of the present study, this line of argument can be reversed for the contemporary small states. Whereas all small states now basically employ the type of representative institutions that were initially designed for larger settings, but have been either imposed or adopted from former colonial powers, it has become clear that such institutions often decrease the quality of politics and democracy in microstates. Therefore, the question can be posed to what extent representative democracy is appropriate for small states, and whether more direct and participatory forms of decision-making cannot be deemed more practicable. As other scholars have argued, Westminster institutions essentially exacerbate the democracy-undermining features of Caribbean politics, which this study has clearly confirmed for the case of St. Kitts and Nevis. In similar fashion, the federal, bicameral, and presidential institutions that Palau has copied from the United States primarily appear to decrease the quality and efficiency of politics in this microstate.

If it can be concluded that microstates are characterized by a discrepancy between formal and informal political features, the question why microstates have adopted and maintained democratic political structures remains relevant. As the case-study analyses have demonstrated, the likelihood that the prevalence and persistence of these institutions is a *direct* product of their smallness is quite small. For example, whereas several authors have assumed that the popular homogeneity of microstates can explain their democratic structures, the analyses have shown that microstates are often not really homogenous in the first place, and that the fierce personalistic competition in microstates can actually be perceived to impede on democratic development. Instead therefore, it is more plausible to assume that democratic institutions are an effect of variables with which size has been found to overlap. On the basis of the case studies, the factors of colonial history, geographical location, and international politics appear to offer the most convincing explanations in this regard. However, the significance of these variables has also been found to differ for the various microstates.

Whereas colonial history cannot explain San Marino's contemporary democratic structures, regional and diffusion effects appear to play a key role in the maintenance of democracy in this European microstate. Being completely

surrounded by Italy, and in a state of constant dependence on this larger neighbor, at several times in the Sammarinese political history the Italians have had a major influence on the composition and nature of Sammarinese politics. By contrast, the survival of democratic structures in St. Kitts and Nevis seems primarily explainable on the basis of the country's lengthy colonization and socialization in Westminster political institutions, the microstate's geographical location in the US-dominated Caribbean basin, and its military, economic, and political dependence on this larger superpower. Whereas it is clear that the international environment of Seychelles is less democracy-stimulating, this country also maintains close links with Western (European) democracies, which have played a crucial role in the archipelago's return to multiparty-democracy in 1993. For Palau, finally, the enduring American influence through the Compact of Free Association, and the strategic importance of the Pacific region and Micronesia to the United States in general appear to provide a strong incentive to continuing democratic government.

If the conclusions and implications of this study are amalgamated, it can be observed that this dissertation clearly concurs with earlier studies by Burton Benedict (1967b), Paul Sutton (1987, 2007a), Donald Peters (1992) and Charles Farrugia (1993). In line with these publications, this research has found smallness to principally result in a number of democracy-obstructing features, although the current study pays more attention to the convergence of these practices with democratic institutions. By contrast, the outcomes of this study are to a certain extent in conflict with some of the theories that have been put forward by not only the classic philosophers, but more recently by Dag Anckar (2002b) and Dana Ott (2000). Together with scholars like Katzenstein and Lijphart, Anckar and Ott have interpreted attitudinal homogeneity in microstates as an indication of more consensus-oriented and accommodative politics. However, the present study shows that homogeneity does not limit competition, but rather takes it to another level, which is personalistic and individual rather than programmatic and ideological. With regard to the greater degree of homogeneity and decreased number of political factions in smaller settings, the findings of this research are therefore basically in line with Madison's contention that democracy benefits from a greater number of political groups with diverging interests.

The greatest contribution of this study to the literature however, is probably its novel methodological approach. Whereas earlier studies generally 1) were primarily theoretical in nature, 2) existed of quantitative statistical analysis with no convincing explanations of the correlations, or 3) focused on

only one or a few microstate-cases without devoting further attention to the political effects of size, the current study is the first qualitative, comparative assessment of the political effects of smallness in microstates around the globe. Furthermore, due to the most similar systems design that this study has employed, the findings of this study appear to be extendable to other microstates around the globe as well, as a result of which they can be considered to be universally valid and applicable. Finally, it must be emphasized that the qualitative within-case analysis based on semi-structured interviews has strongly facilitated the observation and interpretation of less formal, more practical political dynamics, which would not have been discernible if the study was limited to an examination of formal political institutions.

As a final point, the results of this study also have implications for scholars who exclusively rely on aggregate indices of democracy such as Freedom House. As this study has demonstrated, as a result of such indices' bias towards formal aspects of democracy, the informal and practical features of politics are mostly not captured in their rankings, and therefore remain essentially concealed. Furthermore, whereas Freedom House does not allocate the most favorable scores of democracy to most larger third wave-countries, its categorization of St. Kitts and Nevis as an optimal democracy is at least somewhat questionable. This also applies to the European microstates of Liechtenstein and Monaco, which despite the obvious and strong political influence of non-elected monarchs are still classified as full-fledged democracies.[3] In any case, scholars should realize that potential errors in these large-N databases and indices are automatically reproduced in their own analyses if these scores are not triangulated or substantiated on the basis of other sources.

4. Societal and Scientific Relevance of the Findings

In the introduction of this dissertation, the societal and scientific relevance of this study was shortly discussed. Specifically, the inherent scientific value of studying a hitherto strongly under-researched group of cases was highlighted, as well as the aim of this study to find out why smaller states are inclined to have democratic forms of government. From a more societal perspective, the relevance of this study with regard to the increasingly significant political and

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[3] As mentioned before, the position of the Liechtensteiner and Monegasque Princes is comparable to that of the monarchs of Jordan and Morocco (which are mostly classified as semi-constitutional monarchies). Whereas Freedom House points to the strong political influence of these monarchs in justifying the partially free status of these countries, Liechtenstein and Monaco are not treated in the same way.

public debate on the merits of further decentralization and devolution was stressed. Now that the analysis is finished and the results of this research are clear, the implications of this study for these points can indeed be reasserted. One of the central recommendations that follow from this study is that the virtual exclusion of microstates from comparative politics is regrettable and unwarranted, and that much information is lost by studying microstates with an exclusively quantitative and statistical approach. Since the present study has revealed that informal, practical political dynamics are much more informative and illustrative of microstate-politics than their formal institutional frameworks, it would be decidedly regrettable if future studies on small state-politics remain restricted to statistical and quantitative analyses.

Both in academia and in politics, discussions about the merits of decentralization and subsidiarity have become fashionable in recent decades. In particular, decentralization has been hailed as the cure for the perceived growing 'gap' between citizens and politicians and the increasing disenchantment and detachment from politics among voters in larger (Western) democracies. In an attempt to bring politics closer to the people, various countries have now transferred powers from the national government to sub-national jurisdictions such as federal states, regions, provinces, or municipalities, and in other countries an ongoing debate about political devolution is being held. This discussion is mirrored in academia, and various scholars have called for the increased decentralization of powers (cf. Diamond and Tsalik 1999; Weldon 2006). According to Diamond and Tsalik, who refer to the predominance of democracy in microstates in explaining their support for decentralization, "[o]nly if political power over certain issuers and government functions is devolved to lower levels of authority that are democratically elected can government be truly responsive, representative, and accountable" (1999: 159).

The results of this study indicate that the organization of politics on a small scale does not only have advantages. It is of course questionable to what extent local governments can be compared to microstates, but it can certainly be hypothesized that smaller, sub-national administrations are also marked by closer relations between citizens and politicians, more personalistic forms of competition, and a greater incidence of conflicts of interest. However, since sub-national units are often controlled by and accountable to national governments, and because the number of their tasks and competences is – even if increasing – still more limited than that of microstate-governments, factors like particularism and corruption can possibly be expected to play a lesser role in decentralized units than in microstates. Still however, the view that decentralization can cure

the ills of modern representative democracy is widespread, and the present study suggests that this is not always as unequivocally and universally accurate as many scholars and politicians believe.

The findings of this study are especially significant with regard to the debate about the quality of representation in smaller settings. The proximity between politicians and citizens in smaller polities has often been supposed to create better circumstances and opportunities for responsiveness and representation, and this study has indeed found that politicians and citizens of microstates are in constant and direct contact with each other. However, in contrast to Rousseau's theories, in general the electorate of microstates has not been found to exhibit greater levels of attachment to the public good or substantive political interest. In combination with the general absence of ideological competition in politics, representation primarily assumes the character of particularism and constituency service (cf. Ashworth and Bueno de Mesquita 2006). In this sense, smallness therefore does not necessarily result in a higher quality of interest representation.

The greatest scientific relevance of this dissertation however, relates to its conclusions about the association between size and democracy. Whereas many scholars have pondered about explanations for the statistical correlation between these two variables, this study suggests that there is nothing intrinsically about size that produces a democratic political system, and that size actually creates a social and political environment that can in many ways be perceived to obstruct democratic development. At the same time, the prevalence and survival of democratic political institutions in microstates can be explained by factors with which size often (though not necessarily) co-varies, such as colonial history and international vulnerability and dependence. In any case, as with the contemporary optimism about the effects of decentralization on democratic performance, this study suggests that the overtly positive attitude of many scholars with regard to the incidence of democracy in microstates is often a little misplaced.

5. Avenues for Future Research

Although this study has aimed partially alleviate the lack of scholarly knowledge, as of yet microstates remain structurally under-researched cases in comparative political science. Mostly without convincing motivations, large-N comparative studies continue to exclude microstates, as a result of which the extent to which their size renders microstate-politics different from that of larger states remains

largely unclear. It actually often appears to be the case that scholars are unconscious about their exclusion of microstates, since most studies do not even devote attention to explaining the omission of these cases. As a first recommendation, I would therefore advice scholars of comparative politics to be aware of their general exclusion of microstates and its negative repercussions, and to clearly explain their choice to ban microstates from their analyses. Furthermore, if a choice is made to keep out microstates, in my opinion scholars should also explain and justify their threshold of exclusion, i.e. why countries below a certain size are less interesting cases of study than those that rank above this cut-off point.

By applying the scope condition of UN-membership, the present study examines the effects of size on politics by focusing exclusively on nation-states. As mentioned before, in several earlier publications their status as independent and sovereign states was deemed to have a significant influence on microstate-politics, for example because many microstates have been found to exchange their vote in international organizations for material benefits (in accordance with the international patron-client model; cf. Carney 1989). Since further research on this issue is however lacking, the degree to which a sovereign status makes a difference is as of yet unclear. In this regard, the question can be posed whether the political dynamics of non-independent small (island) jurisdictions in the Caribbean (e.g. Guadeloupe, Martinique, the Caymans, or Curacao) and the Pacific (e.g. the Pitcairn Islands, Wallis and Futuna, the Northern Marianas, or French Polynesia) are comparable to those of the independent microstates in this region. Although various case studies on these non-sovereign islands indicate that this is indeed the case, no broader comparative research on this issue has to my knowledge ever been conducted.

In addition to non-independent overseas territories of larger states, a comparison could also be made between microstates and similar-sized municipalities of larger countries. On the question of whether sub-national units and small nation states can be compared, Dana Ott argues that:

> "Perhaps the greatest difference between small states and politically decentralized larger states is the question of mobility. It could be argued that the increased opportunity for mobility within a politically decentralized and larger state might prevent the formation of a social environment similar to that in small states" (Ott 2000: 208).

Indeed, it can be questioned whether the intimate social relationships and multiple-role relationships that characterize the societies of microstates would be mimicked in municipalities or other decentralized units. Since municipal

boundaries do not to a similar degree block the opportunities of citizens to move outside of their municipality and establish social relations elsewhere as in (island) microstates, the extent to which such settings are marked by comparable political characteristics is indeed questionable.[4] In my opinion, this constitutes a puzzle that could very well be addressed in future studies.

The current study was organized along the lines of the method of agreement, or the most different systems design. In accordance with this approach, four cases were selected that scored relatively similar on the two variables of interest (size and democracy), whereas they ranked as dissimilar as possible on all other imaginable variables. On this basis, the similar political patterns that were observed across the four cases can most plausibly be attributed to their shared smallness. An alternative approach to studying the effects of size on politics, however, would be to create a focused comparison between at least one large and at least one small state along the lines of the method of difference (or most similar systems design). A possible example would be to compare Italy and San Marino, which differ a great deal in size but are otherwise similar on most (if not all) other background variables. Similar pairs of countries that can be compared in this way are Liechtenstein and Switzerland, France and Monaco, Jamaica or Trinidad and St. Kitts and Nevis, Madagascar or Mauritius and Seychelles, and Fiji or Papua New Guinea and Palau.

As the average size of countries around the globe continues to decrease, and in both larger and smaller countries a clear tendency towards decentralization and devolution of powers is observable, research on the political effects of size remains relevant and warranted. As this study demonstrates, such analyses should not be limited to the examination of formal structures and institutions, since the significance of size can generally not be observed in the character of institutional structures, but is particularly visible in more informal and practical political traditions, patterns, and dynamics. In my opinion, future studies should therefore devote more attention to precisely these non-institutional features of smaller settings that are caused by size. Since the informal political dynamics of larger countries have captured the attention of scholars for some time now, it is to be hoped that a similar development will occur in the field of small state research.

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[4] On the other hand, as a landlocked microstate the inhabitants of San Marino do have ample opportunities to visit Italy and meet with Italians, and in my experience they also do this constantly. Still however, the Sammarinese society was to a similar degree as other (island) microstates of this study characterized by intimacy and multiple-role relations.

Table 9.2: Scoring of the Four Microstates on the Indicators of Democracy

	San Marino	St. Kitts and Nevis	Seychelles	Palau
Free and Fair Elections	Present	Present, with minor limitations	Disputed; governing party has significant advantages	Present
Party System	Multiparty-system (ENP >5)	Two-party system on each island (ENP around 2)	Two-party system (ENP < 2); opposition virtually absent after 2011-elections	Not applicable
(Frequency of) Alternation in Office	Regularly	Sporadically	Never by peaceful means	Hard to measure exactly, but present
Interest Articulation by Parties	Does occur in manifestoes but voting behavior and political dynamics are person-oriented	Barely; parties primarily denounce the opposition	Does occur to some extent in manifestoes, but political dynamics are person-oriented	No parties, interest articulation by individual candidates minimal
Freedom to Support the Opposition	Present, but political branding is common	Has major negative consequences; victimization	Has major negative consequences; victimization and climate of fear hinders supporters of the opposition	Present, but political branding is common
Freedom of the Press	Press free (FotP-score 17), but weak and unprofessional	Press free (FotP-score 20), but weak, polarized, and unprofessional	Press partially free (FotP-score 56), weak and unprofessional	Press free (FotP-score 14), but weak and unprofessional
Status of the Legislature	Not really clear; different opinions among respondents	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government	Largely ineffective, not autonomous from government

Status of the Judiciary	Impartial, but concerns about appointment procedures of judges; most judges foreigners	Impartial but sometimes pressured; mostly ECSC-judges	Not impartial, often pressured by government	Impartial, strong, and autonomous
Status of the Bureaucracy	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage	Oversized, ineffective, and influenced by government due to patronage	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage	Oversized and influenced by government due to patronage
Contact with and Access to Representatives	Continuous contact and access	Continuous contact and access	Continuous contact and access	Continuous contact and access
Nature of Contact between Citizens and Politicians	Particularistic and personalistic	Particularistic and personalistic	Particularistic and personalistic	Particularistic and personalistic
Political Awareness and Feelings of Efficacy of Citizens	No data, but appears to be high	No data, but appears to be high	No data, but appears to be high	No data, but appears to be high
Universal Suffrage	Present	Present	Present	Present
Turnout at Elections and other Plebiscites	(Very) high at elections, mixed at referendums	Mixed (between 60 and 80%)	(Very) high at elections	High at both elections and referendums
Party Membership	No data available	No data available	No data available	Not applicable; no parties
Participation in Political Activities	No data, but according to respondents seems to be high	No data, but appears to be high	No data, but especially high in Parti Lepep-activities	No data, but appears to be high (especially in social media)

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Appendix A: List of Interviews

San Marino:

Beccari, Marco (17 November 2010, Domagnano, San Marino) Secretary General of the Confederazione Democratica Lavoratori Sammarinese (CDLS), Trade Union

Chiaruzzi, Giorgio (10 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Director of the Organizzazione Sammarinese degli Imprenditori (OSLA), Entrepreneurs' Organization

Ciavatta, Valeria (5 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Secretary of State for Internal Affairs; former Captain Regent; Member of the Alleanza Popolare (AP; Liberal Party)

Felici, Claudio (10 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Leader of the Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici (PSD; Social-Democratic Party) in the Great and General Council

Ghiotti, Massimo (11 November 2010, Fiorina di Domagnano, San Marino) Director-General of the Camera di Commercio della Repubblica di San Marino (Chamber of Commerce)

Giorgetti, Roberto (12 November 2010, Borgo Maggiore, San Marino) Party Leader of the Alleanza Popolare (AP; Liberal Party) in the Great and General Council; former Captain Regent

Michelotti, Francesca (10 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Consigliere (MP) for Sinistra Unita (SU; New-Left Socialist Party) in the Great and General Council; Member of the Consiglio dei Dodici (Council of Twelve); Manager of the State Museums of San Marino

Michelotti, Simona (11 November 2010, Fiorina di Domagnano, San Marino) Managing Director of Gruppo Stampa Imballagi Trasparenti (Gruppo SIT); One of the Leading Enterprises of San Marino; President of the Administrative Council of the Chamber of Commerce

Morganti, Francesco (10 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino), Staff Member of the Organizzazione Sammarinese degli Imprenditori (OSLA), Entrepreneurs' Organization

Morganti, Giuseppe Maria (9 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Consigliere (MP) for the Partito dei Socialisti e dei Democratici (PSD; Social-Democratic Party) in the Great and General Council; Journalist for the Daily Newspaper La Tribuna Sammarinese; former Captain Regent

Morri, Romeo (19 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Secretary of State for Education, Culture, and the University; former Captain Regent; former Leader of the Partito Democratico Cristiano Sammarinese (PDCS; Christian-Democratic Party); Now Affiliated with the Unione dei Moderati (Right-Wing Party)

Muccioli, Stiven (15 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino) Journalist for Notizie di San Marino – Libertas, Online Newspaper; Author of Several Publications on Sammarinese Politics and Media

Oddone, David (17 November 2010, Borgo Maggiore, San Marino) Journalist for the Daily Newspaper l'Informazione di San Marino

Rattini, Maurizio (16 November 2010, Borgo Maggiore, San Marino), Party Leader of the Nuovo Partito Socialista (NPS; Social-Democratic Party) in the Great and General Council; former Captain Regent

Rondelli, Paolo (4 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino), Ambassador of San Marino to the United States; Representative of San Marino at the Congrès des Pouvoirs Locaux et Régionaux d'Europe (CPLRE)

Rossi, Laura (18 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino), Professor in Sammarinese History; Master of the State Library

Zani, Jeffrey (9 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino), Journalist for the Daily Newspaper La Tribuna Sammarinese

Zavoli, Luca (15 November 2010, Città di San Marino, San Marino), Journalist for Notizie di San Marino – Libertas, Online Newspaper

St. Kitts and Nevis:

Astaphan, Hon. G.A. Dwyer (10 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Former Minister of National Security of St. Kitts and Nevis, Resigned in 2008 and Now a Strong Critic of the Labour Government

Brantley, Hon. Mark A.G. (19 January 2011, Charlestown, Nevis), Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of St. Kitts and Nevis for the Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM)

Condor, Hon. Sam T. (28 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of St. Kitts and Nevis

Conway, Stanford (11 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Editor in Chief of St. Kitts and Nevis Vibes (SKNVibes), Online Newspaper (www.sknvibes.com)

Grant, Hon. Lindsay F.P. (12 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Leader of the People's Action Movement (PAM), Opposition Party of St. Kitts

Gumbs, Walford V. (17 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Ombudsman of St. Kitts and Nevis; former Speaker in the National Assembly of St. Kitts and Nevis for the Labour Party

Harris, Hon. Timothy S., PhD (14 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Minister of Agriculture, Lands, and Housing of St. Kitts and Nevis for the Labour Party, Author of Several Publications on Kittitian-Nevisian Politics and History

Inniss, Sir Probyn Ellsworth (17 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Former Governor-General of St. Kitts and Nevis (1975-1981), Author of Several Publications on Kittitian-Nevisian Politics and History

Richardson, Howard (18 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Executive Officer of the St. Kitts and Nevis Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Seaton, S.W. Tapley, QC (12 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Former Attorney-General of St. Kitts and Nevis; President of St. Christopher's National Trust; President of the OECS Bar Association

Sebastian, Sir Cuthbert Montraville, GCMG, OBE (20 January 2011, Basseterre, St. Kitts), Governor-General of St. Kitts and Nevis (since 1995)

Warner, Dr. Asyll (12 January 2011, Basseterre, St Kitts), Lecturer in Political Science at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus

Williams, Kenneth (10 January 2011, Charlestown, Nevis), Editor in Chief of the St. Kitts and Nevis Observer

Seychelles:

Adam, Hon. Jean-Paul (17 February 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Seychelles for the Parti Lepep

Egonda-Ntende, Hon. Mr. Frederick M.S. (1 March 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Chief Justice of Seychelles, former Chair of the Law Reporting Committee of Uganda

Gay, Rita J. (2 March 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Journalist at the Seychelles Nation (Newspaper)

Hollanda, Ivan N. (2 March 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Journalist at the Seychelles Nation (Newspaper)

Lucas, Hon. Wilby LLB (4 March 2011, Île Perseverance, Seychelles), Deputy-Speaker at the National Assembly of Seychelles, Elected as MP for the Parti Lepep in the District of Baie Lazare

Mondon, Hon. Macsuzy (18 February 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), Minister of Education, Employment, and Human Resources of Seychelles for the Parti Lepep

Morgan, Hon. Joel (17 February 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Minister of Home Affairs, Environment, and Transport of Seychelles for the Parti Lepep

Payet, Dr. Rolph, FRGS (4 March 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Seychelles; Special Advisor to the President of Seychelles

Ramkalawan, Hon. Wavel (18 February 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), Leader of the Seychelles National Party (SNP); former Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of Seychelles; former Editor in Chief of Regar (Newspaper)

Sabino, Mr. Divino (1 March 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Attorney-at-Law; Secretary of the Bar Association of Seychelles; Part-Time Lecturer at the University of Seychelles; former State Counsel at the Attorney-General's Chambers

Sinon, Hon. Peter (1 March 2011, Victoria, Seychelles), Minister for Investment, Natural Resources, and Industry of Seychelles for the Parti Lepep

Volcere, Ralph (22 February 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), Leader and former Presidential Candidate for the New Democratic Party (NDP); Editor in Chief of Le Nouveau Seychelles (Newspaper)

Zatte, Dora (3 March 2011, Mont-Fleuri, Seychelles), Ombudsman of Seychelles; Attorney-at-Law and Barrister-at-Law; former Advisor to the Seychelles People's Defense Forces; former Board Member of the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC)

Palau:

Asanuma, Santy (5 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Former Senator in the Olbiil Era Kelulau; Guest Editor of Tia Belau (Newspaper)

Bedor, Roman, *Ngirakebou* (12 July 2011, Meyungs, Palau), High Chief of Ngchesar State; Member of the Palau Council of Chiefs; Attorney-at-Law; former Palauan Activist during the 1980s and 1990s COFA-Negotiations with the United States

Chin, Hon. Elias Camsek (19 July 2011, Ngerulmud, Palau), Senator in the Olbiil Era Kelulau; former Vice-President of Palau (2005 – 2009); Presidential Candidate in the 2008 Election

Dengokl, Yukiwo P., *Ngiraked* (9 July 2011, Koror, Palau), High Chief of Airai State; Member of the Palau Council of Chiefs; Attorney-at-Law

Gibbons, Jennifer K. (6 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Executive Director of the Palau Chamber of Commerce

Gibbons, Yutaka M., *Ibedul* (13 July 2011, Koror, Palau), High Chief of the Republic of Palau and Koror State; Chairman of the Palau Council of Chiefs; CEO of Gibbons Enterprises; former Presidential Candidate

Kesolei, Hon. Katherine (18 July 2011, Ngerulmud, Palau), Vice-President of the Senate in the Olbiil Era Kelulau; Member of Palau's Women Association Mesechil Belau

Kesolei, Ongerung Kambes (6 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Chairman of the Palau International Coral Reef Center; Columnist of Tia Belau (Newspaper)

Mariur, Hon. Kerai (12 July 2011, Ngerulmud, Palau), Vice-President of the Republic of Palau; former Member of the House of Delegates in the Olbiil Era Kelulau (1992 – 2008)

Ngiraklsong, Mr. Arthur (5 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Chief Justice of the Republic of Palau

Pierantozzi, Sandra Sumang (11 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Former Vice-President of the Republic of Palau (2001 – 2005); Former Minister of Finance, Health, and Foreign Affairs; former Senator in the Olbiil Era Kelulau

Rehuher-Marugg, Faustina K. (11 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs of the Republic of Palau; former Director of the Belau National Museum

Shih-chang Huang, Bill (7 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the Republic of Palau

Tellei, Dr. Patrick U. (7 July 2011, Koror, Palau), President of the Palau Community College

Toribiong, Hon. Johnson (14 July 2011, Melekeok, Palau), President of the Republic of Palau; former High Chief (*Ngiraked*) of Airai State

Uludong, Moses Y. (6 July 2011, Koror, Palau), Chief Editor and Publisher of Tia Belau; former Senator in the Olbiil Era Kelulau; former Ombudsman of the Republic of Palau

Appendix B: Question Lists for the Interviews

San Marino

1. San Marino is comparatively a very small country. It is generally believed that politics and democracy in small countries are of a different nature than in other, larger countries. What would you see as some of the typical characteristics of Sammarinese politics?

2. You are a (*Profession*). What is the influence of the smallness of San Marino on the way you do your own profession?

3. In a small country like San Marino, it is likely that citizens and politicians know each other relatively well, and form a cohesive community. Do you think that this has an influence on Sammarinese politics?

4. San Marino is a parliamentary democracy, with a government that is accountable to parliament. How would you describe the relations between the government and the parliament of San Marino, and relations between the government and the opposition?

5. According to your experience and opinion, how are the relations between government and institutions such as the judiciary, the media, the bureaucracy, local governments, and interest groups?

6. San Marino has a parliament (the *Consiglio Grande e Generale*) in which many political parties are represented. Could you tell me something about the differences between these parties in terms of ideology or policy proposals?

7. Since San Marino is an autonomous society, it is likely that there is a distinctive Sammarinese identity, which might be shaped by certain traditions and conventions. Can you tell me something about the factors that define Sammarinese identity?

8. For a small country such as San Marino, relations with other countries and international institutions are likely to be very important. Can you tell me something about the significance of these external relations?

9. Are there issues about Sammarinese politics and the Sammarinese political system that we have not yet discussed, and that you would like to talk about?

St. Kitts and Nevis

1.   St. Kitts and Nevis is comparatively a very small country. It is generally believed that politics and democracy in small countries are of a different nature than in other, larger countries. What would you see as some of the typical characteristics of the politics of St. Kitts and Nevis?

2.   You are a (*Profession*). What is the influence of the smallness of St. Kitts and Nevis on the way you do your own profession?

3.   In a small country like St. Kitts and Nevis, it is likely that citizens and politicians know each other relatively well, and form a cohesive community. Do you think that this has an influence on the politics of St. Kitts and Nevis?

4.   St. Kitts and Nevis is a parliamentary democracy, with a government that is accountable to parliament. How would you describe the relations between the government and the parliament of St. Kitts and Nevis, and relations between the government and the opposition?

5.   According to your experience and opinion, how are the relations between government and institutions such as the judiciary, the media, the bureaucracy, local governments, and interest groups?

6.   St. Kitts and Nevis is a federation that consists of two separate states. In your view, what is the effect of the federal nature of St. Kitts and Nevis on the way politics is conducted in the country?

7.   St. Kitts and Nevis has a parliament (the National Assembly) in which several political parties are represented. Could you tell me something about the differences between these parties in terms of ideology or policy proposals?

8.   Since St. Kitts and Nevis is an autonomous society, it is likely that the people here have a distinctive identity, which might be shaped by certain traditions and conventions. Can you tell me something about the factors that define identity of the people from St. Kitts and Nevis? Do you think that there is a difference between the identity of the people from St. Kitts and the people from Nevis?

9.   For a small country such as St. Kitts and Nevis, relations with other countries and international institutions are likely to be very important. Can you tell me something about the significance of these external relations?

10.   Are there issues about the politics and the political system of St. Kitts and Nevis that we have not yet discussed, and that you would like to talk about?

Seychelles

1. Seychelles is comparatively a very small country. It is generally believed that the constitutional and legal organization of small countries are of a different nature than in other, larger countries. What would you see as some of the typical characteristics of the Republic of Seychelles in this respect?

2. You are a (*Profession*). What is the influence of the smallness of Seychelles on the way you do your own profession?

3. In a small country like Seychelles, it is likely that people know each other relatively well, and form a cohesive community. Do you think that this has an influence on the judiciary of Seychelles?

4. According to your experience and opinion, how are the relations between government and the judiciary of Seychelles?

5. In the past, Seychelles has been a colony of both France and the United Kingdom. Regarding the Seychellois constitutional and legal framework, which of these two colonial legacies would you say has had the greatest impact?

6. According to your experience and opinion, how are the relations between the judiciary and the media of Seychelles?

7. Since Seychelles is an autonomous society, it is likely that the people here have a distinctive identity, which might be shaped by certain traditions and conventions. Can you tell me something about the factors that define the identity of the Seychellois people?

8. For a small country such as Seychelles, relations with other countries and international institutions are likely to be very important. Can you tell me something about the significance of these external relations?

9. Are there issues about the politics and the legal and constitutional system of Seychelles that we have not yet discussed, and that you would like to talk about?

Palau

1.	Palau is comparatively a very small country. It is generally believed that politics and democracy in small countries are of a different nature than in other, larger countries. What would you see as some of the typical characteristics of Palauan politics?

2.	In a small country like Palau, it is likely that citizens and politicians know each other relatively well, and form a cohesive community. Do you think that this has an influence on the politics of Palau?

3.	Palau is a presidential democracy, with a separation of powers between government and parliament. How would you describe the relations between the government and the parliament of Palau, and relations between the government and the opposition?

4.	According to your experience and opinion, how are the relations between government and institutions such as the judiciary, the media, the bureaucracy, local governments, and interest groups?

5.	Palau has a bicameral parliament (the *Olbiil Era Kelulau*) in which no formal political parties are represented. Could you tell me something about the influence of the absence of parties on Palauan democracy?

6.	Since Palau is an autonomous society, it is likely that the people here have a distinctive identity, which might be shaped by certain traditions and conventions. Can you tell me something about the factors that define the identity of the Palauan people?

7.	For a small country such as Palau, relations with other countries and international institutions are likely to be very important. Can you tell me something about the influence of external relations on Palauan politics?

8.	In addition to elected politicians, in Palau traditional leadership also plays an important role in society. According to your experience, how is the relation between traditional and "modern" politics and politicians?

9.	Are there issues about the politics and the political system of Palau that we have not yet discussed, and that you would like to talk about?

NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

Politiek en Democratie in Microstaten

Een Vergelijkende Analyse van de Effecten van Bevolkingsgrootte op Competitie en Inclusiviteit

Uit enkele recente academische publicaties blijkt dat kleine staten significant vaker een democratisch politiek systeem hebben dan grotere staten. Doordat kleine staten echter grotendeels uitgesloten worden van vergelijkend politiek onderzoek, is weinig bekend over de oorzaken van het verband tussen bevolkingsgrootte en democratie. Er bestaat sinds de geschriften van Plato en Aristoteles een levendig debat over de effecten van kleinschaligheid op politiek en democratie, maar veel van de veronderstellingen die in dit debat naar voren komen zijn nooit empirisch getoetst aan de werkelijkheid. Aan de hand van de onderzoeksvraag wat de gevolgen van een kleine bevolkingsomvang zijn voor democratische competitie en inclusiviteit, biedt deze dissertatie door een kwalitatief vergelijkend onderzoek op basis van vier microstaten een empirische test van de reeds bestaande theorieën. Op basis van de resultaten van dit onderzoek kunnen antwoorden gevonden worden op de vraag waarom kleine staten statistisch gezien vaker een democratisch politiek systeem hebben.

De bestaande academische literatuur over de politieke consequenties van kleinschaligheid wordt gekenmerkt door een tweespalt. Van de Klassieke Oudheid tot de 18e eeuw werd een geringe bevolkingsomvang over het algemeen gezien als een voordeel voor de kwaliteit en het liberale karakter van het bestuur. Plato en Aristoteles merkten op dat kleinere bestuurseenheden gekenmerkt worden door een grotere sociale cohesie, omdat de geringe afstand tussen burgers leidt tot meer en intensiever persoonlijk contact. De Verlichtingsfilosofen Montesquieu en Rousseau voegden hieraan toe dat de burgers van kleinere samenlevingen over het algemeen groter belang hechten aan de publieke zaak, omdat zij constant direct contact hebben met hun gezagsdragers. Bovendien argumenteerde Rousseau dat burgers in een kleinere maatschappij relatief meer politieke invloed kunnen uitoefenen, waardoor de kans op een liberaal of republikeins bestuur hier groter is dan in meer omvangrijke bestuurseenheden. De opkomst van het nationalisme en de daarmee gepaard gaande eenwording van respectievelijk Italië en Duitsland

zorgden echter voor een verschuiving in het denken over kleinschaligheid, dat vanaf de 18ᵉ eeuw juist meestal als een nadeel voor goed bestuur wordt gezien.

De Amerikaanse Revolutie en het ontstaan van de Verenigde Staten demonstreerden dat liberaal en republikeins bestuur ook mogelijk is in zeer grote staten. De Amerikaanse *Founding Fathers* Madison en Jefferson weerspraken dan ook de door Montesquieu en Rousseau veronderstelde voordelen van kleinschaligheid, door te stellen dat democratie juist gebaat is bij variëteit en verscheidenheid in groepen en belangen. Volgens Madison bestaat in een kleine, homogene en sociaal vervlochten samenleving een groter gevaar dat één groep erin slaagt om de andere groepen te dominerend dan in grotere samenlevingen. Aan de andere kant argumenteren meer moderne wetenschappers als Katzenstein en Lijphart dat homogeniteit onder de bevolking juist een positieve invloed op democratische ontwikkeling heeft, omdat de politiek van kleinere staten hierdoor meer in het teken komt te staan van de bereidwilligheid om compromissen te sluiten en consensus te bereiken. In de gerenommeerde bundel *Size and Democracy* van Robert Dahl en Edward Tufte worden enkele van deze veronderstellingen empirisch onderzocht, maar wordt er weinig bewijs gevonden voor de veronderstelde causale verbanden.

Over het algemeen oordelen naoorlogse publicaties over de politieke gevolgen van een kleine bevolkingsomvang negatief over de kansen op democratische ontwikkeling in kleine staten. In verschillende studies wordt gesteld dat kleinschaligheid leidt tot personalistische en polariserende vormen van politieke competitie, particularistische relaties tussen kiezers en gekozenen, overvloedige dominantie van de uitvoerende macht ten opzichte van andere instituties, en een gemarginaliseerde rol voor de politieke oppositie en haar aanhangers. Bovendien zou de grote sociale en maatschappelijke verwevenheid ertoe leiden dat formele politieke instituties en rollen genegeerd of omzeild worden, en zouden de overlappende sociale en maatschappelijke rollen die burgers van kleinere staten vervullen leiden tot belangenconflicten en corruptie. Vanaf de jaren '70 is als gevolg van dekolonisatie het aantal (zeer) kleine staten wereldwijd sterk gegroeid, en uit *case studies* waarin deze landen worden geanalyseerd lijken deze laatste theorieën grotendeels geverifieerd te worden.

De in dit onderzoek centraal staande concepten - bevolkingsgrootte en democratie - kunnen op meerdere manieren geoperationaliseerd worden. In deze dissertatie worden alle lidstaten van de Verenigde Naties met minder dan 250.000 inwoners geclassificeerd als microstaten, wat resulteert in een groep van 21 analyseerbare staten. Op basis van Dahl's klassieke conceptualisatie van democratie aan de hand van de twee dimensies van *competitie* en *inclusiviteit*,

wordt democratie in deze dissertatie gedefinieerd als een systeem waarin competitie plaatsvindt voor belangrijke publieke en politieke functies, en waarin geen grote groepen van deelname aan deze competitie zijn uitgesloten. Het karakter en de kwaliteit van democratie worden onderzocht aan de hand van vier subdimensies, te weten 1) de aanwezigheid van politieke alternatieven en oppositie, 2) de horizontale machtsbalans tussen instituties, 3) de relaties tussen burgers en politici en 4) de politieke participatie van burgers. Voor elk van deze dimensies is een aantal indicatoren opgesteld die leidend zijn bij het onderzoek.

Gezien het feit dat kwantitatieve analyses tot op heden niet geresulteerd hebben in een breed gedragen verklaring van het gevonden verband tussen bevolkingsgrootte en democratie, is in deze dissertatie gekozen voor een kwalitatieve, vergelijkende onderzoeksmethode op basis van case studies van vier microstaten. In elk van deze microstaten is tussen november 2010 en juli 2011 een maand veldonderzoek verricht. Vanwege het beperkte aantal eerdere publicaties en het gebrek aan beschikbare data, is bij dit onderzoek gekozen voor semigestructureerde diepte-interviews met respondenten uit verschillende sectoren van de maatschappij. In elk van de vier geanalyseerde microstaten zijn tussen de tien en twintig interviews afgenomen, en de kwaliteit van deze data is gecontroleerd door middel van triangulatie met krantenartikelen, officiële documenten en beschikbare wetenschappelijke literatuur.

Bij de selectie van de te onderzoeken microstaten zijn de criteria van John Stuart Mill's methode van verschil (of *most similar systems design*) leidend geweest. Op basis hiervan is gekozen voor vier casussen die een zo groot mogelijke overeenkomst vertonen op de in dit onderzoek centraal staande onafhankelijke variabele (bevolkingsgrootte), terwijl zij zoveel mogelijk verschillen wat betreft andere mogelijke verklarende variabelen, zoals geografische locatie, economische ontwikkeling, politieke en koloniale geschiedenis, cultuur, en politiek systeem. Aangezien de 21 microstaten geclusterd zijn in vier continenten, is uit elk van deze wereldregio's een casus geselecteerd. Uiteindelijk is aan de hand van deze criteria voor San Marino gekozen in Europa, voor St. Kitts and Nevis in het Caribisch gebied, voor de Seychellen in Afrika, en voor Palau in Oceanië. De afzonderlijke vier hoofdstukken waarin de politieke systemen van de geselecteerde microstaten worden geanalyseerd hebben allen een gemeenschappelijke opbouw. Na een korte beschrijving van de politieke geschiedenis van elke microstaat volgt in elk hoofdstuk een bespreking van een aantal mogelijke verklaringen voor het democratisch gehalte van het bestuur. Vervolgens wordt een korte beschrijving van de politiek-institutionele structuur van elke microstaat gegeven, waarna een

uitgebreide presentatie volgt van de resultaten van het veldonderzoek. Ten slotte worden in elk hoofdstuk in een conclusie de onderzoeksresultaten samengevat.

In hoofdstuk vijf tot en met negen worden achtereenvolgens de resultaten van veldonderzoek in elk van de vier microstaten gepresenteerd. Als de naar eigen zeggen oudste republiek ter wereld, kent San Marino een lange traditie van democratisch bestuur. Al in de Middeleeuwen werd deze microstaat bestuurd door een raad waarin alle familiehoofden van het land vertegenwoordigd waren (de *Arengo*). Tijdens meer oligarchische periodes en bovenal tijdens het fascistische regime (1926 – 1944) kende San Marino ook soms een minder democratisch bestuur, maar na de Tweede Wereldoorlog werd deze microstaat het enige West-Europese land waarin democratisch gekozen communisten (tussen 1945 en 1957) deel uitmaakten van de regering. Na de Koude Oorlog fragmenteerde het Sanmarinese partijstelsel, waardoor er momenteel twaalf partijen vertegenwoordigd zijn in de *Consiglio Grande e Generale*. San Marino's locatie in het hart van Italië en Europa vormt de belangrijkste verklaring voor het democratische gehalte van de microstaat, maar het politiek systeem bestaat uit een aantal unieke (en premoderne) instituties, waarvan het diarchische staatshoofdschap van de *Capitani Reggenti* het belangrijkste voorbeeld is. Het parlement van San Marino telt zestig leden, wat met een bevolkingsgrootte van 30.000 betekent dat elk parlementslid ongeveer 500 burgers vertegenwoordigd – het kleinste aantal ter wereld.

Hoewel het politieke systeem van San Marino zonder twijfel als democratisch getypeerd kan worden, zorgt de beperkte bevolkingsomvang voor een aantal opmerkelijke politieke patronen. Respondenten uit San Marino gaven aan dat er bijvoorbeeld weinig tot geen inhoudelijke politieke verschillen tussen de politieke partijen van het land bestaan, die eigenlijk verhullen dat politieke competitie in essentie personalistisch van aard is. Daarnaast zorgt het gebrek aan professionele journalisten en het feit dat sommige journalisten hun baan combineren met een politieke functie ervoor dat de media van San Marino niet op een effectieve manier haar controlefunctie kunnen uitoefenen. Wat betreft de relaties tussen kiezers en hun vertegenwoordigers kan opgemerkt worden dat burgers weliswaar veel contact hebben met gezagsdragers, maar dat dit voornamelijk een stimulerende werking heeft op cliëntelistische relaties. Bovendien zorgt patronage in de publieke sector ervoor dat het ambtenarenapparaat van San Marino niet alleen relatief groot is, maar ook soms partijdig en onprofessioneel opereert. Volgens de meeste respondenten kan dit particularisme ook grotendeels de hoge politieke participatiegraad van Sanmarinese burgers verklaren.

De Federatie van St. Kitts and Nevis is de jongste en met ongeveer 50.000 inwoners ook de kleinste onafhankelijke staat van het Westelijk Halfrond. Na meer dan 300 jaar bestuurd te zijn geweest als Britse suikerkolonie werd deze voornamelijk door afstammelingen van Afrikaanse slaven bewoonde eilandstaat in 1983 onafhankelijk. Net als andere voormalig Britse eilandstaten in de regio bleef na onafhankelijkheid het *Westminster*-politieke systeem van St. Kitts and Nevis vrijwel volledig intact, met een Gouverneur-generaal als plaatsvervanger van de Britse vorst. Volgens verschillende auteurs heeft de eeuwenlange blootstelling aan het democratische *Westminster*-systeem bijgedragen aan het democratische karakter van de Caribische regio, maar andere auteurs beargumenteren dat de traditionele invloed die de Verenigde Staten in de regio uitoefenen de belangrijkste waarborg is voor het overleven van de democratie.

In tegenstelling tot andere eilandstaten in de regio is St. Kitts and Nevis een federatie die bestaat uit twee constituerende staten (St. Kitts en Nevis), die een historisch antagonistische verhouding met elkaar hebben. De afzonderlijke eilanden binnen de federatie hebben elk hun eigen sfeer van politieke competitie, waardoor er op elk eiland een tweepartijsysteem bestaat en er vier partijen in het federale parlement van St. Kitts and Nevis vertegenwoordigd zijn. Vrijwel alle respondenten gaven aan dat de verschillen tussen deze partijen voornamelijk persoonlijk van aard zijn. In tegenstelling tot de veronderstellingen van Katzenstein en Lijphart blijkt politieke competitie op St. Kitts and Nevis ongekend fel en polariserend van aard te zijn, en verschillende respondenten beschreven dit in termen van politiek tribalisme. Omdat door de kleinschaligheid politieke affiliaties breed bekend zijn, weten politici precies welke burgers zij tot hun aanhangers kunnen rekenen, en worden supporters van de oppositie in de regel getreiterd of geïntimideerd. Wat betreft de machtsbalans tussen instituties wezen interviews uit dat de media en het parlement van St. Kitts and Nevis grotendeels ineffectief en zwak zijn, terwijl de rechterlijke macht redelijk onafhankelijk functioneert. Relaties tussen kiezers en gekozen staan ook in deze microstaat voornamelijk in het teken van cliëntelisme en patronage, en ook hier leidt dit tot een partijdige en inefficiënte bureaucratie en een sterke onderlinge verwevenheid van de publieke en private sector.

In tegenstelling tot San Marino en St. Kitts and Nevis, worden de Seychellen door verschillende bronnen niet als een volledige democratie beschouwd. Met ongeveer 90.000 inwoners is deze in de Indische Oceaan gelegen archipel de kleinste staat van Afrika. De Seychellen maakten tot 1811 deel uit van het Franse Rijk, en kwamen daarna officieel onder Brits bestuur maar werden hoofdzakelijk bestuurd door voormalig Franse kolonisten (de

zogenaamde *Grand Blancs*). Binnen een jaar na onafhankelijkheid vond in deze archipel een staatsgreep plaats, waardoor het land tussen 1977 en 1993 een Marxistische eenpartijstaat was. Hoewel het einde van de Koude Oorlog een terugkeer naar meerpartijendemocratie inluidde heeft de socialistische partij sindsdien alle verkiezingen gewonnen, waardoor zij inmiddels meer dan 35 jaar onafgebroken aan de macht is. Het Seychelse politieke systeem kent elementen van zowel de voormalig Franse als voormalig Britse kolonisator, maar na de herinvoering van de meerpartijendemocratie in 1993 is de microstaat een presidentiële republiek geworden.

Het veldonderzoek in de Seychellen bevestigt dat er behoorlijk wat aan te merken valt op het democratische karakter van deze eilandstaat. Zowel respondenten als eerdere publicaties en rapporten geven aan dat verkiezingen in de Seychellen niet compleet eerlijk verlopen, dat er geen duidelijke scheiding is tussen de staat en de regeringspartij, en dat de rechterlijke macht, media, bureaucratie en het parlement niet autonoom van de regering (kunnen) functioneren. Wat betreft de invloed van kleinschaligheid op het Seychelse politieke systeem kunnen grotendeels dezelfde politieke patronen worden geïdentificeerd als in de andere microstaten, maar de dominantie van de regeringspartij zorgt ervoor dat problemen rond particularisme, polarisatie tussen regering en oppositie, en de relatieve zwakte van non-gouvernementele instituties hier nog prangender zijn dan in de andere microstaten. Hoewel politieke oppositie sinds 1993 is toegestaan, heeft de voornaamste oppositiepartij uit frustratie niet deelgenomen aan de meest recente parlementsverkiezingen. In combinatie met de overvloedige invloed van de politiek op het privéleven van burgers, zorgt het ontbreken van democratische machtswisseling er bovendien voor dat aanhangers van de Seychelse oppositie een structureel gemarginaliseerde rol spelen in de maatschappij.

De meest bijzondere casus is waarschijnlijk Palau, dat sinds 1885 vier verschillende koloniale bestuurders heeft gekend, maar waar het kolonialisme er nooit in is geslaagd om de eeuwenoude lokale cultuur te verdrijven. Het systeem van rivaliserende clans en traditioneel leiderschap (in de vorm van zogenaamde *chiefs*) vormt naast het Amerikaans georiënteerde democratische systeem een geheel eigen politieke structuur, en traditionele leiders hebben hier samen met democratisch gekozen volksvertegenwoordigers een grote rol in het landsbestuur. Daarnaast is Palau één van de weinige democratieën in de wereld die zonder politieke partijen functioneert, en is deze minuscule eilandstaat een federatie die naar Amerikaans voorbeeld is opgedeeld in niet minder dan zestien federale staten. Met ongeveer 20.000 inwoners is Palau de op twee na kleinste

onafhankelijke staat ter wereld, en de overweldigende economische afhankelijkheid van de Verenigde Staten speelt een belangrijke rol in de handhaving van Westerse democratische instituties, die vaak op gespannen voet staan met het lokale systeem van traditioneel leiderschap.

De afwezigheid van politieke partijen zorgt ervoor dat politiek in Palau inherent personalistisch van aard is. Interviews wijzen echter uit dat kandidaten vrijwel niet op ideologische of programmatische gronden van elkaar te onderscheiden zijn, en geïnterviewde politici konden bijvoorbeeld niet aangeven of zij zichzelf als links of rechts, of als progressief of conservatief beschouwden. Hoewel traditionele leiders niet democratisch gekozen worden gaven vrijwel alle respondenten aan dat zij een belangrijke bijdrage leveren aan de kwaliteit van de Palause democratie, doordat zij in tegenstelling tot het parlement en de media wel in staat blijken om de uitvoerende macht te controleren. Omdat het geven van aalmoezen onderdeel is van de traditionele cultuur van Palau, is particularisme hier niet alleen wijdverspreid maar ook grotendeels gelegitimeerd. Door een sterke onafhankelijke rechterlijke macht en de waarborgfunctie van *chiefs* lijken de democratie-ondermijnende effecten van kleinschaligheid in Palau voor minder grote problemen te zorgen dan in St. Kitts and Nevis en de Seychellen.

Het veldonderzoek in de vier geanalyseerde microstaten laat zien dat deze landen in weerwil van alle historische, culturele, en institutionele verschillen allemaal te maken hebben met de politieke effecten van een geringe bevolkingsomvang. Hoewel kleinschaligheid zeker wat betreft inclusiviteit en betrokkenheid van burgers een positief effect heeft op de kwaliteit van democratie, blijkt uit de vier landenstudies dat de politieke patronen die door meer pessimistische wetenschappers werden verondersteld toch grotendeels aanwezig zijn. Elk van de vier landen heeft in meer of mindere mate te kampen met personalistische politiek, polarisatie, particularisme, en overvloedige dominantie van de uitvoerende macht. Dit betekent dat het lastig is om een directe verklaring van het democratische karakter van microstaten te vinden aan de hand van hun bevolkingsgrootte, en wat dit betreft lijkt democratie eerder een bijproduct te zijn van aan kleinschaligheid gerelateerde geografische, historische, en internationaal-politieke factoren. Bovendien laat deze dissertatie zien dat er kanttekeningen te plaatsen zijn bij het huidige enthousiasme over decentralisatie en subsidiariteit in zowel de wetenschap als het bredere publieke en politieke debat, omdat kleinschaligheid zeker als het gaat om het karakter van politieke competitie ook een aantal belangrijke nadelige implicaties kan hebben.

Curriculum Vitae

Wouter Veenendaal (1986, Amsterdam) attended pre-university education at College 't Loo in Voorburg, the Netherlands. He obtained his bachelor degree in political science at Leiden University in 2007, and his research master's degree *cum laude* at the same university in 2009. In the meantime, he worked as a staff member of the Dutch Electoral Council (*Kiesraad*) in advance to the Dutch European Parliament election of 2009, and as a teaching assistant at the Institute of Political Science. Between 2009 and 2012, he was employed as a PhD-researcher at the same Institute, and since 2012 he has been working here as a Lecturer in Political Science. His research has been published in *the Journal of Comparative Politics* and *The Round Table*, and he has presented his work at several international conferences, including the ECPR General Conference and the ECPR Joint Sessions.