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**Coding Professions in Research with Political Elites: a  
Methodological and a Typological Discussion**

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## **Coding Professions in Research with Political Elites: a Methodological and a Typological Discussion**

### **Abstract**

This paper discusses the methodology for the definition, classification, and measurement of social positions of the parliamentary political elite. We present some theoretical and methodological strategies for classifying the variable “occupation held prior to political career”, and suggest the use of more than one indicator for this measurement. We argue that a typology of both social and political characteristics of parliament members is the best way to grasp the transformations on the patterns of political recruitment throughout the 20th century. The first model we tested classified Brazilian senators elected between 1918 and 2010 among occupations conventionally used in studies on political elites. The second applied model seeks to change the coding of occupations so as to grasp this group's sociopolitical transformations over time. We conclude with a new classification suggestion, which results from a typology sensitive to the varying values ascribed to professional occupations throughout history.

**Keywords:** political recruitment; political class; professional occupations; Brazilian Senators

## Coding Professions in Research with Political Elites: a Methodological and a Typological Discussion

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At first glance, the social history of the Brazilian political class contradicts the trend seen in Western democracies. In these one could witness the gradual and progressive replacement of the dilettante and the notable (the one in a superior position within the social hierarchy and to whom politics was a secondary occupation and State positions played more of an honorific role than an executive one) for the figure of the *professional politician* (Weber 1994; Phélippeau 2001; Best & Cotta 2000a). In Brazil's case the path was not quite as straightforward.

Take, for example, the case of the Upper House<sup>1</sup> members. By taking two indicators as references, a) *professional occupation prior to the parliamentary activity* and b) *extension of the political / partisan career*, the majority of the available studies noted that, over time, Brazilian senators increasingly tended to be recruited not from the class of professional politicians, but from the world of private businesses. These senators today have less extensive and less structured careers than the elected representatives in the First Republic (1889-1930)<sup>2</sup>. That is to say, the end of the military dictatorship (1985), the enactment of a new constitution (1988), the regularization of presidential elections (1989, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014), the bureaucratization of party work, the institutionalization of parliamentary routines, the increase in the electorate and political competition, the specialization of campaigns, etc., would not have demanded (or produced) a “professionalization” of political agents. In fact, it was quite the opposite. As for the federal congressmen, Marengo dos Santos revealed that at the end of the XX century there were more *outsiders* in the Lower House than experienced politicians (Marengo dos Santos

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<sup>1</sup> Legislative Power in Brazil, on a federal level, is carried out by the House of Deputies and by the Federal Senate. Together, both houses comprise the National Congress. The House of Deputies represents voters individually. As for the Federal Senate, it represents the federative states and the Federal District, home to the country's capital, Brasília. Brazilian Senators are elected by a majority vote in a single shift. The electoral district is the state.

<sup>2</sup> Perissinotto & Costa (2013) analyzed the trajectory of Brazilian senators between 1918 and 1937. Taking as parameters the 1918-1930 period, the average career time varied from 25.5 to 30 years before reaching the Federal Senate. The average number of offices held until reaching the senator chair increase from 7.7 in 1918 to 9 in 1930. Silva has shown that in 1990, for example, 35.5% of senators had under 8 years of political career (Silva 2010, p.49).

1997), and such was the reality for the different federation states and even for the congressmen profiles across all political parties (Marenco dos Santos 2005)<sup>3</sup>.

Evidences points towards the occurrence, at the early stages of the republican regime, of a high level of *expertise* from Brazilian congressmen and a high rate of politicians originating from typically liberal professions, such as lawyers (Perissinotto & Costa 2013)<sup>4</sup>. During the third and fourth quartiles of the XX century there is a decline of political experience in the Brazilian Senate together with an increase in individuals coming from technical professions, such as accountants, engineers, economists<sup>5</sup>. After the transition from military dictatorship to democracy (1974-1985) and the consolidation of the new political regime, Brazilian senators then began to be recruited mainly among businessmen, with a sharp decline of State employees (Costa & Codato 2013, p.114; Costa et al. 2014; Araújo 2011; Neiva & Izumi 2012b, p.10)<sup>6</sup>.

Two different explanations as to what is happening with the Brazilian political class may be mentioned at this point: either Brazil is an atypical case for a “deprofessionalization” of the political class (short careers, political novitiate, lateral recruitment, a decrease in the amount of delegates from more traditional liberal professions); or the findings in this study reflect a distorted image, the result of an inadequate categorization and erroneous measurement of social attributes and career profiles of Brazilian politicians over time. For that reason, one question must be asked: are these conflicting perceptions functions of reality or fruit of the observers’ predispositions?

Our hypothesis is that this is a problem regarding analysis parameters. Conventional measures that only retain the *last profession practiced before entering a political career* – the usual approach in elite studies – yield a poor understanding of the representatives’ social profile. This holds particularly true if the criterion is applied over an extended period of time. This is a fundamental methodological problem in our study field and the entire discussion regarding the principles that rule political stratification need to clearly address this issue.

The objective of this paper is to test a model that could correlate the social dimension (socio-professional attributes) with the political dimension (career attributes) to explain, in a contextual manner, the professionalization of politics. We expect, therefore, to propose an alternative path for analyzing long-term changes in the parliamentarians’ profiles in Brazil.

We hereby analyzed Brazilian senators elected between 1918 and 2010. The database for this experiment gathers information on 939 individuals elected for 820 terms from 1918 (31<sup>st</sup> legislature) and 2010 (53<sup>rd</sup> legislature)<sup>7</sup>. The observational unit is the

<sup>3</sup> In 1990, nothing less than 58% of Brazilian federal congressmen were in their first term. In 1994, only 9.6% of representatives had a career of over 15 years in politics (Marenco dos Santos 1997), shown in Table 1 and Chart 1.

<sup>4</sup> See Table 1 ahead.

<sup>5</sup> In the interval between 1945 and 1965 the Federal Senate had 2.4% representatives originating from these new professions against 20.8% of lawyers. In the early 1980s that quota had already jumped to 13% (Codato et al. 2013). For more on the rise of Economics and Engineering graduates from 1987 until 2007 and its distribution among parties left and right, see (Neiva & Izumi 2012a).

<sup>6</sup> Costa and Codato show that in 1990 there were no less than 39% of “businessmen” in Brazil’s Senate and that until 2010 this number was never below ¼ of the House (Costa & Codato 2013).

<sup>7</sup> During Brazil’s First Republic (1889-1930) three senators were elected to the Federal District for a nine year mandate. New elections took place every three years in which one third of the senate was renewed. The election was by a majority system, with the top three voted statewide being elected. The second republican Constitution of 1934 determined that each state and the Federal District would elect two senators for an eight

individual biographies and the analytical unit is the mandate terms. Therefore, each database entry refers to the career of the individual who occupied that mandate so as to register, among other things, the increase in career time of the same individual when he is reelected.

The paper is divided in three parts.

In the first part sought to demonstrate how conventional classifications based on descriptive criteria may not be the most appropriate to comprehend the changes in the social profile of a political elite over time.

In the second part we suggest an alternative typology for addressing the issue of classifying profession within Political Science studies on elites.

The third part tests our model to verify its consistency and ability to capture the transformations within the Brazilian senatorial elite over the course of nearly a century.

## I. Conventional classifications: a descriptive typology

A quite common way of classifying occupations in studies on parliamentary elites is the one used by the *EurElite* Project (Best & Cotta 2000b).

Since the mid-1980s the *EurElite* Project has gathered a network of researchers interested in investigating political recruitment patterns by examining the social background and career pattern of individuals elected to national parliaments in 11 European democracies<sup>8</sup>. *EurElite*'s objective was the historical comparison of tendencies within the European parliamentary elite profile from 1848 until 1999. The main problematic was in how to gather information on so many years of parliamentary history from several countries, each with its unique trajectories. Besides the difficulty in collecting such information, there was also the necessity of operationalizing it into a manageable database, that is, one able to express with some clarity the interdependence between changes within the social structure and transformations in parliamentary representation over the course of 150 years. This meant producing generalizations based on the effects that the extension of suffrage, the emergence of mass parties, the new means of communication, and the crisis regarding the Nation-State had on parliamentary representation on a supranational level.

The solution adopted was the *DataCube*. Its function was to homogenize within a database a set of identical indicators (or equivalents) that would encompass the analyzed countries. The *DataCube* is no more than a representation of the data matrix, capable of organizing the information mass produced by two dozen researchers in just three dimensions. The first dimension covers the set of countries or party families which parliamentarians belong; the second dimension is time, while the third one concerns the set of variables mobilized in the research. Thereby, the information from each measured variable could be crossed by country or party over time. The variables contain data on the parliamentarians' social background, information concerning their education level, prior occupation, age when they came into office, but above all it collects data their political

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year term. The 1946 Constitution increased the number of senators to three per state while maintaining the same mandate period. This rule was confirmed by the 167 and 1988 Constitutions. Currently each state and the Federal District elect three senators for an eight year term. This representation is renewed every four years, alternately by one and two thirds.

<sup>8</sup> Denmark, Germany, Italy, Holland, Norway, United Kingdom, France, Austria, Spain, Portugal and Finland.

career the prior to the exercise of their mandate, including local jobs and positions, party leadership positions, rate of parliamentary renewal, etc.<sup>9</sup>.

With the *DataCube*, the *EurElite* Project was able to circumvent a major difficulty: data dispersion. From that point onwards it was then possible to refine the understanding of the interrelationship between social changes and changes in each country's structure of political opportunities towards a greater democratization of opportunities. As expected, a major variance was verified in how the located indicators behaved over the course of 11 years.

Nevertheless, when one adopts a more general point of view, that is, by observing the results in longer temporal series, it becomes possible to compare the peculiarities of national cases with regular changes in the social configuration of the parliamentary board during the course of four major periods. The first period runs from 1848 until the 1880s, when European parliamentarians displayed a social profile very close to the *ancien régime* aristocrats (they have an extremely high educational level when compared to the rest of the population and are landowners). They are the "dignitaries". The second period encompasses roughly four decades (1880 until 1920) and is a time of change within the political elite. Nobility bonds cease to be a prerequisite for arriving to parliament and within this period the old rural aristocracy gradually leaves the scene with an increase in the group of "semi-professional" political representatives: lawyers. However, this is a very gradual process since the parliamentary renewal rate in most elections remains under 40% (Cotta & Best 2000, p.512). The third period goes from 1920 until the 1960s and this is the era of mass democracy. From the 1920s onwards the parliamentary elite renewal process becomes clearer. The recruitment becomes more representative of the social structure with the arrival of newcomers from the working class. The percentage of blue-collar-worker parliamentarians increases in all countries and it is in this period that activism and participation in major partisan and union organizations becomes a precondition for a successful parliamentary career. It is the time for "party employees". Eventually, from the 1970s onwards the social configuration of the European elites converges towards a sort of "middle class". One that possesses a medium/high education level, arrives into parliament circa aged 40, has significant political life experience and usually lives from the political profession. They are the "professional politicians."

Chart 1. Legislators typology – *EurElite* Project

1848-1880	1920-1960
<b>dignitary</b>	<b>party employee</b>
1880-1920	1970-...
<b>semiprofessional politician</b>	<b>professional politician</b>

Source: adapted from (Cotta & Best 2000, p.524)

The story of the transformation of the parliamentary representation profile may be told from four key indicators: *i*) level and type of education (diploma); *ii*) belongingness to the nobility; *iii*) economic sector of origin (primary, secondary, etc.); and *iv*) professional or

<sup>9</sup> A detailed description of the 53 variables can be found in the Appendix to Chapter 1 (Best & Cotta 2000a, pp.23–26).

social background. The last variable was deemed a social position indicator at the time of debut in a political career. According to the model suggested by the *EurElite Project* (Best & Cotta 2000b, pp.25–26), the 15 occupations taken into account were as follow:

### Social Background Indicators

1. Noblemen legislators
2. Teachers/Professors
3. Journalists and other writers
4. Full-time, paid political party (or trade union) employees
5. Civil servants (Higher administrative-level, excluded military, judges, professors, and clergymen)
6. Public sector employees (All levels paid by public institutions)
7. Military persons, all levels
8. Priests, all clergymen
9. Lawyers, practicing
10. Judges, Prosecutors
11. Primary sector, agriculture, fishermen
12. Blue-collar workers, industrial sector
13. Managers, 'businessmen'
14. Professions other than the law
15. Small independent craftsmen and merchants (Best & Cotta 2000a, pp.25–26)

We based ourselves on this classification of occupations and applied two tests to our database to investigate their analytical performance. We included an additional variable, "professional politician", i.e., an individual who has never practiced any effective occupation outside of politics. This variable was absent from the original model but is vital due to the particularities of our population.

Table 1 – Distribution of Brazilian senators over decades according to the profession practiced before the beginning of a political career (%)

	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1. Noblemen legislators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Teachers/Professors	-	1,5	5,7	11,9	5,3	7,9	9,7	13,6	17,8
3. Journalists and other writers	7,2	8,8	5,7	5,1	12,3	7,9	12,5	7,3	7,4
4. Political party/trade union employees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Civil servants	-	-	-	-	1,8	-	-	-	0,7
6. Public sector employees	1,3	5,9	4,3	1,7	3,5	2,2	6,9	5,5	7,4
7. Military persons, all levels	11,1	2,9	15,7	11,9	12,3	6,7	4,2	1,8	2,2
8. Priests, all clergymen	-	-	1,4	1,7	1,8	-	1,4	-	1,5
9. Lawyers, practicing	39,9	36,8	24,3	22	24,6	23,6	16,7	15,5	8,9
10. Judges, Prosecutors	7,8	4,4	12,9	6,8	-	2,2	2,8	0,9	2,2
11. Primary sector, agriculture	1,3	-	8,6	5,1	5,3	2,2	4,2	3,6	3,7
12. Blue-collar workers	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,4	2,7	3
13. Managers, 'businessmen'	1,3	5,9	7,1	10,2	5,3	13,5	11,1	20	13,3
14. Professions other than the law	28,8	27,9	14,3	23,7	24,6	27	23,6	18,2	20,7
16. "Professional politician"	1,3	5,9	-	-	3,5	6,7	5,6	10,9	11,1

TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
99. Missing	1,9	2,9	-	-	-	-	-	0,9	0,7

Source: NUSP/UFPR; The observatory of social and political elites of Brazil <http://observatory-elites.org/>

Occupations were defined from the *EuroElite Project*.  
N mandates= 813 (7 missing).

The most obvious obstacle here is the data dispersion due to the high number of occupations considered. This, however, is the least of troubles. The variable “Professions other than the law”, a kind of residual variable, has very high values in our case. This is because it encompasses professions that have traditionally provided many politicians in Brazil, such as the medical professions (an average of 11.77% within the considered period). Moreover, the aggregation of a plethora of liberal professions under a single label hides for example “engineers” and “economists”, being unable to document the entrance rate from more technical and less traditional crafts into the national political class. The recurrence of ‘Lawyers’ throughout the whole series (an average of 23.5%), the constant presence of “Journalists and other writers,” the vigorous appearance of businessmen (urban and rural) in more recent legislatures could lead us to conclude, based on the conventional classification, that there is an excessive closure of the political market to new occupations and new qualifications. Therein resides the difficulty in this aggregation of occupations being able to grasp, for the Brazilian case, the confluence between modernization (of society), democratization (of the political market) and professionalization (of political agents). The most significant presence of professional politicians from the 1990s onwards can only be documented thanks to its inclusion in the set of variables since it was not envisaged in the original list. 11% of politicians among Senators in the past two decades could even be an underreported value due to the difficulty of obtaining accurate information from sources. In any case, it is a number greater than, for example, “Lawyers” (9% in the 2000s decade).

But there is another set of problems not regarding the empirical inadequacy of the variables to our universe, but instead, methodological obstacles.

Despite the analytical advantages of descriptive categories for shorter time diagnostics, such conventional classifications provide a special obstacle for diachronic analyses. This difficulty in grasping large temporal changes is due to, among other things, *i*) the omission from the descriptive classification concerning the political weight of each profession in each historical moment (certain professions in certain periods are true incubators for political vocations (Offerlé 1999, p.10), but not always) and *ii*) the relational prestige of each occupation towards another. This is because of the change in *status* of a certain occupation in a given social space. For example: from this descriptive classification we could be led to consider that “Journalists and other writers” would have the same social importance in the 1920s and in the 2010s. To be a journalist at end of the Old Republic (an eventual writer, publicist or even editor for a partisan paper) meant something completely different, and much more valued, than being a radio broadcaster TV host in our current democracy. The same reasoning applies to pastors and priests, landowners, and so on<sup>10</sup>. However, the descriptive categorization of the *EuroElite Project* would lead us to conclude in the direction of similarities rather than differences among professions of origin in different

<sup>10</sup> Barman and Barman drew attention to affluence of Law graduates in Brazil after 1850 and its negative impact on the recruitment process of the national political class. If a few decades before graduating in Coimbra meant a greater likelihood of entering the closed circle of the elite, with the relative “democratization” of the diploma the recruitment for political positions became more selective and public sector jobs came to rely more on family ties and influence networks (Barman & Barman 1976, p.444).



chronological periods. This picture may then be a superficial smudge (from a sociological point of view) as to who these individuals are in different historical moments.

Even the “Lawyer” category, an omnipresent social type in Western parliaments and whose characterization could be peaceful at first, cannot be taken in an anti-historical manner. Dezalay and Garth underlined the deep transformation this professional underwent in the XX century. In Brazil and in other important Latin American countries, the gentleman politician of the law gave way to the technocrat-specialist-globalized-lawyer (Dezalay & Garth 2002, pp.18–21). Within the Brazilian parliament is the “lawyer” from the 1950s the same “lawyer” from the 2000 decade? To further complicate matters, this diachronic variation also requires that the aggregation of professional categories must be contextualized by considering parameters which, for most situations, are not identical among different countries or different regional configurations.

Let us see how *EuroElite Project’s* classification for professions behaves in the case of individuals elected to the Brazilian Federal Senate between 1918 and 2010 if we divide this interval into 4 different political periods (and thus introducing, if not a *historical context*, at least a tangible temporal reference). This precaution is necessary since between 1920 and 2010, Brazil had three coups d’état (1930, 1945, 1964) five constitutions (1934, 1937, 1946, 1967 and 1988), two different party systems – *multi-party system* between 1889 and 1937 (with the parties being mainly regional) and between 1945-1965 and 1980 until today (with national parties) and *bipartisanship* between 1965 to 1980 (during the military dictatorship) – and an interval with no political parties or elections (1937-1945). Institutional ruptures and the constant changes in the rules that define the political game had effects on the process of selecting political leaders.

In our timeline, the first period goes from 1918 to 1937, that is, from the height of the oligarchic politics until the coup d’état, which in 1937 abolished all political parties, closed down the legislative houses and parliamentary mandate terms. The second period, from 1945-1962, encompasses an important cycle in Brazilian politics: the “populist” democracy, which ends with the 1964 military coup. The third period ranges from the military dictatorship until the liberalization of authoritarian control over the political system (1964-1982). Lastly, the fourth period is from 1982 until 2010 and spans the final period for political transition, the consolidation of liberal democracy in Brazil until the current regime. The contingency coefficient in Table 2 indicates the average association between *EuroElite Project’s* classification categories and the periods established by us. The standardized residues and the difference between the expected values and the ones found.

Table 2 – Distribution of Brazilian senators by political period according to profession practiced before the start of a political career. Percentages (%) and standardized residuals (SR)

	I		II		III		IV	
	First Republic (1918/1937)		Populist Democracy (1945/1962)		Military Dictatorship (1966/1982)		New Democracy (1986/2010)	
	%	SR	%	SR	%	SR	%	SR
1. Noblemen legislators	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
2. Teachers/Professors	0,4	<b>(-4,1)</b>	8,3	0	6,9	(-0,5)	14,9	<b>3,9</b>
3. Journalists and other writers	7,5	(-0,2)	7,1	(-0,4)	10	(-0,8)	7,8	(-0,1)
4. Political party/trade union employees	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
5. Civil servants	-	(-0,7)	0,6	0,9	-	(-0,6)	0,3	0,3
6. Public sector employees	2,7	(-1,2)	3	(-0,8)	3,1	(-0,7)	6,8	2,1

7. Military persons, all levels	8,4	0,8	13,1	2,9	8,5	0,6	2,0	(-3,3)
8. Priests, all clergymen	-	(-1,3)	1,8	1,6	-	(-1)	1	0,6
9. Lawyers, practicing	38,1	4,5	24,4	0,3	20,8	-0,6	12,8	(-3,8)
10. Judges, Prosecutors	6,6	1,6	7,7	2,1	1,5	(-1,6)	2	(-1,9)
11. Primary sector, agriculture	0,9	(-2,1)	6,5	2,2	2,3	(-0,7)	4,1	0,6
12. Blue-collar workers	-	(-1,5)	-	(-1,3)	-	(-1,1)	2,7	3
13. Managers, 'businessmen'	2,7	(-3,4)	7,7	(-0,8)	12,3	0,9	15,2	3
14. Professions other than the law	27,9	1,5	19	(-1,1)	27,7	1,1	19,9	(-1,2)
16. "Professional politician"	2,7	(-1,8)	0,6	(-2,7)	6,9	0,7	9,8	3,2
99. Missing	2,2	2,2	-	(-1,2)	-	(-1,1)	0,7	(-0,3)

Source: NUSP/UFRP; The observatory of social and political elites of Brazil <http://observatory-elites.org/>

Contingency coefficient = 0,440 (sig=0,000)

Occupations were defined from the *EuroElite Project*.

N mandates= 813/Missing = 7.

In order to analyze the above table we must compare the percentage values of the occupations in the four columns indicative for each period. For the majority of the professions one can notice the great difference between columns, and therefore a heterogeneity among the periods, which is confirmed by the positive and negative values of the standardized residuals. This holds particularly true for 'Teachers/Professors', 'Lawyers', 'Military persons', 'Managers, businessmen', and 'Blue-collar workers', in which there exists a high variation at each interval and notable opposition in the underlined standardized residual values.

But what does this entail, in terms of sociological relevance, beyond the openly stated? That is, that the total number of lawyers plummeted from 38% at the beginning of our series to 13% almost one hundred years later? Or that we rarely find ex-military members in the Brazilian Senate? Or that businessmen have significantly increased their presence within the political elite?

As we have previously suggested, descriptive professional categories fail to clearly recognize morphological changes within the political class over time. Even if the variables are precise (their meanings immediately recognizable), they are less revealing of long-term transformations within this population, since they describe activities whose *names* remained constant over time, but for which their social *status* and political weight have changed across the political space according to different historical periods. Therefore it is not possible to transport these occupational labels from one historical period to another without regard to the different political and extra-political resources mobilized by the holders of these professions. Likewise, neither are these resources identical or their influence the same throughout a significant interval over time.

We can find 'Lawyers' in all political periods (especially in the pre-1937 period). If we exclusively look at the occupations we would be led to believe that parliamentarians elected in recent periods (where we have a larger number of 'businessmen'), are increasingly recruited from the high society, in the "social elite". In reality, the Old Republic 'Lawyers' may belong to the high society (and they in fact did), while businessmen in the current legislatures might have a more wealthy origin, but combined with an extensive political career and political party activism. Therefore, the values in each professional category, while correct, may fault to recognize the measurements and decline verified in the contingent of lawyers while the increase of businessmen may hide, for example, the professionalization of politics.

## II. An alternative proposal: a socio-political typology

The classification above and the brief interpretation of the tests presented in Tables 1 and 2 worked for discussing the difficulties of unreflectively importing and applying occupational categories in elite studies. A large part of the potential inconsistencies from such occupational categorizations happens because of its all-encompassing and blunt usage.

The classification suggested below is an attempt to escape the traps of the categories conventionally used in elite studies. This is a typology that aims to contextualize the social distances between two variables that are identical in their terminology – ‘Teachers/Professors’, ‘Journalists and other writers’, Civil servants, etc. –, but apart in historical time. Therefore, the solution here outlined prioritizes a categorization that considers, at the same time, the weight of social *and* political *status* of political agents (following the line of (Matthews 1961)). This resource should allow for the comparison of relative positions among the occupations (or among their holders) in a contextual manner, that is, according to their time and place. These two dimensions (as well as educational *status*, which will be left out) are the dimensions mobilized by studies that rely on the debate on political professionalization for outlining changes within the parliamentary recruitment pattern. The chief inspiration for our model was Eliassen & Pedersen (1978).

According to the Weber’s classic formulation, the replacement of the notable for the professional politician is concomitant to the decrease of importance of the social *status* (prestige, possessions) and the increase of the individual’s political *status* (career, positions, specific vocation) as vectors for establishing an elite elected within a given society. We adopted both of these dimensions, adapting these two vectors to specific social types throughout Brazilian political history. The model indicators were selected inductively based on the peculiarities of the federal senators. Since the senatorial political elite was, during the I Republic, highly connected to prestigious liberal professions and held an extensive political career, we noticed that simple occupational indicators would lead to the conclusion that in Brazil politicians “de-professionalized” themselves over time, since the Parliament beings to admit not quite the typical figure of the professional politician (such as the one found in the *EurElite Project*), but instead businessmen, public employee, teachers.

Our *social dimension* model seeks to capture the variations between senators from the indicator “**occupation before entering a political career**”, but with a difference in regards to the descriptive typology of occupations. The occupations were divided into two groups in function of the social values they have in Brazil. Some professions are “more noble” than others. Thus, the assumption is that lawyers, businessmen, doctors and diplomats (all of these “elite” professions in Brazil) arrive into the Senate with a higher social *status* than those who acted in less prestigious occupations (economists, engineers and other non-traditional liberal professions).

In turn, the *political dimension* combines two indicators. The first of these is the **profile or political career orientation**, measured from the amount of municipal, state and national offices occupied by an individual before arriving into Senate. If the majority of the individual’s offices are at a national level<sup>11</sup>, we infer that their ambition is focused on the

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<sup>11</sup> We consider the following positions to be of a national level: "Minister", "President of the Republic", "Senator", "Federal Congressman", "Vice-president of the Republic", and "Other positions appointed by the federal bureaucracy." Of local or regional level: alderman, mayor, state deputy, and state or municipal secretary.

political game at a national level. The reverse situation aggregates individuals whose ambition is directed towards state/local politics.

The second *political dimension* indicator is **political vocation**. To assess the occurrence of this quality in the biography of Brazilian senators we measured their age of debut in their first political office and the time they devoted to political life before being elected to the Federal Senate. We hope thereby to identify the vocation for politics in those who started younger and who have devoted longer time to this activity.

The proposed analytical model is thus formed by three dummy variables:

- i) Elite profession: yes or no (social *status* indicator)
- ii) Career Profile: national or local (political *status* indicator)
- iii) Political vocation: yes or no (political *status* indicator)

The logical combinations from the six qualities lead us to eight ideal "political types":

- type 1: individual with a national career, political vocation and elite profession;
- type 2: individual with a national career and vocation, but no elite profession;
- type 3: individual with a national career, elite profession, but no political vocation;
- type 4: individual with a national career, but with no vocation or elite profession;
- type 5: individual with vocation and elite profession, but with a local career;
- type 6: individual with vocation, local career, but no elite profession;
- type 7: individual with a local career, with an elite profession, but not political vocation;
- type 8: individual without vocation, local career, and no elite profession.

To what extent are these logical types also historical types capable of explaining the change in the profile of individuals who reached the Brazilian Senate since 1918? Are these types concentrated within a particular political period or randomly distributed throughout the XX century? Are these indicators – profession, career orientation and political vocation – truly suitable to capture the historical changes of the national political class?

In order to answer these questions we carried out two tests, as described below.

### III. Testing the model and correcting the typology

Firstly, we sought to test if there was any coincidence between these eight ideal types obtained by a logical combination of these two dimensions (political and social) and the Brazilian senators' biographical data within the studied period.

Table 3 distributed political types by the same referred periods from Table 2. These periods encompass, roughly speaking, four political regimes: oligarchic regime (1st Republic.), populist democracy (3rd Republic.), Military dictatorship (4th Republic.), and new democracy (5th Republic.). The "Second Republic" does not appear on the list since it refers to the Estado Novo (1937-1945) when parliaments were closed, elections abolished and political careers interrupted.

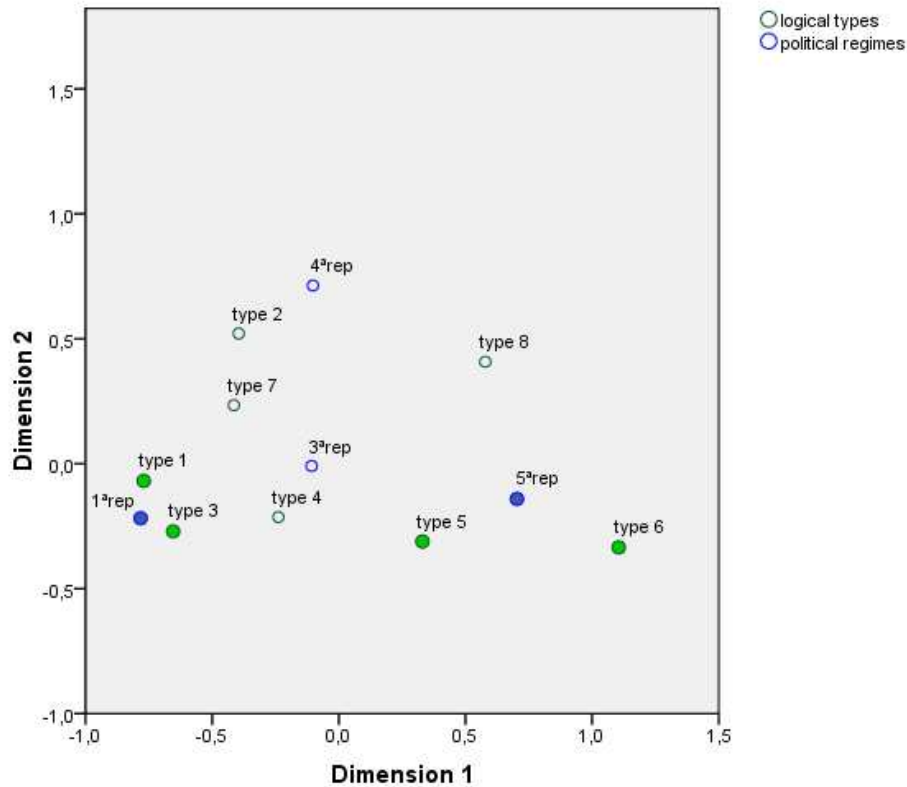
Table 3 – Cross-reference of logical types with political periods within the analyzed interval % e SR)

		Political types									Total
		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5	Type 6	Type 7	Type 8		
Political periods	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Republic</b> (1918-1937)	n	22	20	44	59	15	6	41	19	226
		%	43,1%	30,3%	42,7%	34,1%	21,1%	6,3%	38,7%	12,3%	27,6%
		SR	2,1	0,4	2,9	1,6	(-1,0)	(-3,9)	2,2	(-3,6)	
	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Republic</b> (1946-1962)	n	13	18	24	36	16	16	14	31	168
		%	25,5%	27,3%	23,3%	20,8%	22,5%	16,8%	13,2%	20,0%	20,5%
		SR	0,8	1,2	0,6	0,1	0,4	(-0,8)	(-1,7)	(-0,1)	
	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Republic</b> (1966-1982)	n	8	14	14	24	8	10	22	30	130
		%	15,7%	21,2%	13,6%	13,9%	11,3%	10,5%	20,8%	19,4%	15,9%
		SR	0,0	1,1	(-0,6)	(-0,7)	(-1,0)	(-1,3)	1,3	1,1	
	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Republic</b> (1986-2010)	n	8	14	21	54	32	63	29	75	296
		%	15,7%	21,2%	20,4%	31,2%	45,1%	66,3%	27,4%	48,4%	36,1%
		SR	(-2,4)	(-2,0)	(-2,7)	(-1,1)	1,3	4,9	(-1,5)	2,5	
Total		n	51	66	103	173	71	95	106	155	820
		%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: NUSP/UFRP; The observatory of social and political elites of Brazil <http://observatory-elites.org/>  
N mandates = 813 (+ 7 missing).

The concentration of more accentuated positive and negative standardized residues in the First and Fifth Republics is the first characteristic that should be stressed. This trend towards a concentration of type-cases in regimes at the beginning or end of the studied period suggests that the proposed typology is sensible to modifications that affect the Brazilian senatorial elite over time, even if it is not wholly adequate.

We ran a correspondence test to verify the contiguity between logical types and historical regimes.



Source: NUSP/UFRP; The observatory of social and political elites of Brazil <http://observatory-elites.org/>

Singular Value in dimension 1 = 0,351 (sig 0,000).

The test revealed a correspondence between points which, in the graph, were marked in the colors blue and green (filled). Type 1 (national career, political vocation and elite profession) and type 3 (national career, elite profession, but no political vocation) were closer to the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic. Type 5 (vocation and elite profession, but local career) and type 6 (political vocation, local career, but no elite profession) remained closer to the 5<sup>th</sup> Republic.

From this we replicated the initial typology and aggregated types 1 and 3 in a new category entitled **new type 1**, and types 5 and 6 into a new category entitled **new type 2** (the remainder were also aggregated in new types 3 and 4, but they will be disregarded since they were not statistically significant). Thus, the final rankings arrived to the following new types:

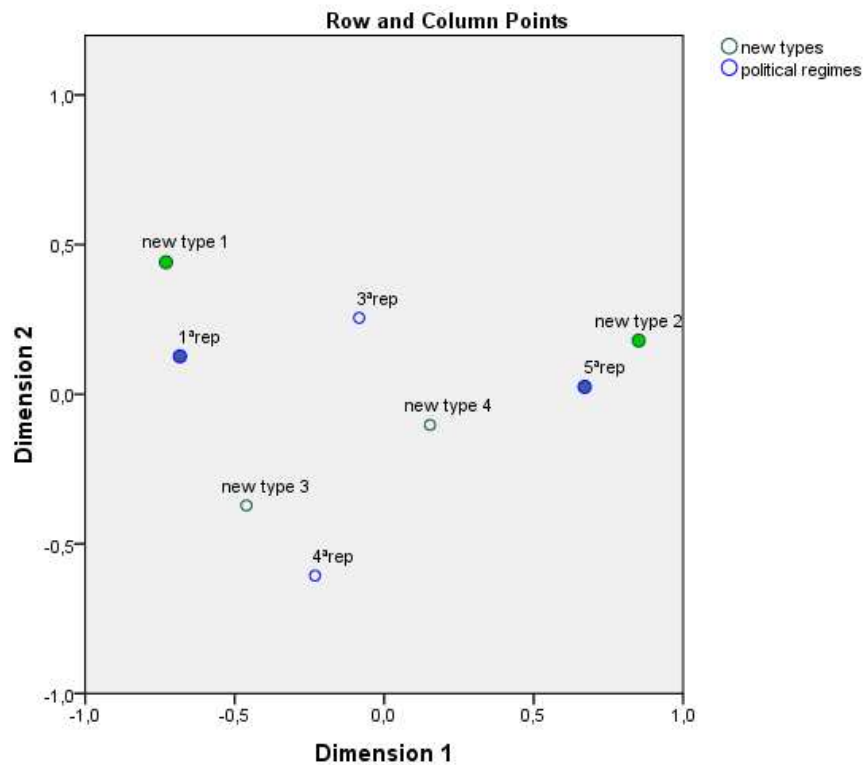
- new type 1:** individuals with elite professions, with careers orientated towards national politics, with or without political vocation;
- new type 2:** individuals with political vocation, without a professional *status* distinction (whether elite or not) and with characteristic orientated towards the state level.

The first new type fixes the values of the social dimension, measured by the occurrence of elite professions, and alternates the values of the political dimension.

The second type maintains fixed the vocation for politics and careers oriented to a state level, but alternates the values of the social dimension, combining into the same group senators who practiced and who did not practice elite professions in Brazil.

The following test presents the correlation results between new types and national political regimes.

Graph 2 – Correspondence Analysis between new types and political regimes



Source: NUSP/UFRP; The observatory of social and political elites of Brazil <http://observatory-elites.org/>

Singular Value in dimension 1 = 0,301 (sig 0,000).

The correspondence analysis between equidistant points among the two distributions reveals that the new type 1 is closer to the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic and that new type 2 is closer to the Fifth. This means that the combination is not merely a logical deduction from the model, since it revealed itself to be able to follow the populace socio-political variations and its affinity with at least two regimes, the oligarchic and the democratic regimes.

That being said, we may try to further *sociologically* understand the possible connections between the political profile and political period.

Our model indicates that there are two characteristic types of professional politicians at the beginning and end of the analyzed period and not a progression or replacement of types (the notable for the professional, the oligarch for the professional, etc.) as we would be led to believe solely with the variations of the amount of professions. Thus, there does not seem to be a less professional politician at the beginning of this series

and a more professional one at the end. Instead, we find a change in the attributes of the professional politician in Brazil.

Four of our findings are worth underlining:

- i)* elite professions (index of high social *status*) are possibly of great importance for becoming a senator during the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic. Such a credential could even replace a precocious political career;
- ii)* in the 5<sup>th</sup> Republic a high social *status* is not indispensable before initiating a political career en route for the Brazilian Federal Senate. This is because the social source of recruitment is more heterogeneous and conditions for political competition are different;
- iii)* localism in the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic may be an important characteristic for political careers, but not necessarily for the Senate, considering that according to our model's results senators mostly pass through national level offices and positions;
- iv)* political vocation (young career entrance and long permanence time throughout the political life) seems to be a necessary attribute in the 5<sup>th</sup> Republic, but not for the 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Conclusions

We recall here how the codification of the politicians' prior professions may lead not only to indexations that distribute individuals per occupations and from thereon produce a socio-graphical mapping of the studied universe, but also how they orient their own explanations as to their recruitment processes and professionalization.

We present here a proposal of a new classification by confronting a logically deduced typology with the Brazilian contexts or political regimes of the XX century. It has revealed itself to be potentially capable of assimilating variations in the profiles of the politicians' careers as well as the social values (*status*) assumed by professional occupations throughout the national parliamentary history. Therefore, we understand that a classification of such individuals based on a double *status* (political and social) allows for a better grasping of the historical recruitment dimension for the Brazilian case.

In more general terms, this *exploratory* work on income and the logical and methodological difficulties of using the variable 'profession' in studies of parliamentary elites allowed us to advance three conclusions.

Firstly, that the categorization of occupations prior to a political life seems to be necessarily *ad hoc*, that is, its employment depends on the historical context.

The second conclusion asserts that purely descriptive classifications provide interesting resources for interpreting specific category variations in short periods of time. However, this same classification would produce, if it were used for the case of Brazilian senators, a mistaken inference on the evolution and changes in the politicians' occupational origin types.

In this case, the third conclusion of this study points towards the potential return of a strategy that combines a long term theoretical lens with indicators more sensitive to the history of the analyzed cases, that is to say, contextual.



If we are correct, the thesis regarding the low institutionalization of the political career (Samuels 2003) and the “popularization” of the Brazilian political class (Rodrigues 2006) may be questioned and the profile of our political class may be further scrutinized.

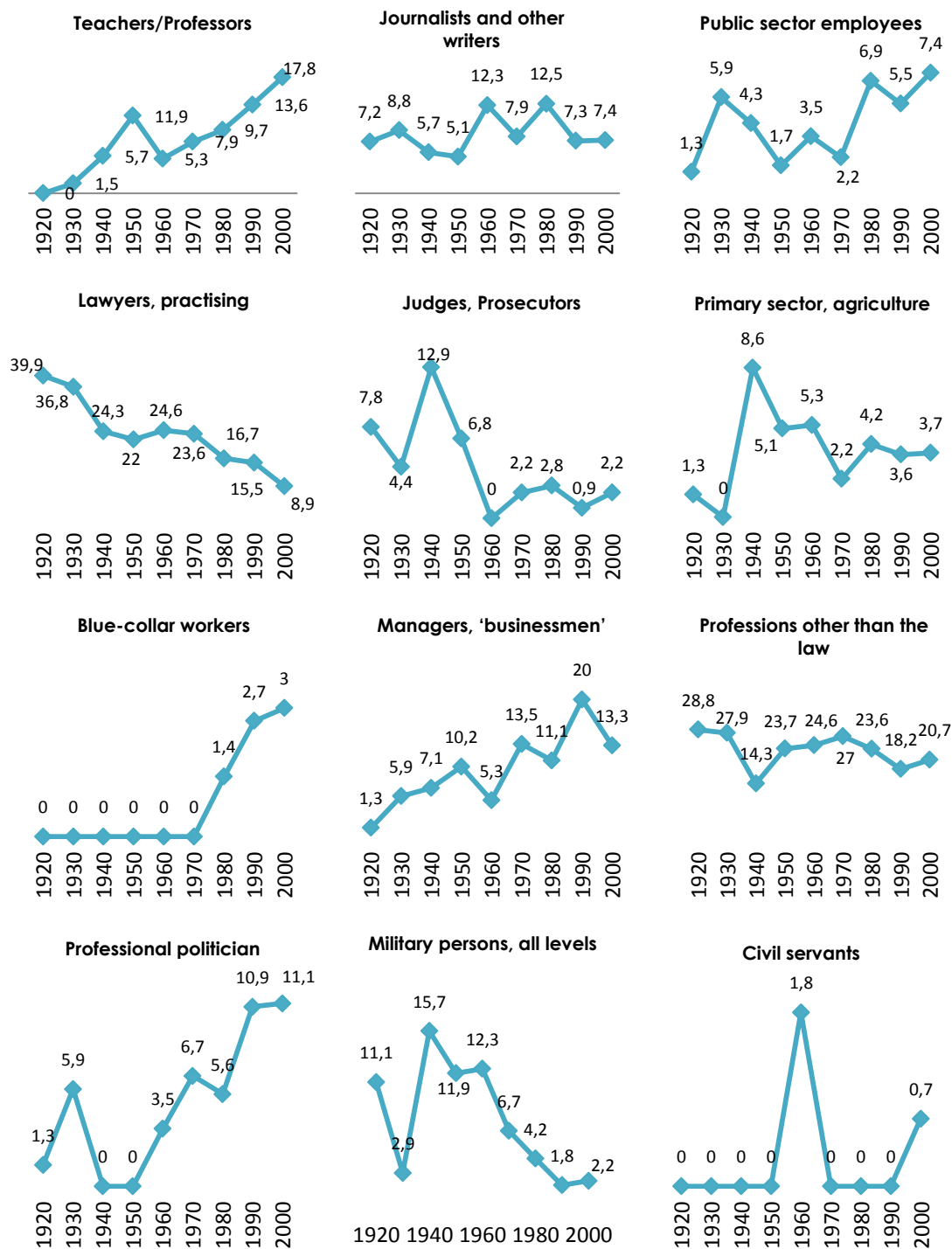
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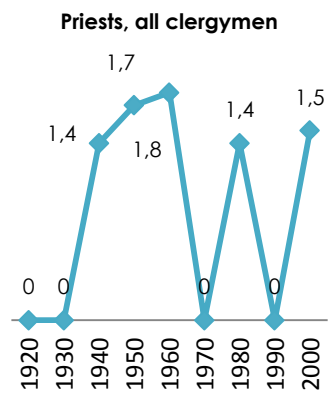
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## Appendix 1

Graphs 3. Distribution of Brazilian senators over decades according to professions practiced before the start of the political career (%)





Appendix 2

Appendix for graph 1

Summary

Dimension					Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
1	,351	,123			,870	,870	,030	,034
2	,101	,010			,072	,942	,035	
3	,091	,008			,058	1,000		
Total		,142	116,395	,000 <sup>a</sup>	1,000	1,000		

a. 21 degrees of freedom

Overview Row Points<sup>a</sup>

logical types	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		Total
					1	2	1	2	
type 1	,062	-,770	-,069	,013	,105	,003	,967	,002	,969
type 2	,080	-,395	,521	,008	,036	,216	,525	,262	,786
type 3	,126	-,654	-,271	,020	,153	,092	,946	,047	,993
type 4	,211	-,239	-,214	,005	,034	,096	,812	,187	,999
type 5	,087	,330	-,312	,005	,027	,083	,727	,186	,913
type 6	,116	1,105	-,335	,051	,402	,129	,972	,026	,998
type 7	,129	-,415	,234	,014	,063	,070	,564	,052	,616
type 8	,189	,578	,408	,025	,180	,311	,872	,125	,997
Active Total	1,000			,142	1,000	1,000			

a. Symmetrical normalization

Overview Column Points<sup>a</sup>

political regimes	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		
					1	2	1	2	Total
1 <sup>re</sup> rep	,276	-,783	-,219	,062	,480	,131	,963	,022	,985
3 <sup>re</sup> rep	,205	-,108	-,009	,007	,007	,000	,113	,000	,113
4 <sup>re</sup> rep	,159	-,102	,713	,009	,005	,798	,065	,900	,965
5 <sup>re</sup> rep	,361	,703	-,141	,064	,508	,071	,981	,011	,992
Active Total	1,000			,142	1,000	1,000			

a. Symmetrical normalization

## Appendix 3

## Appendix for graph 2

Summary

Dimension					Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
								2
1	,301	,090			,936	,936	,032	,047
2	,076	,006			,060	,997	,036	
3	,018	,000			,003	1,000		
Total		,097	79,232	,000 <sup>a</sup>	1,000	1,000		

a. 9 degrees of freedom

**Overview Row Points<sup>a</sup>**

new types	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		Total
					1	2	1	2	
new type 1	,188	-,730	,441	,033	,333	,479	,915	,085	1,000
new type 2	,202	,852	,179	,045	,488	,085	,987	,011	,998
new type 3	,210	-,461	-,372	,016	,148	,380	,854	,141	,994
new type 4	,400	,153	-,103	,003	,031	,055	,851	,097	,948
Active Total	1,000			,097	1,000	1,000			

a. Symmetrical normalization

**Overview Column Points<sup>a</sup>**

political regimes	Mass	Score in Dimension		Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2		Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		Total
					1	2	1	2	
1 <sup>o</sup> rep	,276	-,683	,127	,039	,428	,058	,989	,009	,998
3 <sup>o</sup> rep	,205	-,084	,255	,002	,005	,175	,260	,614	,874
4 <sup>o</sup> rep	,159	-,231	-,606	,007	,028	,764	,364	,634	,998
5 <sup>o</sup> rep	,361	,671	,025	,049	,540	,003	,999	,000	,999
Active Total	1,000			,097	1,000	1,000			

a. Symmetrical normalization