The Elite London Vortex

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Economic and spatial contexts

Gross Value Added (GVA) by region, 2011

(Source: Eurostat: Gross value added at basic prices by NUTS 3 regions (NACE Rev. 2) [nama_r_e3vab95r2])

Percentage change in GVA (2007-2011) relative to London for seventeen major British cities

(Source: Eurostat: Gross value added at basic prices by NUTS 3 regions (NACE Rev. 2) [nama_r_e3vab95r2])
The GBCS: origins, data structure, skew

- Two waves, c.300,000 respondents
- The GBCS was a self-selecting web survey and not a nationally-representative sample
- It has a pronounced skew in both spatial and social terms
- Spatially, participation was skewed to London and the South East of England
- Socially, participants from higher occupational bands were over-represented in comparison to those from manual backgrounds
Inequality in the UK: a wider framing

• Approaches to the study of spatial inequality have for reasons of practicality and orthodoxy focussed solely on economic disparities up to now

• The GBCS provides the means to explore how inequalities play out not only in the economic, but also social and cultural domains
The metropolitan geography of economic capital

- Concentric zonal analysis of mean household income by 2km bands radiating from the Bank of England, Threadneedle Street.
- Marked variation in mean incomes as we move away from central London
Extending the scope of Social capital
Extending the scope: Cultural capital
Spatial benchmarking: the *Elite*

*Distribution of the GBCS ‘Elite’*
*Distribution of the NS-\( \text{SeC} \) I population, 2011*
*OLS regression with Elite as predictor and NS-\( \text{SeC} \) I as dependent variable*
The ‘Recursive’ Elite: London

- Occupational data on respondents enables us to identify particular sub-groups, or to construct traditional employment aggregate schemas.

- These different sub-elites have pronounced geographies, occupying different urban spaces.

*The London ‘Business’ Elite*

*The London ‘Cultural’ Elite*
London: Intensifying Elite vortex

Recruitment into the London Business and Cultural Elites by parental class

Recruitment into the London Business and Cultural Elites by secondary education
London Sub-Elites and Universities

Recruitment into the London Business, Cultural and Legal Elites by university in relative (left) and absolute (right) terms

- We can use the GBCS to examine the power of specific HE institutions in providing access to the London Elite and its sub-incarnations
- In both relative and absolute terms Cambridge displays its power in forming the Cultural Elite
- For Oxford and Cambridge, the patterns for Business and Cultural Elite formation are effectively mirror images
- Oxford displays remarkable absolute and relative strength in the formation of the Legal Elite.
Conclusions

• We are used to thinking of spatial inequality solely, or at least primarily in economic terms. A Bourdieusian understanding provides a wider framing of inequality and elite formation.

• The data available from the GBCS provides the first means of analysing the interplay between economic, social and cultural inequalities in a national, spatially granular way.

• The increasing primacy of London within the UK economy is one of the most well-established tropes of contemporary discussion on inequality in the UK, but the GBCS data enables us to further dissect this trend, to draw attention to the increasing intra-stratal inequalities within the middle classes and the intensifying exclusivity of access to the London Elite.