1

Politics, Communities, and Power

To paraphrase Harold Lasswell, politics is about the power to decide who gets what, when, and how. Power summarizes the ways in which political actors compete in political arenas, fields, or spaces to impose their preferences on the distribution of political spoils. The field of political networks has grown, applying theories and methods from social networks to political contestation in a range of fields. Political actors are creative and resourceful and coordinate their actions. They create and join collectives to change the balance of power and create and relate concepts to change each other's preferences. That is, the fields, arenas, or social spaces in which political contestation takes place are never unidimensional but contain multiple types of actors and relations. Political actors turn to or create new categories of cooperation or contestation in their efforts to build resources or flank those with whom they disagree. This volume reviews, synthesizes, and promotes developments in multimodal political networks to better understand politics.

Multimodal political networks consist of two or more types of nodes (known as modes) and the relations connecting them. For instance, citizens (one mode) support protest movements (a second mode), which sponsor protest events (a third mode), in which citizens participate. Citizens, movements, and events are different types of entities, related by different forms of ties: support, sponsorship, participation. A focus on only one of these entity modes, say protest events, is myopic and potentially distorts our understanding of politics, which regularly involves relations between (and within) multiple modes.

Two broad categories of social entities are actors and objects. Political networks usually start with actors. Actors have agency; that is, they have some capability to act and make choices among alternatives. Voters casting ballots for party candidates is a classic instance of political agency. Actors may be individual persons but can also be groups, teams, organizations, institutions, nations, and other collectivities. Relationships between individual and

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collective actors, such as voters' affiliations to political parties, are multimodal and common in political networks. Beyond individual and collective actors are objects. Political objects – such as texts, information, photos and videos, Web pages, funds, and physical resources – lack agency, but are created or employed by political actors for political purposes. For example, a voter may choose one candidate over another because of his or her record in the legislature or affiliation with certain ideas that are represented or are related to ideas to which the voter ascribes.

Complexity emerges because actors not only interact with one another, but also in communities that converge around certain sets of objects and in repudiation of others. Network analysis understands well that political relations are interdependent. But a multimodal political network analysis additionally recognizes that political actors may be or act dependent on the existence of nodes in other modes and their relationships to them. To examine politics without an appropriately full picture of the contexts of action leaves only a partial account of the meaning of actors' decisions. However, political network analysis has been relatively slow to fully adopt such an approach, despite the basic theoretical and methodological building blocks being present for decades.

Multimodal analyses of politics offer several advantages over conventional unimodal political networks. First, multimodal networks offer a richer way of graphically representing the complexity in a political arena. As in all types of network analysis, visualization plays a key role, drawing maps and topological representations of the social distances and proximities among heterogeneous entities. Multilevel and multilayer network visualization in the past had presented some additional challenges, which explains the dearth of layout algorithms for such networks in popular computer packages. Recent years have seen the gradual development of fundamental methods for visualizing such networks though, improving the amount of information that can be conveyed. Second, multimodal networks preserve all relational ties rather than erasing some information through "projections" that collapse data across modes. This feature enables multimodal methods to use as much information as possible for analytic purposes. For example, multimodal analysts can trace all paths of diffusion and contagion, through which information, ideologies, knowledge, innovations, and resources spread across political domains. Third, because network theories and network methods always advance hand-in-hand, multimodal political analyses facilitate opportunities for creative inquiry, generating and testing new analytic propositions and applications that paint a richer picture of the political world. And multimodal methods can also finally allow researchers to represent the more complex theories of real-world political interactions that previously necessitated some analytic simplification. Richer analyses and inferences promise the potential to forecast network outcomes – benefits and costs – and plausible future structural transformations, identify structural gaps or holes that impede the performances of entities, and suggest opportunities for improving systemic outcomes.

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Our main purpose is to draw the attention of political theorists and researchers to new conceptual, methodological, and substantive tools for extending political network research. We introduce multimodal network concepts, discuss how to measure and analyze them, and present a series of examples from across political science, political sociology, social movements, and international relations to illustrate how multimodal networks can help us to reveal insights into political structures and actions. In making these developments more accessible to political network analysts, we believe advances in knowledge are potentially immense. To that end, our concluding chapter sketches a handful of future projects in some detail. We hope that graduate students, instructors, and network analysts in political science, political sociology, public administration, and related fields will take up those and related challenges in their own multimodal political network projects.

In the next section, we quickly recount a history of political networks that highlights its breadth, points to new opportunities afforded by contemporary data resources, and its coevolution with methods development. The third section elaborates the relationship between political networks and power, as mentioned in the introduction, and discusses three literatures that conceptualize the challenge of drawing borders for political networks: arenas, fields, and social spaces. Politica nodes may be individuals or collective actors, or various kinds of objects. In the fourth section, we expand on the notion of community, which speaks to the first division, and a key component of political networks.

A SHORT HISTORY OF POLITICAL NETWORKS

The field of political networks has existed for nearly as long as social networks and, like social networks, has seen increasing attention and growth as a community in the last 30-odd years. Three contemporary developments are worth observing here.

First, political networks constitute a big tent and have been growing rapidly since David Knoke's *Political Networks: The Structural Perspective* (1990a). Researchers have applied social network analytic methods to a wide range of political dynamics and structures, including: the European Union (Van de Steeg et al. 2010; Marshall 2015), interest groups (Beyers and Braun 2014; Box-Steffensmeier and Christenson 2015; Heaney and Strickland 2018; James and Christopoulos 2018), intergovernmental organizations (Ingram et al. 2005; Hollway and Koskinen 2016b), policy diffusion (Garrett and Jansa 2015; Milewicz et al. 2018), political parties (Grossmann and Dominguez 2009), social movements (Diani 1995, 2015; Tremayne 2014), protest politics (Bearman and Everett 1993), terrorism, insurgency, and revolution (Zech and Gabbay 2016; Bruns et al. 2013; Walther and Christopoulos 2015), transnational policy analysis and think tanks (Stone 2015), urban, national and cross-border governance (Ponzini and Rossi 2010; Bang and Esmark 2009;

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Sohn, Christopoulos and Koskinen 2020), banking regulation (Christopoulos and Quaglia 2009; Chalmers and Young 2020); policymaking (Knoke et al. 1996; Christopoulos 2017; Ingold, Fisher and Christopoulos 2021), elite formation (Bearman 1993), local politics (Stokman and Zeggelink 1996), and virtual political communities (Kawawa-Beaudeu et al. 2016; Halberstam and Knight 2016; Chao et al. 2017). Moreover, many other disciplines now regularly study politics using networks, even as they pursue their distinctive foci; for example, scholars studying environmental governance (e.g., Bodin and Crona 2009; Lubell et al. 2014; Bodin 2017; Ceddia et al. 2017; Inguaggiato et al. 2019). This book does not aim to review all this literature (see Berardo, Fischer and Hamilton 2020). The field of political networks is by now too broad to be integrated and is already well promoted. Nor is our aim to propose an overarching theory of political networks, if such were even possible. Though cross-fertilization is certainly possible, different scales and kinds of politics demand different theories. Rather, this volume demonstrates that across all the areas of political networks that we have examined, a multimodal network approach can be applied to yield insights into political dynamics.

Second, a wealth of new, multimodal data is already being exploited by companies but that can also be used to gain new understandings of political processes. A wealth of multimodal data is available on political topics as we recognize the importance of digital data and content for contemporary political life. Computer scientists have been quick to highlight multimodal folksonomies, created by private "folk," on the Internet. A familiar example is Facebook users who "like," tag, and add comments to a wide range of posts, photos, videos, and other content uploaded on their friends' personal pages. The controversy surrounding Cambridge Analytica's influence on recent elections has highlighted the political salience of this information. Not just contemporary data are becoming more available. Various archives are being digitized, giving us new opportunities for insight into the past, and marked improvements in text digitization, recognition, and automatic coding provide researchers a wealth of new political objects to study.

Third, as they always have, network theory and methods co-evolve. Oddly though, recent advances in network methods for multimodal networks have not yet been picked up by scholars in any sustained way. For example, a family of community detection algorithms has been developed among mathematicians, physicists, and computer scientists for two-mode networks, and yet the analytic leverage this allows has rarely been utilized in political networks. While network pedagogy typically begins by analyzing unimodal networks – for good reasons, we think – it is too often satisfied to stay there, perhaps including only a brief mention of two-mode networks. This volume advances the idea that since political networks are multimodal, pedagogy in political networks must progress beyond unimodal analysis and also introduce methods for examining multimodal networks. Our purpose is therefore to highlight the additional opportunities multimodal political networks offer, especially to a new

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generation of political network researchers, by introducing intermediate and advanced methods for analyzing such networks and presenting vignettes that apply these methods empirically.

POWER

Power is often simplified as a one-dimensional "force" where one actor's will prevails despite the resistance of another or others (see Niccolò Machiavelli, Max Weber, and many others). A limitation of that conception of power is its inherent intangibility and abstractness: power can only be inferred from its observable effects. However, we know that in many cases power is latent and can exist without being exercised. Some powerful actors prefer to remain inscrutable. John Padgett and Christopher Ansell coined the term "robust action" to capture the essence of Cosimo de Medici in Renaissance Florence, whom they described as multivocal, sphinxlike, and a flexible opportunist (1993:1263).

Actors will also choose the strategic points at which to exercise their power, since it involves expending political capital. The European Commission, the European Union's executive body, is widely recognized as powerful, even when its power is not exercised (Thomson and Hosli 2006). Indeed, the Commission often makes its preferences known in draft regulations, engages in wide consultations, but is circumspect in overtly using its power to force its will on other actors. Yet, lobby groups, member state governments, other supranational institutions, and global actors invariably recognize the European Commission as a powerful actor because it can set the agenda and, thus, frame the preferences of others. We contend that the presence of latent power can be deduced by examining the structure of relations among political actors. Put differently, the way that political actors are patterned or connected into clusters or groups by their relations reveals to others the presence of both their apparent power and their latent power. Actors are therefore assumed to have the *potential* to exercise power on one another through recurrent exchanges of information, political support, debates about public policies, collective decision-making, and so on but are not a priori presumed to be powerful because of their relations, status, or position. Power relations can also be implied by association; in its simplest form, an indirect affiliation can be assumed among actors who jointly participate in multiple political events and activities. To paraphrase Woody Allen, ninety percent of political life is just showing up.

ARENAS AND FIELDS AS SETTINGS FOR MULTIPLE ENTITIES AND MULTIMODAL NETWORKS

Power contestation takes place in specific settings. A multiplicity of terms has been used to denote those settings or "social spaces" (Bourdieu 1985, 1989;

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Pattison and Robins 2004; Stark and Vedres 2006; Hollway et al. 2017). Among the most popular are "arenas" (Flam 1994: Chapter 1;) and "fields" (Martin 2003; Armstrong 2005; Bottero and Crossley 2011; Zietsma et al. 2017), though "architectures" (Biermann et al. 2009) and regime, institutional, or governance "complexes" (Raustiala and Victor 2004; Alter and Meunier 2009; Keohane and Victor 2011; Oberthür and Gehring 2011; Zelli and van Asselt 2013; Hollway and Koskinen 2016a) are also common terms within International Relations.

The notion of arena is often used in an inclusive way, to evoke systems of interactions in which actors adopt each other's orientations without assuming the development of strong shared norms or understandings. According to one definition:

> An arena is a bundle of rules and resources that allow or encourage certain kinds of interactions to proceed, with something at stake. Players within an arena monitor each other's actions, although that capacity is not always equally distributed. Like players, arenas vary in the degree to which they are institutionalized with bureaucratic rules and legal recognition as opposed to informal traditions and expectations. They also vary in the extent to which they are literal physical settings, like a courtroom or Tahrir Square. (Jasper et al. 2015:401)

The concept of field has been the subject of intense scrutiny and debate in social science (Martin 2003), which may be referred to in social psychology, most notably in Kurt Lewin's Gestalt theory (1951), Pierre Bourdieu's opus (1992), and the work of neo-institutionalist theorists such as Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell (1983). These diverse approaches share nonetheless an ultimate vision of fields as sets of agents, sharing institutional patterns of behavior and understanding, while simultaneously competing to modify their positions. For example, in DiMaggio and Powell's classic formulation, an organizational field consists of "organizations that, in the aggregate, represent a recognized area of institutional life" (1983:64–65). In the case of civil society, the civic field may comprise all individuals and voluntary organizations engaged in the promotion of collective action and the production of collective goods (e.g., Diani 2015). A policymaking field is the set of actors relevant to a specific public policy issue (also called a policy domain by Laumann and Knoke 1987). In the arts, a field consists of all artists focusing on one particular activity, whether French painting (White and White 1965), American nonprofit theaters (DiMaggio 1986), or alternatively, practitioners spanning diverse artistic endeavors and genres (Bourdieu 1993). Actors having agency within a field are capable of identifying each other as mutually relevant, share some understandings regarding the rules that regulate behaviors and role expectations in that field, while they struggle to gain advantage and to secure more influential positions over other actors in the same field.

Despite the differences in their internal level of articulation, both arenas and fields provide a focus for interaction patterns that involve not only a

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multiplicity of entities but, as we have seen, entities that differ remarkably in their nature. When the multimodal/multilevel aspects of arenas and fields are fully appreciated, we see that they represent a multilevel social or political space in which the actors interact, compete, and collaborate (Hollway et al. 2017). Understanding them calls for a multimodal approach to political networks. Multimodal network analysis attempts to deal with the complexity of political ecosystems by the judicious use of theoretical principles and empirical methods that can provide novel insights into relations among different types of entities. Fundamentally, multimodal analysis often deals with instances of nested entities and the methodological challenge of a key feature of relational data, the interdependency of entities. At the same time, classic problems with nested data, such as the ecological fallacy, can be addressed by considering nested data levels in tandem (Tranmer and Lazega 2016).

Political outcomes in these arenas or fields are regularly contested. Moreover, the distribution of power in most political arenas or fields is rarely equally distributed. Even formally equal political systems see a de facto distribution of power that varies considerably, whether from inherited or acquired sources. Collectively, such resources can be thought of as *political capital*, that often correlate with decision power and political reputation. While some theorists see political capital as a facet of social capital (Lin 2001), we see good reasons to view it as distinct. Political capital can be seen both as an individual resource and as a structural property of a political system. It is inherently a relational property of an actor in that it encompasses all those resources that constitute their power, leadership, reputation, skill, and previous accomplishments into an intangible asset akin to personal social capital. Yet, political capital is also a resource that actors acquire and expend through their relations with others and because those others allow them to do so. In that respect it is distinct from say, decisional power or an actor's leadership or skill. Political capital therefore is a relational resource that actors employ in influencing political outcomes.

Actors have two main strategies in increasing their political capital. First, they can pool their political capital together with others by creating or joining political communities, organizations, groups, movements, or alliances. Second, they can try to change the value of the political capital they have by creating new objects, such as bills, propositions, policies, texts, concepts or arguments, or relationships among them. Both of these strategies, which we elaborate in the chapters of this book, are premised, as political capital itself is, on *legitimacy*. Most political contest does not involve gladiatorial combat; instead, individuals working in teams, or within organizations, attempt to influence and coordinate their actions with others. Put differently, maintaining political power "ultimately rests on domination combined with influence" (Knoke 1990a:6–7). Although actor legitimacy can be perceived as an attribute, associated with network embeddedness, Ronald Burt contended that the network approach allows for legitimacy to be "keyed to the social situations of a person, not to the

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person's attributes" (Burt 1998:35). Both collectivities and objects are potential resources of political capital because they relate to political legitimacy, solidarity, and identity.

Political networks are inherently multimodal because political actors are creative. Faced with an unfavorable distribution of power, they will seek to change the topography of the field by creating or joining groups and creating or associating ideas to outflank the opposition. Of course, their opponents will be doing the same, and this is where the dynamics of political networks lie. A multimodal political network structure thus reflects, restrains, and enables the use of political capital. The key is not to ignore, but to embrace, this multimodalism. In the next section, we outline the relations between individuals, organizations, and events as they relate to multimodal analysis.

INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, EVENTS

Analyzing a political network means looking at a multiplicity of entities, including some that have no agentic capacity. One type of political entity consists of individual actors (such as citizens, politicians, and donors) or collective actors (such as organizations, interest groups, and governments). Those entities can be assumed to have *agency*, that is, an individual or collective capacity to decide and act toward advancing their interests and goals. Relations that connect different types of entities comprise a *multimodal political network*. As an example, Figure 1.1 shows a schematic network of three types of agentic entities and two political relations. Citizens vote for politicians running for elective office, and donor organizations, such as political action committees of business associations and labor unions, give campaign contributions to politicians. No direct ties exist between citizens and donors in this structure, although presumably some voters are members of donor organizations and may also contribute funds to politicians, either directly or indirectly through union dues or corporate donations.

Political networks may consist of entities at different levels of analysis, in which some units are embedded within others. Figure 1.2 illustrates a hierarchy consisting of three levels of authority. City councils pass laws and ordinances which municipal law enforcement agencies (police, courts, jails) are required to enforce on citizens who violate those regulations. Two entities are formal organizations and the third is a set of individual persons. Not shown in the

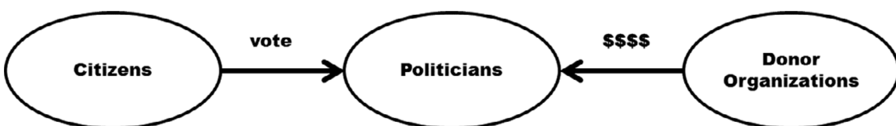

FIGURE 1.1. Political relations among three types of entities

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FIGURE 1.2. Political relations among entities in an authority hierarchy

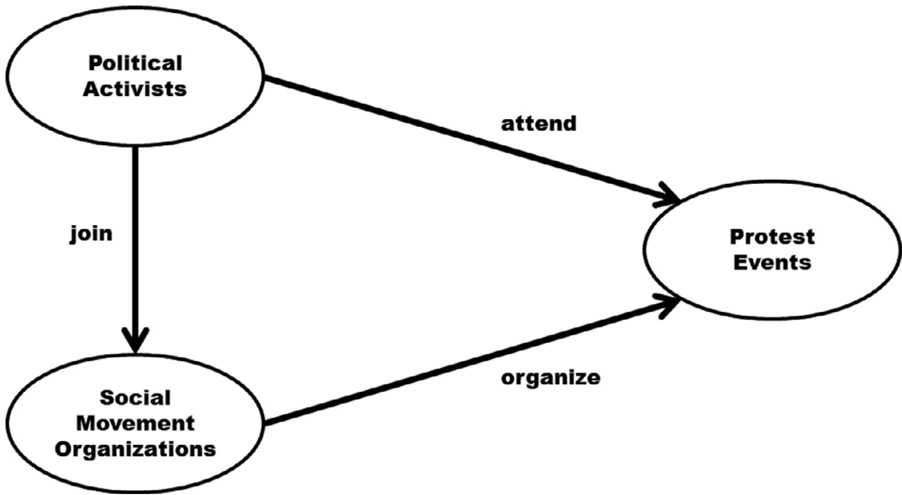

FIGURE 1.3. Political relations among agentic and nonagentic entities

diagram are other collective entities, such as street gangs and organized crime families, which could add complexity and greater realism to the network.

Nonagentic entities – exemplified by protest events, party policy platforms, legislative bills, and campaign websites – lack autonomy to choose and undertake political actions. Rather, they are typically the outcome or consequence of choices made by agentic entities. In Figure 1.3, individual political activists join social movement organizations, which sponsor protest events, such as marches and sit-ins, in which some of their members participate. Additional complexity could be added by examining interpersonal friendship and kinship ties among individual activists to help explain which persons show up at which events.

Entities intermingle in increasingly complex patterns of interaction as we move across levels of analysis from individual actors to broader macro-social structures. Still, we can view the latter as various combinations of basic dyads and triads. This possibility does not mean that all kinds of sustained interaction automatically generate a structural pattern proper. It means, however, that we can conceptualize macro-structures, such as institutions, in relational terms. As John Levi Martin wrote

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> … there are conditions under which interpersonal interactions tend to align and structure themselves. … Instead of simply noticing that there are recurrent patterns, we can make reference to these patterns as independent entities that make predictable demands on us. It is at this point that we speak of an institution. … social interactions, when repeated, display formal characteristics; and this form can take on a life of its own, ultimately leading to institutions that we (as actors) can treat as given and exogenous to social action for our own purposes. (Martin 2009:3)

The process element in this view – and one which is highly consistent with the network perspective – is illustrated by the possibility that "at any moment (or at least at some moments) these institutions may crumble to the ground if not rejuvenated with compatible action" (Martin 2009:3). This remark points at two elements: First, institutions (and indeed social structures at large) are sustainable only to the extent that they are reinforced by innumerable micro-interactions. Second, reinforcing actions are possible only if actors share the same understanding of interactions to which they are involved:

> … it is unlikely that such structures would continuously reappear as forms of regular interaction were the people in question unable to understand the formal principles of these structures in some subjective terms. It is not necessary that people be able to visualize or define the structure … but it is necessary that they understand how structurally consistent ties are formed … a heuristic is a rule that could be induced by an observer as a guiding principle of action on the basis of observed regularities in this action. (Martin 2009:16–18)

We follow a similar logic in laying out our conceptualization of the political process. We see it as a series of interactions among a multiplicity of actors who are patterned to varying extents; are guided by actors' heuristics that are universal though variably deployed; and in which the institutionalization process is subject to continuous renegotiation. In the next chapter, we identify three primary types of entities – individuals, groups/organizations, and events – although this typology could easily encompass other types of entities. In doing so, we follow Anne Mische's (2008) lead in exploring Brazilian protest campaigns, but we extend her approach to include a broader set of actors, organizations, and nonagentic entities.

Many of the interactions between individual citizens do not follow any particular pattern and do not create any distinctive solidarity. However, even occasional and noncommittal interactions – like those occurring in public spaces, such as commuter trains, street conversations, shopping centers, and children's playgrounds – may contribute to forming shared understandings of social and political life. Solidarity is much more likely to arise through (largely non-political) interactions that occur within families, workplaces, educational and religious institutions, and other social settings (Putnam 2000). A minority of interpersonal interactions consists of relations that carry greater continuity and a stronger sense of mutual obligation. Some are rooted in ascribed ties such as those originating from family, community, ethnic group; others develop out

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of involvement in chosen activities, from professional to voluntary ones. The direct relations that connect citizens to one another are powerful determinants of their political behaviors and beliefs. They shape how people think politically, their perceptions of the political space, and their availability to engage directly in politics. At the same time, the very development and reinforcement of interpersonal connections is also heavily dependent on beliefs and earlier patterns of political participation. The amount, nature, and interconnectedness of interpersonal ties also varies considerably depending on the status of the actors involved. Elites are notoriously better connected to political institutions than are ordinary citizens, a feature which has become even more prominent with the extension of globalization processes (e.g., Sklair 2001).

Organizations are bundles of interacting individuals, but they are more than simple aggregations of persons. We can speak of a group or an organization whenever three conditions are present: (1) socially understood (although not necessarily universally agreed upon) criteria for membership exist; (2) such criteria affect patterns of interaction within and outside the group in important ways; and (3) as a result of such interaction the collectivity displays a capacity to behave as a unitary actor that transcends the volitions of its individual members. Criteria for group membership can vary considerably. They may be totally formalized and relatively stable, as it happens in public bureaucracies, private corporations, or in many other kinds of formal organizations. But they may also be entirely dependent on group members' mutual recognition, as happens in informal protest groups, in neighborhood groups, or, from another point of view, in elite circles. In both cases, however, interactions reaffirm group boundaries: in one case abiding by consolidated "heuristics" that shape behavior toward members or nonmembers; in other cases, confirming through behavior that certain people are actually seen as belonging to the collectivity. (Ernest Renan's famous claim that a nation is a "daily plebiscite" may indeed apply to a variety of groups, including social movements.)

Whether formal or informal, patterns of interaction vary for those inside or outside the boundaries of a group. In extreme cases of exclusive organizations like totalitarian institutions, world-rejecting religious groups, political sects, or terrorist organizations, interactions may be significantly different between members and nonmembers, sometimes even entirely restricted to the former. In most cases, the opposite applies, as in-group ties do not preclude out-group ones. Even the intensity of interaction may change dramatically not only between but even within organizations, depending on the level of commitment, roles assumed by different people, and properties of the organization. The average member of a transnational public interest group, such as the World Wildlife Federation or Friends of the Earth, probably interacts far less with fellow participants than do the members of small, local environmental groups. As sometimes happens with boundary definition, organizational roles may be allocated following specific rules, while at other times they are subject to constant negotiation and redefinition. Always, however, boundaries define

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relations that at least for their content and focus bear some distinctiveness and shape members' attitudes and behaviors.

Finally, because of their capacity for collective action, organizations may form network ties by establishing alliances and co-operations with other organizations, sharing information and practical resources, expressing support and sympathy for other organizations' activities, and creating proper channels of communication. For example, the creation of a new government ministry creates channels of communication between departments that then operate – at least in principle – in a routine way, that is, without necessitating interventions by any particular office holder. In most voluntary organizations, to the contrary, the activation and reproduction of a tie requires the presence of organizational representatives to secure the exchange. Still at other times, interorganizational ties may consist of little more than a handful of their members exchanging resources and information on an informal basis (Monge and Contractor 2003:34). This example points to the fact that individuals not only cluster within organizations, they also operate as connectors and interlocks between them. We note that individuals create such connections in diverse ways. They may simultaneously hold memberships in multiple organizations. They also create interorganizational ties through their interpersonal connections to members of other organizations, thus creating informal channels of communication. Of course, the more central the roles played by people in several organizations, the higher their chances of affecting the overall process, as exemplified by corporate leaders serving as directors on multiple executive boards (Mizruchi 1996; McGregor et al. 2019). At the same time, organizations create ties between individuals, and – most important – patterns of membership differentiate interpersonal ties: while co-membership in one organization is likely to create some link between two individuals, it is not implausible to expect co-membership in multiple organizations to generate more powerful and significant bonds among the participants.

At all these levels, however, connections are created not only by direct links between agents of a similar nature (e.g., organizations sharing resources, or individuals befriending each other), but also by the fact that elements of the same network are involved in some activities or share some properties that can create opportunities of interaction. This was famously illustrated by Simmel's analysis of the effect of the intersection of social circles, namely, individual memberships in different types of social groups (Simmel 1955; Breiger 1974). One important implication is the dual effect that intersecting circles have on social structure. On the one hand, individuals are linked through their membership in the same groups; on the other, social groups are connected by sharing individuals (Breiger 1974). This mechanism is not restricted to the interplay of individuals and organizations but easily extends to events. Again, the connection between agents (whether individuals or organizations) and events is twofold. The most obvious one consists of joint involvement of some organizations in the same events indicating a connection between those

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organizations (see e.g., Diani 2015). Likewise, activists' participation in multiple public events creates connections both between the activists attending the same events and between the events attended by the same individuals (Carroll and Ratner 1996; Diani 2009). The less obvious link, and certainly the less explored one, is the cognitive and emotional connection that agents create between events through their joint involvement in them. By getting involved or even promoting a series of events, activists and organizations weave such events into larger campaigns; they also establish a meaningful connection between episodes that might remain largely isolated otherwise; and identify larger and longer term political agendas (rare exceptions include Wada 2004; Cinalli and O'Flynn 2014; Diani and Kousis 2014; Diani 2015: Chapter 6). Similar considerations apply to the involvement of nation states in military alliances: multiple participation by superpowers like the United States may link local alliances into larger international political communities (see Chapter 7 in this volume).

Political Communities

Community in the biological sciences refers to the variety of plant and animal species interacting with one another in a physical environment, including such abiotic components as soil and climate. Some social science fields borrowed and applied key ideas to the study of human communities, most notably in cultural anthropology, rural and urban sociology, and human and organizational ecology theories. The concept of community has two broad meanings in the social sciences. The first refers to a geo-spatial location where human inhabitants interact. The second concept of community is a set of actors with shared interests that typically lacks physical colocation, such as a health profession or an Internet fan club. In both conceptualizations, defining and measuring community boundaries and membership criteria is a fundamental task. After reviewing theory and research on both perspectives, we discuss how each applies to political communities and, most specifically, to the multimodal analysis of political networks.

Communities as Geo-Spatial Locations

In parallel to a biological community defined as a set of interacting species within a territorially bounded ecosystem, geographic communities are defined as a physical space in which "some type of social interaction or common tie is usually included" (Poland and Maré 2005; see also Poplin 1979). Depending on the research question, geographic boundaries range from rural villages and towns, to urban neighborhoods, school and hospital catchment areas, forest and water conservation districts, and the like. Many geographic community boundaries are legally established by governmental authorities in the United States and other nations, including such civil jurisdictions as township, subdivision, precinct, municipality, county, parish, department, state, and province.

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Administrative units regularly collect data about the organizations, inhabitants, and socioeconomic activities occurring within their jurisdictions, thereby facilitating social research on communities. Researchers may also delineate communities that transcend legal boundaries; for example, Charles Galpin (1915) delineated rural communities consisting of the trade and service areas surrounding a central village. Similarly, the boundaries of a functionally interdependent organizational community, such as social services and healthcare delivery systems, "may be, but need not be, coextensive with those of a legally constituted political community" (Laumann et al. 1978:460). In a striking physiological simile, Max Weber wrote in a letter about his visit to Chicago in 1905, "With the exception of the better residential districts, the whole tremendous city – more extensive than London! – is like a human being with its skin peeled off and whose intestines are seen at work" (Scaff 2011:41–42). His observation probably inspired members of the Chicago school of urban sociology in the 1920s and 1930s who investigated diverse facets of Chicago's growth, competition, succession, and social disorganization (e.g., McKenzie 1924; Park et al. 1925; Wirth 1938). Ethnographic studies of geographic communities remain a staple of contemporary anthropology, geography, and sociology.

Communities as Shared Interests

The members of shared-interest communities, sometimes called *cognitive communities*, typically reside in diverse geographic locations but are drawn together by their common identities, ideologies, goals, vocabularies, symbols, or activities. The extent to which community members directly interact with one another may range from intense and intimate (e.g., guilds, churches) to temporary and tenuous (e.g., camping programs for urban youths). Extreme forms of tenuousness are virtual communities in cyberspace, such as Second Life and World of Warcraft, whose members are anonymous animated avatars (Bardzell and Odom 2008; Golub 2010). The boundaries of loose-knit interest communities are primarily determined by their participants' psychological sense of community (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Boyd and Nowell 2014). Membership involves individual self-identifications and the collective perceptions of both insiders and outsiders about who belongs and who does not. More strongly connected shared-interest communities are often formally structured as named organizations with explicit membership criteria, dues requirements, and governance positions; for example, the American Sociological Association, Italian Sociological Association, International Studies Association, and Hellenic Political Science Association.

Geographic and shared-interest concepts of community overlap in theories and research on residents' subjective identification with the places where they live, work, and play. Because geographic communities are also socially constructed by their participants, the link between physical locale and subjective attachment to place are shaped by both attractive and repulsive factors

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(Woldoff 2002; Brown et al. 2015). The cognitive maps that people carry in their heads may overlap to varying degrees with the corresponding physical and social environments (Montello et al. 2014; Phillips and Montello 2017). For example, neighborhoods may be viewed as "open systems in which membership and commitment is partial and relative, and the delineation of neighborhood boundaries is a negotiated and imperfect process, often driven by political considerations" (Chaskin 1997).

McMillan and Chavis (1986) hypothesized that four dimensions affect residents' psychological sense of community: belonging, fulfillment of needs, influence, and shared connections. A factor analysis of responses to batteries of questionnaire items by 669 rural, suburban, and urban residents in southeast Queensland, Australia, supported the hypothesized latent dimensions (Obst et al. 2001). A survey of 546 Birmingham, Alabama, respondents found that a higher sense of community was related to voting, contacting public officials, working on public problems, and overall political participation (Davidson and Cotte 1989). Likewise, data on 822 residents of Tallahassee, Florida, showed that sense of community contributed to voting and political discussing (Anderson 2009).

In contrast, research on 612 residents of Southern Italy revealed that a negative psychological sense of community is a "centrifugal force that drives individuals away from the community" (Mannarini et al. 2014; see also Banfield 1958). In geographic communities with heterogenous racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, sexual orientation, social class, and other group characteristics, people may identify more strongly with a neighborhood or a minority subcommunity than with the larger surrounding agglomeration (Mitchell 2017; Rogaly and Taylor 2016). The forms and strengths of community attachments affect identification with and participation in both geographic and shared-interest political communities.

Geographic Political Communities

Almost all representative democracies (and many nondemocratic states) hold electoral contests within geographically defined territories of comparable residential population sizes. A few legislative electoral systems use winner-takes-all plurality/majoritarian voting districts (Australia, Canada, France, UK, US), while New Zealand and most European and Latin American nations have proportional representation systems that enable minority parties to win legislative seats, and thus to participate in coalition governments (Powell 2000). Periodically redrawing the election district boundaries to adjust for changing population patterns ideally generates maps that fairly reflect the districts' demographic composition (Phillips 2016). However, partisan redistricting practices, called "gerrymandering" in the United States, either pack ethnic and racial minorities into a few highly concentrated districts or "crack" (splinter) them across several districts, thereby restricting these communities' ability to elect officials who represent their interests (Friedman and Holden

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2008; Waymer and Heath 2016; Durst 2018). Similar manipulations occur in other nations, such as UK House of Commons "rotten boroughs" controlled by prominent families in the eighteenth–nineteenth centuries, and prevalent electoral frauds ("ballot stuffing," voter intimidation, violence) in twenty-first century developing nations, such as Sudan, Turkey, and Venezuela (Norris et al. 2018).

Ethnically heterogenous states sometimes try to manage or resolve intercommunal conflicts by devolving substantial political power to autonomous minority institutions. When an ethnic community is geographically concentrated within a national subregion, local self-governing entities – such as schools, media, courts, and public administration bodies – can more easily be created to enable a group to preserve its cultural, linguistic, and religious identity within the larger state. However, when a minority population is widely dispersed, nonterritorial autonomy (NTA) mechanisms may be necessary to facilitate a community to self-administer its affairs, for example, using separate electoral registers or legislative seat quotas (Smith 2009).

After the collapse of the Habsburg, Romanov, and Ottoman Empires at the end of the First World War, several new Central and Eastern European states grappled unsuccessfully with NTA minority group protection. Following the 1989 collapse of the Soviet Empire, another wave of attempts to implement NTA were "less impressive than the formal promise of autonomy" (Coakley 2016:15). Two noteworthy exceptions were Estonia's 1925 cultural autonomy law, and Belgium's 1970 constitutional reforms that included an NTA dimension alongside territorial and consociational features.

At the global level of analysis, political scientists debate the existence of an international community of states: Is it merely a rhetorical phrase or an actual entity? Some skeptics dismiss the term as a fig leaf to hide the post-colonial machinations of imperialist Western nations (Jacques 2006; see also Haass 2013). Obviously, no supra-sovereign institution, certainly not the UN General Assembly, has power or authority to impose norms, values, and standards of behavior on the planet's roughly 200 states. Equally obvious, shifting coalitions of states have competed, cooperated, fought wars, and peacefully settled conflicts for centuries. Moreover, as discussed above, geographic concepts of community don't require unanimous identification, agreement, and consensus by all participants on liberal norms such as free trade and human rights.

In a classic statement, Karl Deutsch and colleagues (1957) argued that states in the North Atlantic Area (the US, Canada, and Western Europe) learned how to create security-communities which gave "real assurance that the members of this community will not fight each other physically but will settle their disputes in some other way" (p. 5). Historical case studies of 24 successful and 8 failed security communities underscored that developing a sense of community among states is "a matter of a perpetual dynamic process of mutual attraction, communication, perception of needs, and responsiveness in the process of

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decision-making" (p. 36). The European Union could be considered the culmination of a centuries-long evolution toward an increasingly integrated Atlantic Area community of states. Although some analysts are prone to regard the international community's actions in a generally positive light (Lindberg 2014:12), others warn that many underdeveloped and failed states are not benefiting from globalization processes (Rao 2011; Laakso 2017).

Shared-Interest Political Communities

The shared-interest perspective on political communities emphasizes common political values, partisanship, or policy preferences. In democratic states, sustaining a strong sense of community among citizens is crucial to making collective decisions more responsive to diverse and divergent interests and identities:

> Democratic political community does not come from trust in authorities or legitimation of the political regime, but from the empowering of laypeople as capable and knowledgeable members of a political community, who share a common division of labour and, in the course of time, have developed a sense of mutual identification, springing from their concrete experiences with how to "make a difference." (Bang 2009:106)

Community members mutually recognize one another, a process that combines interpersonal relations and a psychological sense of community:

> Political integration generally implies a relationship of *community* among people within the same *political* entity. That is, they are held together by mutual ties of one kind or another, which give the group a feeling of identity and self-awareness. Integration, therefore, is based on strong social cohesiveness within a social group. (Jacob and Teune 1964:4)

But, demographic and technological changes may fracture community cohesion and solidarity, fragmenting a polity into subcommunities that practice "more fluid, issue-based group politics with less institutional coherence" (Bimber 1998:133). When some members of a society question others' right to participate fully in the political community, it becomes "a site where contests are waged over citizenship and the terms of membership in society. Community is, therefore, the object of struggle in which different moral geographies are imagined" (Staeheli 2008:5). Conflicts erupt over the power to shape public policy decisions, ranging from restricting citizenship to enjoying the benefits of governmental resource redistributions. Social movements can be viewed as communities of challengers outside the polity that use unconventional collective actions, such as demonstrations and protests, in seeking redress of their members' grievances by changing power structures and public policies (Lo 1992; Taylor and Whittier 1992).

Weber's concept of power fits this community-conflict model: "the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (Weber

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1968:962). The resisting others are members of opposing political communities who desire different policy outcomes. Rivalries between political tribes – ethno-cultural communities locked into zero-sum struggles for domination of the polity – intensified in numerous states during the early twenty-first century (Chua 2018). Populist authoritarians rode to electoral victories on waves of reactionary nationalism: Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Narendra Modi in India, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, Jaroslaw Kaczynski in Poland, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey, Donald Trump in the United States, Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela. Other states – notably Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK – saw substantial electoral gains by far-right parties pursuing anti-immigrant and anti-globalist agendas.

Clashes of competing political communities also characterize interest group politics, conventional influence actions within a polity where private-sector groups try to affect public policy decisions (Berry and Wilcox 2016). Drawing from population biology and organizational ecology theories, some political scientists investigated US lobbying at the state and national levels by applying population ecology principles to explain their rapid growth in the late twentieth century (Gray and Lowery 1996; Leech 2015; Halpin et al. 2016). Their analyses "both accounted for observed variations in the density and diversity of interest communities in the American states and suggested ways in which these emergent population characteristics shape organization survival and adaptation, the strategies and tactics interest organizations employ, and how influential these can be in political contexts" (Lowery and Gray 2015:1). Research topics included the changing demography of the EU interest group system (Berkhout and Lowery 2010; Zeng and Battiston 2016); lobbying and change in party competition and polarization in the United States (Gray et al. 2015); and the weakness of organized opposition to the business community in financial regulatory policymaking (Pagliari and Young 2015). Organizational ecology has also been applied in International Relations (Abbott et al. 2016). Other scholars sought to explain the conditions under which some political interest communities are more successful than others in achieving their objectives. A common perception is that business interest groups dominate the public policymaking process (Drutman 2015). However, a random sample of 98 policy issues between 1998 and 2002 found that US business efforts that provoked challenges from other interests were less likely to achieve their goals. Business had "an advantage in the relatively rare instances when it acts to advance its interests on issues that do not draw opposition or interest from other actors" (Hojnacki et al. 2015:205). Research on business lobbying outcomes in the EU drew a similar conclusion (Dür et al. 2015).

Lastly, political communities are increasingly ubiquitous at the transnational level of analysis. The European Union is an economic community of 27 states (after Brexit) with a parliament where lobbyists try to influence supranational legislation (Bellamy and Castiglione 2013; Klüver et al. 2015). A proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) would further integrate

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TABLE 1.1. *Classification of chapters*

	Types of Communities	
Types of Actors	**Geographic**	**Shared-Interest**
Persons, Groups	#3 Exceptional Policymaking Agency #5 Civil Society Associations	#6 Collective Action Fields
Organizations, Nations	#7 Nations Trading & Fighting	#3 States, Fisheries Organizations, and Legislative Networks #4 Event Publics #8 Legislative Influence

EU and US economic ties (Dür and Lechner 2015; Morin et al. 2017). President Trump withdrew from a similar Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which continued without the United States. Around the world, some 200 states belong to regional trading blocs, military alliances, and diverse educational, cultural, and scientific intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Research on IGO memberships found that trade ties are "the most important determinant of joint membership between states in the most institutionalized IGOs, which is congruent with security communities" (Boehmer and Nordstrom 2008:282). Participation in IGOs diffuses international norms "where democracy is viewed as the legitimate form of government" (Torfason and Ingram 2010:355). By communicating, learning, diffusing knowledge, and emulating one another's best practices, IGO members collectively construct a shared sense of political community. Chapter 7 examines these multimodal transnational communities in greater depth.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

This chapter lays the cornerstones of our argument. We highlighted how actors, seeking power in political arenas or fields, create or join groups, or create associated objects to contest or reinforce current distributions of political capital. We explained why communities are a key concept for this book and for future research on political networks: how they can be identified, how they are created, and what effects they have on individual-, community-, and system-level outcomes. The next chapter presents the multimodal network analysis methods to be applied in the six substantive chapters that follow. Table 1.1 classifies those chapters according to type of political actors and type of communities under investigation. In conclusion, we briefly reflect on some future directions for multimodal political network analysis and sketches a set of future research projects that could build on the theoretical and methodological foundations of this volume.

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