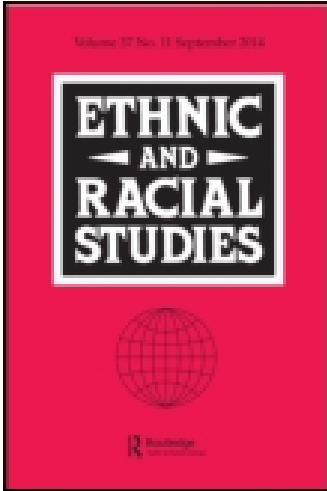


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Publisher: Routledge
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Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Ethnic and Racial Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rers20>

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Published online: 14 Aug 2014.

To cite this article: Bruno Cousin & Sébastien Chauvin (2014) Globalizing forms of elite sociability: varieties of cosmopolitanism in Paris social clubs, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37:12, 2209-2225, DOI: [10.1080/01419870.2014.934260](https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2014.934260)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2014.934260>

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Globalizing forms of elite sociability: varieties of cosmopolitanism in Paris social clubs

Bruno Cousin and Sébastien Chauvin

(Received 29 March 2013; accepted 2 June 2014)

This article examines the cultivation of transnational connections, cosmopolitanism and global class consciousness among members of elite social clubs in Paris. Drawing from interviews with members, it compares how – according to their respective characteristics – various social clubs promote different kinds of bourgeois cosmopolitanism, while rejecting the more recent internationalism of upper-middle-class service clubs such as the Rotary. Each club's peculiar ethos, practice and representations of social capital are related to the features of competing clubs through relations of mutual symbolic distinction; for example, some clubs emphasize the 'genuineness' of links while stigmatizing others for the accent they put on utility. The varied forms of cosmopolitanism that they promote partly replicate these logics of distinction, eliciting struggles over the authenticity or inauthenticity of transnational connections. Yet, clubs also oppose each other according to the unequal emphasis that they place on international ties per se, which creates a competing axiology within the symbolic economy of social capital accumulation.

Keywords: upper class; cosmopolitanism; sociability; social capital; symbolic relations; Paris

Since the Middle Ages, European elites and upper classes have always considered themselves more cosmopolitan than other social groups.¹ Such self-representations resulted in part from geographical mobility and intercultural contacts fostered by specific institutions, for example: networks between nobiliary courts, between monasteries and, later, universities; *linguae francae* and common scholarly languages; the circulation of cultural goods; commercial partnerships, political alliances and norms of exogamy; the *peregrinatio academica* and the Grand Tour (Elias [1969] 1983; Duby [1981] 1983; Le Goff [1984] 1992, 2001; Braudel [1979] 1992; Chartier 1994; Black 2003).

In the contemporary period, several works in the sociology and anthropology of cosmopolitanism have emphasized how different experiences of intercultural or transnational inclusiveness are linked to specific social positions, connections, sociability practices, institutions, world views and shared narratives (see e.g. Hannerz 1990; Tarrus 2000; Lamont and Aksartova 2002; Wagner 2007a; Calhoun 2008; Duyvendak 2011; Glick Schiller, Darieva and Gruner-Domic 2011; Ossman 2013). They have found that cosmopolitanism and the promotion of cosmopolitan values does not preclude class exclusiveness, boundary work, or a concern for distinction. Indeed, the version of cosmopolitanism most valued by globalized elites often goes together with the stigmatization of the less mobile and the differently connected. Yet, structural and symbolic relations *between the different forms* of cosmopolitanism (or internationalism) have never been systematically studied, aside from the ways in which rich ‘expats’ distance themselves from poor ‘immigrants’ (Green 2008). At the top of the social ladder, several recent qualitative studies analyse the transnational sociability of the ‘old money’ upper class (Saint Martin 1993; Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot [1996] 1998; Wagner 2007b), expatriate families of international executives and managers working for large corporations (Wagner 1998; Beaverstock 2002, 2005), free-moving professionals as a Europeanized upper middle class (Scott 2006; Favell 2008)² and exchange students in the EU Erasmus programme. But, although some of this work makes comparisons between these groups, they seldom address the ways in which framing processes and practices of symbolic boundary making result in distinct international identities and resources, nor how these identities connect with logics of social domination between fractions of the upper class.

Adopting a Bourdieusian perspective, the pioneering work of Anne-Catherine Wagner briefly underscores how recently acquired skills and dispositions towards ‘international’ cultural capital are looked down upon as superficial, inauthentic and too explicitly instrumental by those who inherited them through early socialization (Wagner 1998, 117–123, Wagner 2004, 136). Cosmopolitan heirs see their own comprehensive experience of growing up within a transnational and multilingual environment as more truly and deeply transformative than any formal learning provided by national school systems or company training programmes.

However, if Wagner gives a clear hint of the ways that certain international *cultural* competences and knowledge can be legitimized or delegitimized from another social position, she does not explore how international *social* capital – both transnational connections and local acquaintances with foreigners – can also elicit symbolic struggles over its more or less distinctive character. These dynamics of distinction are our focus here: by pointing rival experiences of international sociability, we contribute to the study of the symbolic economy of social capital among the upper classes (Cousin and Chauvin 2012). Our argument draws on data

collected on Paris elite social clubs: since 2010, we conducted twenty-one in-depth interviews among the members of the city's five clubs – Jockey Club, Nouveau Cercle de l'Union, the Travellers, Automobile Club de France and Cercle de l'Union Interalliée³ – supplemented with ethnographic observation and archival research. These institutions of sociability were chosen for three reasons: (1) because their explicit function is to manage and develop the social capital of their members; (2) because they contribute significantly to the boundary work among different parts of the upper classes (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 1989, 193–252; Khan 2012, 371); and (3) because social clubs are still key in the internationalization of the bourgeoisie, a point that has been overlooked in the literature until now.⁴

How elite clubs foster class-based cosmopolitanisms

The Jockey is the most aristocratic, legacy-based and patrilineal of all Parisian social clubs;⁵ its members acknowledge these characteristics very openly. Its primary *raison d'être* is to perpetuate the links between the male descendants of the nineteenth-century French conservative ruling class, whose belonging to the elite goes back even further. Refined Frenchness is proudly cultivated as part of a restricted group identity and through its special relation with national history. However, its members often come from families traditionally at ease in several countries, within Europe and on both sides of the Atlantic, where their undisputable nationally rooted prestige serves as a guarantee of their social status.

For instance, Alexandre, a thirty-eight-year-old Jockey member from a ducal house who ranked among the Peers of France, was raised in one of the wealthiest *arrondissements* of Paris, where he attended a private elementary school named after his family and then several secondary institutions around the country, which familiarized him with many regions of France. He explained:

I am very French, by my origins, by my family, by my education, by my environment, by the people I see, by many things. (...) Thus I really have an origin: my blood and my origins are from somewhere. My roots.

Yet, he went abroad right after graduating (with difficulty) from high school. He studied business economics for two years in Brussels, six months in Madrid and six months in Dublin, was drafted into the military for a year, and came back to Paris for his fourth year of college. At the same time, he spent every summer interning in the USA, which led to a job in New York City after graduation. He lived there for twelve years, working successively as a derivatives trading support associate, a financial adviser, the chief financial officer and partner of an advertising agency,

and finally for a hedge fund managing investments for many wealthy European aristocratic families, whose founder was himself a Jockey Club member. He also obtained a finance MBA from New York University, an MA in financial mathematics from Columbia, and US citizenship. He now considers the USA his adoptive country.

The Great Recession, however, brought him back to France, where he created his own financial company, which he located in Geneva. At the time of the interview, his clients were mainly French, Swiss, Luxembourgish, Belgian and British, while the financial products he distributed were managed in the USA. Therefore, he was living between Paris and Geneva and spending one week every month in New York where he was still a partner in the advertising agency.

When in New York, Alexandre is a regular at the Knickerbocker Club, with which the Jockey (like the Nouveau Cercle de l'Union (NCU) and the Travellers) has a reciprocal arrangement, and where he can entertain his US acquaintances. In fact, even though he lives mainly in Europe, he spends much more time at the 'Knick' than at the Jockey. He became familiar with the Jockey by going to private parties (*rallyes*) organized at the club for teenagers of the upper class. Today, he often meets male family members and old family friends there, which makes him feel a strong sense of belonging. Yet, the club is primarily a way for him to get direct, easy access to the sociability of the traditional East Coast elite of the USA. More generally, as Alexandre insisted:

When I travel, my first reflex is to check if there isn't a reciprocal club in the city I will be visiting: New York is of course an easy example... London is another one... When I visit Brussels, there is the Cercle du Parc where I go from time to time, to have lunch or just to pass by. And that's very pleasant. It's pleasant because you feel at home. (...) Another anecdote: I was having lunch [at the Jockey] with my dad; we were sitting at a table with two people I didn't know. We talk business a bit – not really about work, just about industry in general and how things are going... – and one of them asks me: "So you travel a lot... are you going somewhere soon?" I tell him yes, that I'm leaving for Brazil in two weeks to spend two weeks there, for business and for pleasure, and I tell him that I don't know the country. And he tells me: "Well, wait: one of my nephews is in Rio, so if you go to Rio, get in contact with him!" I got in contact with him by email, and we saw each other almost every day! Thus I would say there is this notion of quasi-instantaneous affinity.

In a similar manner, a financial analyst and board member of the Jockey told us how much he appreciates frequenting the Circolo della Caccia, which is located in the Borghese Palace in Rome, both for the 'quite exceptional environment' and for the feeling of social familiarity and comfort that he experiences every time he goes there. The Jockey Club and its international network of partner clubs indeed promotes class-based

cosmopolitanism – ‘But this is not shutting ourselves off from the world,’ clarified Alexandre. ‘It is merely, at certain moments, having a world in which we can be among ourselves.’

Among the other Parisian social clubs, the Nouveau Cercle de l’Union (NCU) is most like the Jockey. It grew out of several consecutive mergers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the last of which occurred in 1983 between the Nouveau Cercle and the Cercle de l’Union – itself established in 1828 with the explicit Anglophile motivation of strengthening the links between French and British elites and importing to Paris a form of sociability already typical of London’s high society (Gmeline 2003). Today, however, the NCU and its 500 members are less attached to their aristocratic heritage than Jockey members. In addition to offering the traditional leisure activities of the French conservative upper class (equestrian sports, hunting, golf and gaming), the NCU also promotes cultural and scholarly exchanges. Many of its members are bibliophiles, and interest in history and international relations is a long-standing characteristic of the club. It awards two non-fiction literary prizes for history and autobiography every year, has strong connections with the Société d’Histoire Diplomatique and its journal, and a second history prize awarded by a jury mainly composed of foreign ambassadors. Two recent presidents of the NCU, René de La Croix de Castries and Gabriel de Broglie, were illustrious amateur historians and fellows of the Académie française. A few other members also belong to the Institut de France (the most prestigious French honorary society, which includes the Académie). More generally, while the majority of NCU affiliates are part of the business world, it also has the highest share of diplomats,⁶ top civil servants, journalists and writers among its members. The NCU’s proximity to culture and diplomacy leads its members to perceive the world through a more intellectual frame than the other clubs, even though, for many of them, cosmopolitanism primarily results from social intercourse with professional intercultural mediators (who are sometimes asked to give formal presentations). A thirty-six-year-old audit manager of a multinational corporation told us:

When you have great ones, when you have Renaud Girard, a distinguished reporter at *Le Figaro*, when you have a Jean Bothorel, who is at *L’Express*, it is interesting to discuss with this kind of persons, rather than to chat with the old aristocrat who has an old estate and keeps lamenting, saying “we were a great family and now everything falls into pieces,” with his three cows... He’s a kind fellow, but one must live in the world! (...) I prefer a hundred times talking with Renaud Girard. Each time he gives a conference there I go, and it is captivating! He brags a bit, but that’s part of his character... and I prefer having tea with him.

The cosmopolitanism of NCU members grows less out of their pre-existing private and personal connections than at the Jockey and is more

often institutionally mediated. Indeed, its members are affiliated with multiple organizations, fostering class-based internationalism according to a variety of criteria. For instance, several NCU members – qualified descendants of the French commissioned officers who served during the American Revolutionary War – are also members of the USA’s oldest patriotic society: The Society of the Cincinnati (and can therefore automatically be affiliated with the less socially selective Sons of the American Revolution).⁷ More importantly, *all* NCU members also belong to the much broader Cercle de l’Union Interalliée (CUI, most often referred to as l’Interalliée), originally established in 1917 as a social and dining club where Parisian elites could socialize with the officers and prominent figures of France’s allies during the First World War.

The NCU members we interviewed criticized the size, lower selectivity, lack of conviviality, and mixed gender make-up of l’Interalliée (whose membership reaches over 3,300 persons). They complained that these characteristics do not really allow CUI affiliates to be personally known by the staff and to know each other, and that it is therefore ‘more like a luxury hotel than a real social club’. Since the NCU is housed on a dedicated floor of CUI’s building, it is literally a club within a club. Its members, however, often appreciate this two-tiered organization, as it allows them to combine the more intense and distinctive sociability of the smaller institution with the larger infrastructure and services offered by the other, which include a network of 136 partner clubs in twenty-nine countries (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 2007, 233). In contrast, the NCU affords a more restricted choice of seventeen partners that it considers to be its equals.⁸ A thirty-six-year-old antique dealer explained:

I travel a lot for work, and when I’m abroad I stay at the clubs. I find it nicer and less impersonal than the hotel. Our advantage is that since we are the oldest club in Paris and the fanciest – with the Jockey – we have equivalences with the fanciest. In London I know almost all of them, and in New York... But I try to stay at the same ones as much as I can: for sure in New York the best is the Knickerbocker, and in London I generally stay at Boodle’s, because it is really our matching club, and otherwise I sometimes stay at the Athenæum... Because, what’s not bad with the fact that we are automatically members of the Interalliée is that we also benefit from all its partnerships, and they are countless! I think it is probably the club in the world with the highest number of reciprocal agreements... But it doesn’t position itself in the same way we do: we look for *the best* club in a certain country, while they look for quantity. In New York they might have five or six partners; and we absolutely do not! And, true, in London we have two equivalences, but in London they are a lot of gentlemen’s clubs: we have Boodle’s, which is the fanciest after White’s, but White’s doesn’t have reciprocal agreements with anybody. And we have the Athenæum because it is the intellectual one.

Thus, NCU members see their club as playing a distinct role in the diversified set of tools that they use to manage their social capital and international connections, including their families, informal circles of friends, professional and inter-professional networks, exclusive clubs that act as status markers, and more integrated clubs that broaden their reach.

Compared with the Jockey and the NCU, cosmopolitanism at the Travellers is even more explicit. The Travellers is class-based and elitist like the former two, but in a way that directly values professional status and promise, primarily in law and finance, in addition to high social origin. It promotes the international integration of a *de facto* Western upper class: the club was created in 1902 as a counterpart to its homonym in London, and still has reciprocal agreements almost exclusively with gentlemen's clubs in Europe and in the Americas.⁹ However, more than any other Parisian club, its purpose is to foster *international* social capital among its members. As prescribed by the Travellers' regulations, around half of its 800 members hold foreign citizenship (alone or in addition to French nationality); the majority are British or American. Members are listed in a directory including their nationalities; several come from historic transatlantic families (like the de Gunzburg). Finally, the club has a special non-resident membership category for people living abroad. In contrast to other clubs that require residence in France, the Travellers supports their co-optation (for instance, George Soros is a member).

Moreover, just how much cosmopolitanism is valued and legitimized is evident in the Travellers' membership criteria. As opposed to the other Parisian social clubs, transnational mobility experiences and not being (only) French are seen here as intrinsically positive qualities, which partially compensate for one's lack of inherited social status. A thirty-seven-year-old lobbyist, who is a member of the Board of the Travellers and also a member of the Jockey, detailed:

It is true that, among the young Americans whose parents were members of the Travellers, many now live in London or New York, and are members of affiliate clubs. Thus they have no real advantage in being members here. When you are a member of the Knickerbocker in New York, or of Boodle's or the Turf in London, if you come to France you can come here. (...) But we are very open to Americans or Englishmen who would work in Paris. Even if they are not members by family tradition. (...) In this respect it is very international, and it is especially open to international curriculums. Whereas we will tend to require family pedigrees from the pure French, someone who has a father or a mother who is American (or Austrian, or something else) will be very welcome at the Travellers, without us going to his home country to get information on his origins. (...) When you have decided to settle and to work in Paris even though you are completely American, it gives a dimension of open-mindedness, a culture: it is not open to everyone.

The contrast with the Jockey Club is clear. The latter changed its entry rules following the recent international controversy that arose when it admitted Baron Albert Frère, a self-made man and the richest man in Belgium,¹⁰ who had been previously turned down by the Jockey's partner in Brussels. The Parisian club subsequently revised its admission policy to stress clear national prerogatives. Foreign candidates can no longer be considered for admission if they come from a country where the Jockey has a partner club but they are not already a member of it. As one board member explained, a man's reputation is better assessed in his country of origin.

The Travellers is also a place where members' international backgrounds get converted into status markers that are more identifiable and meaningful in the French context – in addition to providing access to Paris's high society. Many interviewees spoke of these processes of prestige translation. Nicholas, a thirty-nine-year-old dual citizen (one of his grandparents was French, the other three American), who lived back and forth between the USA and France until the age of twenty-two when he finally settled in France and then founded a trilingual family with his German wife, is now the chief executive officer of a financial communication company. When describing his academic background, he said:

But who in France knows Brown? Or, even less: who knows Phillips Exeter Academy? (...) I am in France with a baggage that comes from the United States, but which does not mean anything in a French context. If I had been to Harvard, or perhaps Yale, this is transportable baggage that can cross the Atlantic and still mean something... But unfortunately for me, in the French context I have never benefited from the slightest advantage related to that, because they are in fact references that don't mean anything for anyone here. And that's precisely another interest of being at the Travellers: you are potentially facing people who... this, they know, and this evokes something for them. And thus, it makes an extra link (...), a common reference.

Conversely, since the club is well known by part of the world's upper class, some respondents described inviting foreign business partners or customers to the Travellers to signal that they belonged to the French establishment. In a similar way, while abroad, members of the Travellers can simultaneously assert class belonging and display a cosmopolitan habitus by taking advantage of reciprocal agreements and bringing local acquaintances to prestigious clubs that many have never entered, although they are in their own country.

Finally, with more than 2,000 members, the Automobile Club de France (ACF) is Paris's largest gentlemen's club. It was founded in 1895 both as a private club and as a public organization for the promotion of automobiles. Today its building still contains the headquarters of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, the organization that oversees motorsports

at the global level. However, activities related to cars are now a separate, rather marginal aspect of the ACF's life: only 200 of its members are part of an internal subgroup of car enthusiasts (which requires a distinct application). This contrasts with the ubiquity of automobiles – especially antique ones – in the ACF's interior decoration and strategies of self-representation, which celebrate French auto industry pioneers, thereby serving as an enduring source of symbolic capital for the club and its members.¹¹ Indeed, as a social club, the ACF aims to bring together industrial elites at the national level.

Its centripetal orientation distinguishes it from the more outwardly oriented clubs interested in transnational relations. The ACF is particularly open to entrepreneurs from all over France who visit Paris regularly for business – whether as guests of Parisian members or as members themselves. It is also the only social club in Paris to have a reciprocal agreement with a club in another French city: the Club de l'Union, in Lyon. But until recently it had no agreement with clubs in New York (in 2007, its only partner in the USA was in Chicago) and, although its members often say how much they admire English traditions of masculine sociability, such Anglophilia often grows out of literature and reputation rather than out of intimate experience with London's clubs. Besides, that very few ACF members are foreigners and that very few foreigners grace its doorstep is not judged a problem: despite its 10,000 square metres, ACF's building does not have bedrooms; infrequent guests stay in rooms at the Jockey Club, thanks to an agreement between the two institutions.

Indeed, although many ACF members do have some international experience and connections, they develop them mostly through other institutions of sociability. Thus Basile, a thirty-six-year-old lobbyist for a national business association, expanded his network in the Americas thanks to the Association France-Amériques; and Louis, a thirty-four-year-old private banking manager who belongs to an old family of automobile industrialists, regularly stays at the Knickerbocker Club in New York because he is also a member of Paris's Travellers.

Varieties of cosmopolitanism and the symbolic economy of social capital

Beyond the question of cosmopolitanism and transnational ties addressed in this article, our wider research on social and service clubs (Cousin and Chauvin 2010, 2012) draws attention to how each club frames social capital and defines the best way to accumulate it. Our findings suggest that because members face unequal conditions for accumulating resourceful connections, symbolic hierarchies and competition arise over how each

group represents their social capital and over the criteria each uses to connect their members with each other.

At the Jockey Club and at the NCU, social capital is generally inherited and conceived as collective patrimony. Its consolidation and mobilization are framed as ‘natural’, spontaneous and disinterested, with no other direct purpose but leisure, and as private as a familial relation can be. Thus the Jockey and the NCU differ from other institutions of (upper-)middle-class sociability such as the Rotary and other service clubs (Camus-Vigué 2000), which recruit members based on their professional status and present themselves as useful tools for social network engineering. The Travellers and the ACF occupy an intermediate position, combining a valorization of legacy and strong ties within a select upper class with meritocratic and utilitarian preoccupations.

Thus, in line with the conflict between ‘*mondain*’ (effortlessly elegant) and ‘*docte*’ (scholastic) relations to *cultural* capital identified by Bourdieu ([1979] 1984, 70) among French elites, we observed disagreements over the best way of acquiring and managing one’s social capital, which grow out of the unequal and different ways through which it is acquired by members of these different organizations. Social club members, especially ones at the Jockey and the NCU, almost unanimously scoff at what they consider the artificiality, inherent vulgarity and pushiness of the Rotary. Often without even being asked, they feel the need to point out that Rotary clubs (and other service clubs) are something ‘totally different’ from social clubs and ‘have nothing to do’ with them. Denis, the sixty-four-year-old president of the CUI, former president of the NCU and long-time member of the Jockey, told us of one of the most egregious cases of misinformed journalism he ever had to correct – when the writer described him as belonging to the Rotary. Jockey and NCU members also regularly invoke the Rotary as a foil against which they contrast good practices from bad, as when they criticize other clubs for being too utilitarian and network-driven. In a more light-hearted manner, they emphasize the less aristocratic origin of Travellers and ACF members, and their (supposedly laborious) strategies of social capital accumulation, by nicknaming them respectively ‘*les Travailleurs*’ [the Workers] and ‘*les Garagistes*’ [the Mechanics].

Our inquiry into the symbolic boundaries marked by different social actors to categorize sociability and friendship practices (Lamont and Molnár 2002) required that we combine classical approaches to social capital as a set of individual resources (e.g. Bourdieu 1980; Portes 2010) with the relational approach to symbolic struggles deployed in *Distinction*, thus integrating two parts of Bourdieu’s ([1979] 1984) theoretical framework in a new way.

But how do the distinctions that clubs make over how social capital should be accumulated and used map onto the varieties of cosmopolitanism we described earlier? For the most polarized positions, the two logics of differentiation essentially blend. For instance, the members of the five

Paris social clubs see the Rotarians and their more than 1,000 French clubs as a multitude of local and provincial elites, whose claim to be ‘international’ –based on the coordinated activities, exchange programme and official principles of Rotary International (Goff 2008) – gets short shrift because, from their perspective, Rotary clubs are not even in touch with France’s centralized national power structure and therefore cannot pretend to transcend it. Additionally, they criticize the artificiality of an organization that implements the exact same model of sociability everywhere around the world and which prospects and plans international contacts mainly as group activities and discovery tours (and not primarily to facilitate its members’ pre-existing cosmopolitanism and transnational mobility, as in social clubs).¹²

However, when elite social clubs contrast themselves *with each other*, logics of distinction do not just revolve around the authenticity or artificiality of international connections. Indeed, clubs also disagree over how important it is to have international connections in the first place and whether the club should be a place for accumulating them. As a consequence, oppositions between different forms of social capital are only reflected in those between different forms of cosmopolitanism to a limited extent. In fact, the latter space of struggle partly subverts the former and therefore makes it more complex. For example, although Travellers’ interviewees who cannot belong to the Jockey or the NCU sometimes acknowledge that their lack of aristocratic legacy and inherited social capital is a handicap, most insist that their own ‘international profile’ fits with their club’s view that cosmopolitanism is an intrinsic virtue. This alternative positive interferes with the generic axiology pitting ‘genuine’ experiences of social capital against ‘interested’ ones. In fact, the Travellers can be more business oriented in part because it is more international. As it is often difficult to define with precision the family background of a foreign applicant who grew up outside of France, the club relies more on his professional position to establish his social status. In addition, as many foreign members do not have family or old friends at the Travellers, they are less likely to consider the club as a natural extension of their closest circle of relations and see it more as a work-related space.

In response to the symbolic positioning of the Travellers, members of the ACF – which, as we saw, is the least internationally connected of all Paris social clubs – try to minimize the importance of cosmopolitanism and having contacts abroad altogether. ‘Not everybody wants to have lunch next to an American banker,’ summarized one ACF member referring to the Travellers. As for the NCU, its members reframe internationalization as a qualitative rather than a quantitative issue, stressing the importance of acculturation. From this perspective, of course, the learned cosmopolitanism and intercultural mediators of the NCU appear particularly legitimate, while the ‘spontaneity’ of the Jockey and the ‘international openness’ of the Travellers can both be stigmatized as superficial

and simplistic. The latter is even blamed for calling people international who do not deserve it. As one thirty-six-year-old member of NCU put it: 'There you find any dick who is a small lawyer in an English or American firm: that's his life accomplishment! [*bâton de maréchal*].'

Conclusion

This article examines the cultivation of transnational connections, cosmopolitanism and global class consciousness among members of Paris social clubs. It compares how these clubs promote different kinds of upper-class cosmopolitanism, while differentiating themselves from the more recent internationalism of upper-middle-class service clubs such as the Rotary. Games of distinction between clubs around the greater authenticity of their competing forms of social capital take place both at a general level and around *international* social capital in particular (as some transnational connections are stigmatized as more superficial or utilitarian than others). Yet, clubs also disagree about the value of international ties per se, thus activating a competing axiology within the symbolic economy of social capital accumulation.

While theorists such as Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006) present globalized (upper-class) cosmopolitanism as potentially universal, Craig Calhoun (2008) suggests that we need to empirically examine who gets to be cosmopolitan with ease and who struggles to achieve it or remains uninterested. Yet, far from marking linear differences that could be measured along a single scale of cosmopolitanism, various material conditions and social institutions foster different sorts of cosmopolitan inhabitation of the world, also within the upper class. These differences not only arise from unequal degrees of exposure and sensitivity to global interdependence (Beck 2006) but can be produced by dynamics of symbolic competition between class fractions.

Revealing the class infrastructure of contemporary cosmopolitanisms also frames the question of global citizenship in new ways. As a diacritical political institution, citizenship has always drawn a line between the included and excluded within a given territory (Bosniak 2006). Thus, the rising notion of global citizenship invites us to scrutinize the new hierarchies that it may imply. By exacerbating people's unequal access to mobility and transnational ties based on their unequal resources and their positions within contemporary capitalism, globalization potentially shifts civic hierarchies to the world level (Sassen 2006). Besides nationality and economic capital, social capital plays a key role in determining how well individuals can access global resources and status, and in the shaping of their cosmopolitan representations and practices.

The feeling of being world citizens does not preclude that of belonging to the globalized class of the privileged, nor does it prevent the explicit

cultivation of *entre-soi* – as Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot designate the in-group togetherness that they identified as the main class-reproduction strategy of the French bourgeoisie. France's elite global citizens do not feel any less distinct from the global poor than they feel distinct from the French poor when thinking of themselves as French citizens. This is especially true considering that the international *entre-soi* cultivated by Paris's social clubs through their partner clubs 'around the world' steadily persevere in a Western (and white) ethnic tropism, ignoring the elites of the Global South, including the ones of France's former colonial empire, as much as it ignores at home the members of the French elite from ethnic minority backgrounds. Furthermore, as we saw, elitism and cosmopolitanism can go hand in hand: cosmopolitanism itself can function as a source of distinction from the less mobile or less broadly connected – whether the lower classes or those within the upper class who owe their legitimacy to more strictly national resources.

Moreover, in-depth interviews with members of social clubs suggest that the global elite, far from being obsessed with distinguishing itself from the world's masses, can be mostly preoccupied with emulation and competition among privileged peers and subgroups. Further research is needed to measure how much these internal dynamics of class distinction contribute to the internationalization of elites, and to explore the consequences of these processes for the emergence of global cosmopolitan values within and beyond the upper classes.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Apostolos Andrikopoulos, Mabel Berezin, Rogers Brubaker, Jan Willem Duyvendak, Shamus Khan, Michèle Lamont, Peggy Levitt, Ashley Mears, Ann Morning, Jules Naudet, Pál Nyíri, Susan Ossman, Rachel Sherman, Tommaso Vitale, Roger Waldinger and anonymous reviewers of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* for their comments on the previous versions of this article.

Notes

1. In this article, when no further specification is given, we use the terms 'cosmopolitan' and 'cosmopolitanism' in a limited and non-moral acceptance. They refer to travelling abroad, being part of and cherishing a network of international contacts, displaying intercultural ease, and feeling at home in different countries. It is therefore a quality and world view that does not necessarily have to do with the sharing of universalistic or egalitarian values. This restricted sense, which is already documented in Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* and texts by many English-speaking figures of the Enlightenment, is also – nowadays – the usual meaning of the French word '*cosmopolite*'.
2. Other monographs focus on the cosmopolitanism fostered by the activity and the professional sociability of specific cultural producers or mediators: artists,

writers, academics, foreign correspondents, diplomats, United Nations personnel, and so on.

3. All interviews (except one with an American interviewee) were conducted in French, at one of the clubs (ten interviews out of twenty-one), at the apartment of the interviewee (two), at his office (three), at our faculty office in Paris (five), or by phone (one). Except for this latter, which lasted only twenty minutes, the duration of each interview ranged between one hour and three hours twenty-five minutes. Interviewees were recruited through chain referral. All the quotes in the article were translated by us.

4. Although this article focuses on the French case, the theory of elite social capital that we deploy and some of the findings we present here were first outlined in a previous study conducted in Italy, on Milan's social clubs and most prestigious Rotary clubs (Cousin and Chauvin 2010).

5. Today, 97% of the 1,100 Jockey members come from aristocratic families, with the consequence (related to the distinct professional traditions between the French upper classes) that many of them work in the financial services, in real estate, or as top civil servants, diplomats and sometimes as entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the great families of the industrial bourgeoisie are almost not represented in the club, whose aristocratic component has progressively expanded since its creation in 1834 (Mension-Rigau 2003).

6. In addition to the presence of many French diplomats among the regular members, the (male) ambassadors of several countries are honorary members of the NCU for the duration of their appointment in Paris.

7. In comparison, the members of the Travellers – whose families generally entered the elite later but often studied in the USA – tend to be more involved in alumni associations (those of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Stanford are particularly active in Paris).

8. The Jockey Club also has less than twenty reciprocal agreements, all of them with clubs located outside France that it considers its foreign counterparts. This special attention to international social equivalence was particularly patent when, after 150 years of partnership with London's Turf Club, the members of the Jockey recently considered that Turf's social selectivity had declined (among other reasons, because it was keeping with the tradition of facilitating the admission of racehorse owners). They therefore decided to find an additional – more appropriate – British partner, and made an agreement with Boodle's.

9. 'We are open to the world, but it does not mean we are open to all cultures,' a thirty-three-year-old investment banking manager told us, also evoking the fact that, in all Paris social clubs (although a little less at the Travellers and at the ACF), not being of Catholic origin – and, more broadly, not being Christian – can be an obstacle to admission. For instance, only 2% of ACF members have African or Asian surnames: mainly Sephardic, but also often Lebanese (or Persian). They generally come from other national bourgeoisies that moved to Paris after major geopolitical events – either the end of the French colonial empire, the Lebanese civil war or the Islamic revolution – and almost never from upwardly mobile labour migration.

10. It is interesting to note that A. Frère's candidacy to the Jockey Club had been sponsored by French American David René de Rothschild, current head of the tricentennial international banking empire known today as the Rothschild Group

and of one of the world's most prominent cosmopolitan families (which is also among the few belonging traditionally to the Jockey despite not being Catholic). 11. In a similar way, interviewees from the ACF stressed the fact that the swimming pool of the club and the metal structure that tops it were designed by Gustave Eiffel.

12. Rotary International has a very meticulously planned 'Friendship Exchange Program' (based on a *Rotary Friendship Exchange Handbook*) designed to create new international connections between its members, and whose goals include 'learn[ing] how [Rotarians'] vocations are practiced in other parts of the world', 'observ[ing] new customs and cultures' and 'promot[ing] an appreciation of cultural diversity worldwide' (2009 edition, 1).

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