Chapter 1

Personalism, Personalization and Party Politics

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This book is about the role and place of individuals—primarily leaders, legislators, candidates and other activists—in modern political life and the implications of this for political parties. Election campaigns, especially in parliamentary democracies, have typically been characterized as contests between competing political parties (Wlezien 2009) because it is parties that aggregate interests, set policy agendas and mobilize voters (King 1969; Dalton, Farrell and McAllister 2011). Moreover, even after the election has been waged, parties remain central players as both legislatures and governments are organized along party lines (Weller 1985). The centrality and importance of political parties is captured in Schattschneider's (1942, 1) classic argument that 'political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties.'[1] From a theoretical perspective, the primacy of the party as an organization was particularly evident during the time of the mass party.[2] In the context of deeply rooted historical animosities based on cleavages such as religion, class and region, individual political actors and their personalities were thought to matter very little compared to ideology and party (Mughan 2000).

Despite the centrality of political parties as organizations, however, individual political actors have been, and will always be, crucially important to democratic politics. After all, parties are often considered to be nothing more than collectives of individuals, or 'teams of men' as Downs (1957) defined them. Cadre parties, with their loose organizational structure, for example, were built around individuals, and election campaigns tended to highlight individual local notables rather than broad national policy or collective identities (Norris 2000; Katz and Mair 1995). Even the mass party took opportunities to highlight its leader and did not focus solely on the collective identity.

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As Katz notes in the concluding chapter to this volume, membership applications for the French Communist Party in 1950 included the following oath: 'I hereby join the party of Maurice Thorez'. Despite having a clearly defined ideology and sense of collective identity, the party was, in many ways, defined by its leader. Moreover, as the deeply rooted cleavages that defined politics for generations waned, Kirchheimer's (1966) 'catch-all party' emerged as an alternative to traditional mass-based politics. The emergence of the catch-all party has transformed party competition and has placed a renewed emphasis on individual political actors, specifically with its de-emphasis of ideology and the strengthening of those at the top of the party leadership.

As ideology and formal group identifications (such as class, union affiliation and so on) continue to fade as the primary mechanisms for organizing civic life (Bennett 2012), Western democracies have experienced a significant decline of partisanship and party identification (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000), increased electoral volatility (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Caramani 2006) and a decline of collective identities more generally (Inglehart 1990; Putnam 2000). Importantly, transformations in social and political attitudes and significant changes in political party organization have been accompanied by dramatic innovations in communications technology such as the widespread adoption of the television, and more recently, the Internet and social media. In many ways, these technological changes have served to reinforce the importance of individual personalities (Hermans and Vergeer 2012; Vergeer, Hermans and Sams 2011) by allowing leaders, individual legislators and even candidates to have a more direct and unmediated relationship with voters (Kruikemeier et al. 2013).

Since the emergence of the catch-all party, scholars have increasingly written about the growing importance of individual political actors, especially party leaders and prime ministers, both during election campaigns and inside of legislatures and governments. Although there is still much debate regarding the precise degree, many students of parties and elections have identified a trend towards more candidate and leader-centred politics (Cross and Blais 2012a; Karlsen and Skogerbø 2015; McAllister 2015; Pruysers and Cross 2016a; Wattenberg 1991; Zittel 2015), increasingly individualized campaigns (Cross and Young 2015; De Winter and Baudewyns 2015; Eder, Jenny and Müller 2015; Zittel and Gschwend 2008) and the growing authority of party leaders and chief executives (Poguntke and Webb 2005; Savoie 1999). All of these trends are part of a broader phenomenon that has been labelled the *personalization of politics.*

Although there have been sporadic and somewhat piecemeal attempts in the literature to identify the importance of individual actors, what is lacking is a comprehensive assessment of the role of individuals in democratic politics and importantly, the relationship of this with political parties.

The presidentialization literature (i.e., Poguntke and Webb 2005), for example, focuses exclusively on party leaders and chief executives, leaving out candidates, Members of Parliament (MPs) and a variety of other party individuals who might also deserve study in the context of individualized and personalized politics. Conflation of presidentialization with personalization, of which the literature is often guilty (see, for example, Lobo 2017), is therefore problematic because it restricts our focus to the 'top'.

Likewise, the personalization literature (i.e., Karvonen 2010) focuses too heavily on change over time, and in the pursuit of documenting longitudinal changes, we often lose sight of how central and influential individual actors are even in the absence of change. Indeed, a country's politics may be more *personalized* than another (meaning that persons are more important in the first than in the second), but it may nonetheless experience less *personalization* (the importance of persons is increasing more slowly, if at all). In other words, politics can be highly personalized without personalization. This, of course, is a matter of the baseline from which we start measuring and focusing on the '-ization' of personalization means that this distinction typically is lost. Although the debate regarding the personalization of politics is both interesting and important, it is equally important to assess the degree of *personalism* (i.e., the extent to which politics is personalized).

It is therefore important to take a step back. As a result of the importance of party leaders and chief executives, we are necessarily interested in presidentialization (and the more static presidentialism). Leaders and chief executives, however, are not our only interest. We are also interested in candidates, MPs and party members. Here, the multiple levels identified in the personalization literature is a useful starting point (Balmas et al. 2014), although we identify many more possibilities for personalism than a simple leader-candidate dichotomy. Furthermore, although we are interested in personalization broadly, change over time is not our only interest. Ultimately, we are interested in *personalized* politics. That is, politics in which individual political actors are centrally important, prominent and highly visible. One of the arguments of this collection is that contemporary democratic politics includes a significant degree of personalism. In some respects this might result from recent changes (i.e., personalization), whereas in others it may have been the case for decades or longer.

As students of political parties, however, it is the interaction between personalism/personalization and party politics that is our central interest. Both personalized politics and the personalization of politics have important, though largely undocumented, implications for the way democratic politics is practised and the relative role, function and organization of political parties. Accordingly, we are particularly interested in how the various types and degrees of personalism/personalization interact with, and perhaps influence,

party behaviour and organization. Simply put, we seek to uncover the impli-cations of personalization on political parties and consider how personalism influences the 'partyness' of both party and government.

As we will see, the very definition of personalization sets it up as some-thing that occurs at the *expense* of the party and therefore is a phenomenon that weakens the party. As Katz argues in his contribution, in some manifes-tations this is clearly the case when party primacy, cohesion and unity are undermined by the prominence and visibility of individual actors (be they leaders, legislators, candidates, etc.). Although focus on a single, paramount leader may not always challenge the cohesion and coherence of a party, intra-party competition to become or to replace that leader may put cohesion and coherence in jeopardy, as may the prominence of individual personalities in positions below the top. It may also mean that what the party stands for can change, perhaps dramatically, depending on who is steering the ship. All of this suggests that high levels of personalism and processes of personalization may represent an important challenge to political parties as they are conven-tionally conceived.

Although this may be the case, we are equally interested in how parties react to personalism and how it influences their organization and behaviour. It may not weaken them as much as encourage—or force in some instances—change in organization, practice/strategy and internal power distribution. Thus, on the other hand, personalization may simply represent an opportunity for the party to rebrand itself, the ability to ride the coattails of a star candi-date or popular leader or the possibility of local candidates putting a 'human' face on the distant and impersonal party machine. In this sense, personalism can be a strategic decision of the political party and not something that simply happens to it.

In examining personalization through the lens of party politics, the chap-ters that follow demonstrate that personalism and personalization are not inherently zero-sum games for political parties. Although these processes cer-tainly have the ability to undermine party cohesion (both during campaigns and inside legislatures) and challenge the primacy of parties, personalization also provides parties with opportunities to connect and engage with party members and voters and to highlight the strengths of their unique 'team' (i.e., individual candidates and leaders). Importantly, however, the relationship and dynamics among person, party and personalism are not the same in every case or consistent over time. Some candidates, for instance, may engage in personalized campaigning in such a way as to undermine the coherence of their party's message, and others in the same party may wage a personalized campaign that is nonetheless consistent with the party's overall message and brand. Likewise, the degree of personalism may change both over time and among different parties in the same country. In better understanding how,

when and the extent to which personalization, and personalism more generally, occurs we contribute to a more complete picture of party organization and party government.

PERSONALIZATION AND PERSONALIZED POLITICS

The question of 'what is personalization' is both straightforward and multifaceted. At the most basic level, personalization refers to changing electoral, societal and political norms in which the centrality of individual actors has increased. Rahat and Sheafer (2007, 65), for example, define personalization as 'a *process* in which the political weight of the individual actor in the political process increases over time, while the centrality of the political group (i.e., political party) declines'. Karvonen (2010, 4) sums up the basic premise as follows:

> The core of the personalisation hypothesis is the notion that individual political actors have become more prominent at the expense of parties and collective identities. The central concept denotes a process of change over time: at t politics was less personalised than at $t+1$.

Personalism is personalization without the longitudinal change. It denotes the current state of personalized politics and refers to the role and prominence of individual political actors, regardless of change over time. Although the personalization literature focuses on change over time (i.e., personalization as a 'process' rather than a 'state'), many authors have noted that personalized politics is not an entirely new phenomenon. Indeed, Weber's classic form of 'charismatic authority', for example, emphasized how individual leaders could derive personal authority from their charisma.[3] More recently, Bennett (2012, 22) has written that 'personalized politics has long existed, of course, in the form of populist uprisings or emotional bonds with charismatic leaders'. Similarly, Holtz-Bacha and colleagues (2014, 154) have argued that 'in many ways, the personalization of politics is as old and ubiquitous as politics itself', and Karvonen (2010, 2) writes that 'while most authors would argue that the personalisation of politics is a typical feature of contemporary democracies, the phenomenon itself is anything but new'.

Persons always have been important in politics because ultimately they are the only ones capable of seeking political office and of governing. One of the attributes of any politician in a modern democracy is his or her party. But, of course, individuals differ within the same party with regard to: (a) their competence; (b) their policy preferences; (c) their moral character; (d) their personability or sex appeal, and so on. Personalization occurs, for instance,

when citizens, voters, the media and political actors themselves place greater emphasis on these personal differences. Suffice it to say, forms of personalism have likely existed for as long as politicians have. The important distinction here, however, is the (potentially) increasing importance of individual actors over time or, at very least, the particular importance that these actors have in contemporary democratic politics.

Beyond this basic definition, however, there is little consensus on the issue of personalization, either conceptually or empirically. Take, for example, the degree of personalization that can be found in western democracies. McAllister (2015, 337) has written that 'there is little doubt that national election campaigns in the established democracies have become more personalized. Leaders are much more prominent now than in the past, and considerable popular attention is directed towards the personalities of the leaders'. Elsewhere, McAllister (2007, 571) has written that 'in a trend that is shared by all of the liberal democracies, politics has become increasingly personalized'. Others, however, are less convinced. Kriesi (2012, 825), for example, claims that 'the empirical evidence concerning the "personalization of politics" thesis is, at best, mixed'. Kriesi concludes that rather than finding evidence of increasing personalization, what can be found are 'large country-specific differences in the overall degree of personalization and of the concentration of attention on the top candidates'.

This tension is borne out empirically as well. Wauters et al. (2016, 3), for instance, reviewed forty articles regarding the personalization of politics and found no clear evidence in either direction. In fact, the studies were almost evenly divided between those supporting personalization (eighteen studies) and those finding no or mixed evidence of personalization (twenty-two studies). Likewise, Karvonen's (2010) large-scale analysis of personalization produced mixed results. Although certain dimensions, such as media attention, provide strong evidence of personalization, evidence relating to the importance of party leaders and individual candidates in vote choice, as well as the changing dynamics of parliamentary democracy, are less clear. Indeed, Karvonen (2010, 101) concludes that the analysis 'does not support the notion that there has been a clear and pervasive trend towards personalisation among parliamentary democracies'. We add to this debate by providing new empirical evidence of the personalization of politics (or lack thereof) in a number of parliamentary democracies.

Holtz-Bacha and colleagues (2014, 155) suggest that much of the inconclusive and contradictory findings in the literature are the result of 'a lack of clarity and agreement about the definition of the term'. This is echoed by Van Aelst, Sheafer and Stanyer (2012, 204) who write that 'it is the lack of conceptual clarity and the absence of common operationalizations which are an important cause of the unclear or conflicting conclusions'. Some studies

explore personalization in the media, others consider local campaigns and others still examine voters and how they cast their ballots on election day. Additionally, different institutional settings, different temporal periods of study and baselines and different countries/parties may all contribute to the mixed findings. Indeed, it has been suggested that 'it would be a mistake to assume either that personalization has developed linearly, or that all countries would experience the phenomenon identically' (Holtz-Bacha, Langer, and Merkle 2014, 154). It is therefore unsurprising that different, and often contradictory, conclusions are made given the different foci of various studies.

Acknowledging the conceptual and theoretical deficiencies with the literature, recent scholarship has attempted to provide a clearer definition of personalization, categorize its various types/subtypes and provide empirically tested operationalizations (Adam and Maier 2010; Balmas et al. 2014; Van Aelst, Sheafer, and Stanyer 2012). Rahat and Sheafer (2007), for example, make an important contribution by distinguishing among three types of personalization: institutional, media and behavioural.[4] Institutional personalization refers to rules and institutions that place more emphasis on individuals; media personalization refers to a greater centrality and visibility of individual actors in news coverage; and behavioural personalization refers to the actions of both voters and politicians—voters in how much emphasis they place on candidates relative to parties and politicians in how much emphasis they place on their own campaigns and personalities relative to their party. These are important distinctions because comparing different 'types' of personalization may result in inconsistent results. In other words, within a single jurisdiction, there may be variation across the various types of personalization. With that said, each of these three types likely feed into one another to some degree.

In a similar fashion, Balmas et al. (2014) distinguish centralized forms of personalization from decentralized. Although this is not an entirely new contribution (see Zittel and Gschwend 2008), the authors provide clear definitions of the two subtypes of personalization and provide empirical evidence to demonstrate their differences. Broadly speaking, Balmas et al. (2014) suggest that centralized personalization occurs when 'power flows upward from the group' to a single leader, whereas decentralized personalization occurs when 'power flows downward from the group' to individual candidates/legislators rather than party leaders/executives. This is a useful distinction that helps define the locus of political personalization. Importantly, it demonstrates that personalization is not limited to party leaders and that there are implications for other political actors such as general election candidates. The authors also demonstrate how the earlier Rahat and Sheafer (2007) threefold typology fits within the framework of centralized and decentralized personalization.

Personalization, however, does not only refer to the 'who'. Holtz-Bacha, Langer, and Merkle (2014) are correct to point out that it goes beyond the

visibility and centrality of individual political actors. Personalization also refers to the increased focus on the character, personal lives and personality of these individuals. Here, Van Aelst, Sheafer, and Stanyer's (2012) recent work is useful insofar as it distinguishes between two distinct faces of personalization: individualization and privatization.[5]

> The first form of personalization concerns a focus on individual politicians as central actors in the political arena, including their ideas, capacities and policies. . . . We therefore label this first form 'individualization' . . . . The second form of personalization implies a shift in media focus from the politician as occupier of a public role to the politician as a private individual, as a person distinct from their public role. We label this shift in focus 'privatization' (204–205).

This second face of personalization, privatization, has been the focus of far less scholarly work. Nonetheless, there is evidence that both the media and voters focus on personality traits and information related to the personal lives of politicians in addition to their professional competence and performance (Adam and Maier 2010, 216; Bittner 2011; Langer 2011). This, however, is difficult to operationalize as it is challenging to define which personality traits are 'professional' or 'politically relevant' and which are in fact 'personal'. The difficulty in operationalization is likely a contributing factor to the underdevelopment of this aspect in the literature.

These conceptual and methodological innovations have helped to address some of the theoretical deficiencies in the personalization literature. Throughout this volume, we make two additional important conceptual contributions to the study of personalism/personalization. First, despite often being conflated with one another, we argue that personalization and presidentialization should not be used synonymously. Presidentialization is a specific form of personalization, a form that focuses its attention at the top (party leaders and chief executives). As we have just discussed, however, the concept of personalization/personalism is much broader and encompasses other actors such as general election candidates and legislators (among others). To use the two concepts synonymously further entrenches the notion that personalization is primarily about party leaders when this is simply not the case. Personalization occurs at a variety of levels and is in no way limited to the top of the party or government. Furthermore, even when specifically examining personalism among party leaders and chief executives, the two terms should not be confused. High levels of personalism can occur in the absence of presidentialization, whereas presidentialization cannot occur without personalism (see Poguntke and Webb this volume).

Second, although the identification of centralized and decentralized personalization is useful, we suggest that the simple leader-candidate dichotomy

that dominates the literature does not go far enough in identifying the various possible levels of personalization. Katz and Mair (1993) convincingly argue that political parties are not completely coherent and unified actors. Three important, and often competing 'faces' of parties have been identified: the party in public office, party in central office and party on the ground. The identification of these three competing faces challenges the conventional view of parties as hierarchical and unified organizations. As Carty (2004, 6) explains, the traditional conception of a political party as 'a single identifiable organization that some group can capture and command' may no longer accurately describe how parties actually organize. Although parties were once hierarchical, *stratarchy* is a more apt description of how many modern parties organize. Given the stratarchical nature of modern parties, it should not be surprising to find personalization manifest at multiple levels within the party and among a variety of different party actors. Our broader conceptualization, however, still fits within the Balmas et al. (2014) framework of centralized and decentralized personalization; we simply identify many more possibilities in each. Centralized personalization, for instance, can include individuals such as chief executives, party leaders, cabinet ministers and other high-profile and prominent politicians at or near the 'top'. Decentralized personalization, by contrast, includes actors such as ordinary backbench MPs, candidates and party members. Personalized politics can therefore be found at the supranational level, the subnational level, the local level and so on.

It should now be clear that personalization is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Although personalization refers to the increasing importance, relevance, prominence and even authority of individual actors, it is much more than this; the concept includes more than just candidates and leaders and covers not only the 'who' but the 'what'. Despite this complexity, we can point to several key features of personalism and personalized politics, particularly as they relate to political parties:

- Candidate-centred electoral systems emphasize individual politicians over their collective entities (see chapter 2).
- Citizens take their own evaluations of leaders/candidates into account when casting their ballots (see chapter 3).
- Election campaigns centre increasingly on individual leaders and candidates rather than parties or their platforms (see chapter 4).
- Intraparty democracy stresses individual membership over collective identities in the form of one-member-one-vote (i.e., primaries) for the selection of party leaders and candidates (see chapter 5).
- Individual politicians are highly visible online, especially when considering their social-media activities (see chapter 6).

- Party membership has become individualized and atomized, stressing the individual member over the broader group or subgroup (see chapter 7).
- The behaviour of legislators may deviate from the party and be more individualized (see chapter 8).
- Chief executives are increasingly powerful, especially compared to their parliamentary counterparts (see chapters 9 and 10).
- Election campaigns and the media highlight the private and more personal characteristics of candidates and leaders (see chapter 11).

OUR ANIMATING QUESTIONS AND KEY THEMES

The implications of personalized politics are necessarily widespread and can be found across many different aspects of political parties and our democratic politics more generally. Personalism influences the way election campaigns are waged, how voters determine their preferences, how legislators and governments function and the place and operations of political parties in democratic life. However, in an effort to quantify the precise degree of personalization over time and to uncover the various causes or drivers of personalization, the existing literature has paid far less attention to many of the important questions regarding the consequences of personalism.

The research that does exist, like much of the personalization literature in general, is somewhat mixed. For some authors, the increasing personalization of politics represents a significant challenge for the quality of democracy because it has the ability to downplay substantive debate, overshadow ideology, emphasize personal and often trivial aspects of a leader's life, undermine accountability and weaken party unity (Bennett 2012; Zittel and Gschwend 2008). Others, however, offer a more optimistic outlook, emphasizing the positive implications for individual citizens, the potential empowerment of ordinary MPs and even arguments for enhanced accountability (Kruikemeier et al. 2013; McAllister 2015).

Although many of the chapters throughout this volume document the extent of personalization/personalism, they also seek to address some fundamental questions about the nature of personalized politics, how it manifests, and its consequences for governance, representation, and the state of democracy more generally. The question of what personalization means for political parties is the central animating theme of this volume. Although the importance of this question may seem immediately obvious to some, it has not been adequately explored in the literature. This is not entirely surprising because nonparty scholars, specifically political communications experts, have pioneered and written much of the personalization literature. As a result, the news media is often the central focus and not necessarily political parties.

However, as a process that has the ability to draw focus, visibility, influence and authority away from parties towards leaders, candidates and other individuals, personalization necessarily has implications for the party.

This, of course, is not to say that media personalization is unimportant. It is well-established that media coverage of politics influences voters both in establishing their views of political actors and in making their vote choices. In this way, who or what the media decide to focus their coverage on is vitally important. However, of all the possible manifestations of personalization, the media has been the most studied (Holtz-Bacha, Langer, and Merkle 2014; Kriesi 2012; Langer 2007, 2010; Mughan 2000; Rahat and Sheafer 2007; Van Aelst, Sheafer, and Stanyer 2012; Reinemann and Wilke 2007). We focus our attention, by contrast, on the most understudied aspect: political parties themselves. Within our focus on parties, however, many chapters include an analysis, to some degree, of personalism in the media. Pruysers and Cross, for instance, demonstrate differences between party and leader mentions in national and regional media coverage during the 2015 Canadian general election, as well as analyse how parties portray themselves in their media strategy (press releases, television advertisements and e-mail messages). Likewise, Rahat and Zamir examine new media, exploring how politicians and political parties use social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to present themselves to voters, and Thomas, as part of her chapter, examines gendered media coverage of candidates/legislators and considers the implications this has for the personalization of politics. Despite our focus on parties, then, mediated personalization is featured prominently throughout the volume.

When considering personalization and party politics, important questions regarding the interaction of centralized and decentralized personalization arise. Although their work reveals diverging trajectories for centralized and decentralized personalization in the Belgian case, Wauters et al. (2016) demonstrate that the two can coexist. The implications of this coexistence for political parties, however, have not yet been fully explored. What happens when both leaders and candidates run personalized campaigns? Are election campaigns disorganized and devoid of unifying themes among parties? And how do these actors behave inside the legislature once elected, having just run personalized and individualized campaigns? As Zittel (2015, 4) explains, the answers are not immediately obvious:

> the concept of personalization does not imply any clear-cut position on the relationship between party and candidate. Personalized campaigns could signal an adversarial relationship culminating in the mode of openly contradicting party positions in a candidates' campaign communication and thus in individualized campaign politics. However, this relationship also can be supplemental with candidates playing to distinct sub-constituencies while at the same time supporting their parties' platform in their campaigns.

In terms of an adversarial relationship, decentralized personalization has the ability to cause tension within parties for at least two reasons. First, an emphasis on individual candidates/legislators may pose a threat to traditional party discipline. From a parliamentary perspective, the empowering of individuals may ultimately weaken political parties and their general primacy inside of legislatures. Second, the party's message and ideological positioning may be undermined by legislative candidates who run personalized and localized campaigns. When candidates have the ability to focus on specific issues that may be at odds with the national campaign, party cohesion is likely to suffer.[6]

Personalization, however, does not only involve the party, leader and candidates. Indeed, ordinary party members are also implicated in this process. Take, for instance, the movement towards primary elections for leadership selection and candidate nomination (Cross et al. 2016; Cross and Pilet 2015; Hazan and Rahat 2010). Collectives such as convention delegates or the parliamentary party group have lost much of their formal influence over leaders and the direction of party politics. In their place are atomized and individualized party members. According to Katz and Mair (1995) this has served to strengthen the top party leadership and ultimately reduce intra-party accountability. Institutional personalization, in this case, the adoption of primaries, therefore, has consequences not just for how leaders are selected but also the resulting intraparty dynamics.

Beyond intraparty dynamics, personalization also influences the strategic decisions that parties make when waging election campaigns. How much emphasis will a party place on their leader in campaign advertisements and messaging? Do parties focus their campaign attacks on competing parties or competing party leaders? When do local candidates decide to run a campaign that is more about themselves than their party? The degree of personalization in a political system will condition all of these decisions and in doing so will make election campaigns look different—both across time and across countries.

A second animating theme of the book concerns the multilevel nature of personalization. Although there have been both conceptual (Balmas et al. 2014) and empirical (Chiru 2013; Cross and Young 2015; De Winter and Baudewyns 2015; Eder, Jenny and Müller 2015; Zittel and Gschwend 2008; Zittel 2015) examinations of decentralized personalization, the personalization literature remains firmly focused on party leaders and chief executives and often conflates it with presidentialization. So much so that personalization almost immediately conjures images of party leaders. We address this asymmetry by exploring personalization not only at the level of party leaders but also local candidates, legislators (and other prominent politicians) and party members, thereby moving the analysis well beyond a simple leader-candidate dichotomy.

In doing so, we consider the dynamics between the multiple levels and explore implications that this might have on party organization, election campaigns, and governance. Are the processes of centralized and decentralized personalization in competition with each other or can the two forms co-exist? If personalization occurs at multiple levels simultaneously, does the combination of personalized central party campaigns around the leader and individualized local campaigns around individual candidates produce tension once these individuals are inside the legislature? How, if at all, does personalization impact the behaviour of MPs or prime ministers? The implications for both election campaigns and governance are numerous.

The third theme that animates this volume relates to what might be the least studied component of personalization: privatization. Rather than focusing almost exclusively on 'who', we pay particular attention to the 'what'. What is it about party leaders that voters consider when casting their ballot? What kinds of information are candidates and party leaders transmitting about themselves in their campaign communication? What kind of content are politicians posting online? We also consider the broader democratic implications of privatization, specifically whether processes of personalization are gender neutral or whether the process is uneven with gendered effects.

Hart (1994) notes that television has hastened the trend of growing intimacy between voters and leaders, a trend that he suggests is damaging substantial political debate. Echoing this argument, Bennett (2012) also notes that personalization entails a weakening of ideological considerations for voters and less emphasis on policy discussions for election campaigns. Replacing ideology and policy are a variety of other considerations directly related to the individual candidate such as competence, appearance, family life, and so on. Indeed, Zittel and Gschwend (2008, 979) conclude that 'the growing saliency of the personal properties as well as the personal background of main candidates is assumed to put the political issues on the backburner of campaign agendas'.

Although some level of information about candidates' personal lives may be informative for voters, there is a real concern that privatization undermines the substantive elements of political debate. What's more, the concern is not only that ideology and substance are undermined, but that they are also replaced by trivial and often sensational aspects of an individual's personal life (i.e., what they look like, their marriage, etc.).[7] Privatization, as one of the faces of personalization, suggests that personality characteristics, personal achievements and an individual's life outside of politics are becoming increasingly important—both to the media who report on it and voters who consider this information when casting their ballot (Langer 2007; Van Aelst, Sheafer and Stanyer 2012; Van Zoonen 1991). This, however, raises important questions regarding whether personalization is an uneven process and whether its effects are gender neutral.[8]

In terms of the media, there is no shortage of evidence demonstrating gendered news coverage. Indeed, female candidates are typically subject to considerably more attention on their appearance, marital status and sex than their male counterparts (Anderson 2011; Bashevkin 2009; Lawless 2009). Examining the 2004 Conservative leadership election in Canada, for example, Trimble (2007) finds that, among the two leading candidates, fully one-in-three news stories mentioned Belinda Stronach's appearance compared to just 2 percent for Stephen Harper. Similarly, Lawless (2009) argues that the overt sexism and bias in the media experienced by Hillary Clinton in the 2008 Democratic primary may result in fewer women wanting to put themselves in similar situations. The privatization of media coverage around women candidates may therefore act as a significant barrier, preventing women from cultivating a sense of political ambition.

Furthermore, although privatization is often associated with media personalization, it has a much wider application. Privatization can manifest in how candidates portray themselves, as well as what information citizens use to make their voting decisions. In terms of candidate portrayals, women may be punished for presenting certain kinds of personal information (Thomas and Bittner 2017). The gendered nature of privatization may therefore shape the campaign strategies and options available to women candidates. It may also be problematic for women that voters are taking personal characteristics into account when voting, especially because negative stereotypes about women in politics are still quite pervasive. Male politicians, for example, are often viewed as more knowledgeable, trustworthy and convincing than their female counterparts (Aalberg and Jenssen 2007). Stereotypes about women remain in terms of candidate traits and issue competency (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Sanbonmatsu and Dolan 2009; see also Pruysers and Blais 2017) as well as potential for electoral performance (Sanbonmatsu 2006). Given the widespread nature of these stereotypes, women candidates/leaders may be at a disadvantage. Thus, personalization in this sense may have negative consequences for the overall health of democracy and for the quality of representation in legislatures.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Although the relationship between party and personalization/personalism is not necessarily zero-sum and political parties may engage in personalization strategically, personalization has important implications for political parties nonetheless. The chapters in this volume demonstrate that the degree of personalism influences how parties conduct their election campaigns, how they organize and distribute power internally, as well as shape their role in

governing. While our focus is generally on consequences and outcomes, there is likely a close feedback loop between cause and effect. Take, for example, the question of electoral systems. Some electoral systems fuel personalism/personalization by being candidate, rather than party, centred. In this sense, the electoral system promotes personalization. Nonetheless, demand for more candidate-centred politics may fuel support for particular electoral systems. In this regard, personalization promotes a certain kind of institutional reform and can shape the institutional architecture of the state. Similarly, it is difficult to untangle whether the movement towards primaries for the selection of party leaders and legislative candidates is a cause or effect of personalization. The answer, perhaps unsatisfying, is both.

To explore the relationship between personalism/personalization and party politics, this volume brings together a diverse set of scholars who study political parties, elections and parliamentary institutions. In terms of empirical data, the subsequent chapters marshal a tremendous amount of information, drawing on a number of existing and original data sets regarding electoral system change, voter behaviour, social-media activity, party communications, the parliamentary behaviour of legislators and constituency candidate campaign strategies. Although the geographic scope varies by chapter, this serves to highlight the widespread and pervasive nature of personalized politics among parliamentary democracies. Importantly, it allows us to uncover variation not only within countries but also between them, reaffirming that personalization is far from a linear or even process.

As noted at the outset, parties perform a wide range of functions. To explore the interplay between personalization and party, we have structured the remaining chapters around the most important activities that parties engage in. Here we can identify the 'electoral arena', the 'party arena', and the 'governance arena'. Taking this approach not only demonstrates how potentially pervasive personalization is, but it also highlights that the implications are far-reaching, impacting many aspects of democratic life including election campaigns, party organization and even governance.

In chapter 2, Jean-Benoit Pilet and Alan Renwick examine the role of the electoral system itself, documenting the move towards more personalized electoral systems around the world as well as the implications of this trend on electoral and party politics. In chapter 3, Amanda Bittner considers the importance of leader evaluations during election campaigns, specifically focusing on the calculus of voters in Canada and the United Kingdom. This section is concluded in chapter 4 in which Scott Pruysers and William Cross explore personalization during the 2015 Canadian federal election, highlighting how competing parties adopt different approaches and how the dynamics of personalization can be different for leaders and candidates within the same party and election.

We then move to the party face of personalization with three chapters that focus directly on the internal workings of political parties and questions of intraparty democracy. In chapter 5, David Stewart examines leadership selection and demonstrates how the move towards more inclusive selectorates is tied to the process of the personalization of party leaders. Note that although the emphasis here is on party leaders, similar conclusions can be made about candidate selection because there has been a similar democratization in this area (Cross et al. 2016). In chapter 6, Gideon Rahat and Shahaf Zamir explore how parties and individual politicians present themselves online and consider whether the online space is a mere reflection of the offline world or whether we can find different trends with respect to the personalization of politics. This is followed by a discussion of party members in chapter 7 in which Anika Gauja considers personalization from the bottom up and explores how membership participation in internal party life is increasingly individualized and specialized.

In the third section, the governance face, our authors consider how personalization influences the governing process and power dynamics inside of legislatures. In chapter 8, Mihail Chiru explores the relationship between personalized election campaigns and the subsequent behaviour of representatives both in the legislature and in representing their districts. In chapter 9, Jonathan Malloy explores the behaviour of party leaders once inside the legislature and considers how personalism and 'personal authority' influence how they interact with their parliamentary colleagues and the implications this has for governance. In chapter 10, Thomas Poguntke and Paul Webb revisit the *presidentialization* of politics thesis, specifically focusing on the nuances that were overlooked in their original work and distinguishing personalization from presidentialization.

The volume ends with two concluding chapters. In chapter 11, Melanee Thomas considers personalization through a gendered lens, demonstrating how the entire process is far from gender neutral. Finally, in chapter 12, bringing together the key findings of the previous chapters, Richard Katz explores the relationship between personalization and party government, revealing that personalization is not necessarily the threat to party that it is often made out to be.

NOTES

1. Similarly, Bryce writes that 'parties are inevitable' (quoted in Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, 3).

2. The mass party, of course, was a phenomenon of the Left. Parties on the Right transformed from elite, cadre parties to catch-all parties. In both cases, personality,

especially leaders, were more important than they seemed to be in the ideologically driven mass party.

3. Weber defines charismatic authority as 'resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him' (1968, 215).

4. For similar, although not identical conceptualizations, see Hermans and Vergeer (2012) and Poguntke and Webb (2005).

5. Van Zoonen (1991) writes of 'intimization', whereas Langer (2010) uses the phrase 'politicization of the private persona'. Note that the use of 'privatization' is somewhat counterintuitive in that it refers to making public that which was previously regarded as private, whereas in the normal etymology of English words, it ought to mean exactly the opposite.

6. The personalities and characteristics of individuals have always mattered. Ranney's (1965) observation in *Pathways to Parliament*, for instance, highlights that the selection of candidates has historically been quite personal. Interestingly, one of the most highly valued personal attributes was loyalty to the party and its message. New forms of personalization, however, seem somewhat different as the personal lives and other attributes of individuals gain prominence.

7. This concern, however, is debated. Mughan (2000) demonstrates, at least in the British case, that fear of unsophisticated voters being manipulated by leader effects and trivial aspects of personalization is unfounded. Indeed, Mughan (2000, 145) concludes that 'the voters most susceptible to leader effects are not in fact the least politically interested and involved, but are the most qualified, as reflected in the possession of characteristics like being politically knowledgeable, caring which party won the election and reading election literature. . . . Moreover, the aspects of the leaders' characters that influence the vote are related to ability to perform well in the job rather than politically irrelevant considerations, like whether they are likeable'.

8. The fact that personalization is a process, however, is important in this regard. Although the treatment of women may differ from men, there may be a convergence over time. We address this possibility in a later chapter.