

Summary

This book (*Materials for Elite Theory and Its Critique*) deals with the topic of elite theory and elitism spanning the period from the age of the classical authors to approximately the 1970s. Elite theories were (and still are) influential philosophical and socially theoretical conceptions, which attempted to grasp several important features of politics and social development mainly at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Elite theorists pointed in different ways to the fact that it is possible to distinguish two different types of citizens regarding their access to power in democratic societies. In short, those who are in power and those who are not. They attempted to establish a new paradigm of political and partly social thought, the purpose of which was to explain the aforementioned new phenomena within the sphere of politics and social life. They also attempted to create a school of thought which represented an alternative to Marxism. Their theories should be read also as a new way of thinking about social change and society as such.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section of book, entitled *Founders of Modern Elite Theory (Zakladatelé novodobé teorie elit)*, comprises classical texts written by the Italian thinker Gaetano Mosca (*The Ruling Class and the Political Formula [Politická třída a politická formule]*), the Italian sociologist and economist Vilfredo Pareto (*Elites and their circulation [Elity a jejich cirkulace]*) and the German-born Italian sociologist Robert Michels (*Oligarchical Tendencies of Organization [Oligarchické tendence organizace]*). The second section, entitled *Selected Conceptions of Elites after 1945 (Vybrané koncepce elit druhé poloviny 20. století)*, contains four texts. The first text is written by the Hungarian-born sociologist Karl Mannheim, and its title is *Political and Cultural Elites (Politické a kulturní elity)*. The second text is *Politics and Truth (Politika a pravda)* by the American political thinker James Burnham. The third text is written by the German sociologist Hans P. Dreitzel, entitled *The Concept of Elite as Sociological Category (Pojem elity jako sociologická kategorie)*. The fourth text is *A Divided and United Elite (Rozdělená a sjednocená elita)* by the French political scientist,

philosopher and sociologist Raymond Aron. The final section, entitled *Attempts to Critique of Elite Theories* (*Pokusy o kritiku teorie elit*), comprises seven different texts. The first is *Critique of Michels' book "Political Parties"* (*Kritika Michelsovy knihy „K sociologii stranictví“*), written by the Hungarian philosopher and Marxist György Lukács. The second text is *Party Apparatus and Inter-Party Democracy* (*Stranický aparát a vnitrostranická demokracie*), written by the German author Alexander Schiffrin. The third text is *The Critique of the Ruling Elite Model* (*Kritika modelu vládnoucí elity*) written by the American political scientist Robert A. Dahl. The fourth text is *From the Ruling Class to the Power Elite* (*Od vládnoucí třídy k mocenské elitě*), written by the British Marxist sociologist Thomas B. Bottomore. The fifth text is *The Ruling Class and the Power Elite* (*Panující třída a mocenská elita*), written by the Polish sociologist Włodzimierz Wesolowski. The sixth text is *Power, Elite and Democracy* (*Moc, elita a demokracie*), written by the Serbian academic and politician Ljubomir Tadić. The last text is written by the British sociologist Anthony Giddens, and its title is *Elites and Power* (*Elity a moc*).