

Training of high-ranking officials in France
during the Mid-Nineteenth Century:
The *Auditorat* in the *Conseil d'État* under the July Monarchy
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This article discusses how high-ranking officials were trained under France's July Monarchy (1830-1848), at a time when government administration was becoming more and more complex and a bureaucratic organization was gradually being institutionalized. The author takes up the case of the *Auditorat* in the *Conseil d'État*, focusing on the logic behind the recruitment and training of its administrative officials. He describes the actual circumstances of recruitment and training of *auditeurs* via a synthesis of three approaches: 1) institutional analysis of the *auditeur* based on laws and ordinances, 2) prosopographical analysis utilizing the personal data of 211 *auditeurs* and 3) analysis of petitions for recruitment of *auditeurs* as well as their internal evaluation.

The author concludes that first, two contrary opinions existed regarding the institution of *auditeur* during the time in question. One was the conservative idea which considered the *auditorat* as a *stagiaire* who would become merely a *maître des requêtes* or a *conseiller* in the *Conseil d'État* in the future; the other was the republican idea which considered the institution to be the *grande école d'administration*, in which trained officials who could be entrusted with any administrative post. The laws and ordinances pertaining to *auditeurs* promulgated under the July Monarchy all embodied the opposition between these ideologies.

Secondly, the necessary conditions of *auditeur* recruitment were threefold: 1) the social background of the candidate, 2) the influence of recommenders and 3) the abilities of the candidate. However, it is impossible to determine which condition was the most conclusive, leading one to believe that it was a combination of them which led to successful recruitment.

Finally, as to the system of *auditeur* training, the author points out that *auditeurs* were expected to acquire the skills of administrative officials through experience gained along different career paths, which included a central administrative post, a local administrative post and a post in the *Conseil d'État*. However, *auditeur* training was not very successful because of the customs surrounding the promotion of central administrative officials and the lack of administrative ability on the part of the *auditeurs* themselves. In addition, the lack of *maître des requêtes* posts in the *Conseil d'État* made the training of *auditeurs* more difficult. Nevertheless, approximately half of those who had trained at the *auditorat* under the July Monarchy were given administrative appointments and reappointed by the next political regime. This proportion of reappointments exceeded the number during the Napoleonic era and the Bourbon Restoration. Consequently, it can be said that the institution of *auditeur* under the July Monarchy served the function of training high-ranking officials to some extent and that this institution had a impact on both the struggle for hegemony in the *Chambre des pairs* and the *Chambre des députés*, and on the institutionalization of the recruitment and the careers of high-ranking officials during the nineteenth century.