CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The process of democratization that unfolded in European countries during the nineteenth century involved multiple dilemmas of institutional design. The first question concerned the scope of political suffrage. The transition from restrictive to extended suffrage took place either through the adoption of piece-meal changes in the scope of the franchise or through dramatic extensions that enfranchised nearly all citizens. Reforms enacted in Britain exemplify the first approach. There, the expansion of suffrage proceeded gradually. The first Franchise Act, enacted in 1832 extended the scope of suffrage from 5 to 7 percent of the population. The second Franchise Act of 1867 extended the scope of suffrage to 16 percent of the population (Cook 2005: 68) By contrast, both France and Germany adopted electoral reforms that expanded the share of the enfranchised population suddenly and dramatically. In Germany, the electoral law adopted in 1870 introduced universal suffrage for men.

A second question on the agenda of democratizing countries concerned the mode of voting. An important dilemma that underpinned electoral reforms throughout the nineteenth century was whether voting should be open or secret. While secret voting triumphed – an outcome that from the perspective of the twentieth century appears inevitable – its adoption was by no means unambiguous (Buchstein 2000). What is remarkable about nineteenth century deliberations about the adoption of the secret ballot is that significant theoretical and practical ambiguity existed as to whether secret voting provided a better protection of voters against intimidation. Both methods of voting had prominent defenders at the time and the political coalitions that favored either secret or open voting were extremely heterogeneous. Opponents of the secret ballot included successors of the Jacobins, conservatives, like Lord Russell and Otto von Bismarck, Catholics, such as Ludwig Windthorst and Liberals, such as John Stuart Mill (Buchstein 2000)

A third dimension of electoral change concerned the adoption of reforms that protected the autonomy of voters at the moment they cast their ballots. Should voters be protected against pressure or intimidation so their vote would reflect their genuine preference? Or should the vote be allowed to reflect the underlying economic realities of the time? In both theoretical and practical terms, this third dimension of electoral reforms, which concerned the protection of the electoral autonomy of voters continued political debates about the adoption of the secret ballot. In political terms, those who supported both sets of reforms shared the belief that granting political rights was an empty and meaningless promise if sufficient electoral guarantees for the protection of voters were not in place. However, in many European countries, the question of the protection of voters' electoral autonomy persisted as a salient issue of electoral reform even *after* the introduction of the secret ballot. The nominal protection of electoral secrecy remained insufficient in guaranteeing voters' political autonomy and their ability to exercise their electoral

choices unencumbered by external, illicit influences. As Heinrich Rickert, a free liberal politician and tireless promoter of reforms protecting electoral secrecy argued on the floor of the Reichstag in 1895, nearly three decades after the adoption of Germany's electoral law, "the need to create a guarantee for the secrecy of the vote becomes more urgent with the passing of each year. Nothing is more contemptible and in conflict with the constitution than existing efforts to influence the dependent (abhängige) voters and to make it difficult for them to cast their free vote" (Stenographische Berichte des Deutschen Reichstages 15 May 1895). Similarly, a commission investigating electoral irregularities in the French Third Republic noted the regrettable persistence of voters' intimidation as late as 1903. As this commission noted: "One cannot say that the universal suffrage is free. Because voting is not entirely secret it cannot be exercised with entire freedom. The voter, if he is employed faces the pressure of employers, if he is a shopkeeper, he faces the pressure of customers and if he is a state employee, he faces the pressure of the state". (Journal Officiel de la République Franaçaise, Débats 1903).

'Undue electoral influences' – to adopt a term that was used by nineteenth century British reformers –came in a variety of forms. One form of influence was the transfer of money and favors. Another was the production of a diffuse sense of fear of retribution in voters if the latter chose not to support a particular candidate. The persistence of undue electoral influences in the aftermath of democratizing reforms was attributable to a range of different factors. The first was institutional in nature. Electoral rules defined uneven levels of punishment for different electoral irregularities. This created incentives for political actors to substitute towards electoral strategies that were punished with lower costs. In Britain, practices of "treating" voters at the times of elections were not successfully regulated. Consequently, vote buying was the dominant type of electoral irregularity. The French electoral law imposed relatively sharper punishments for vote buying as compared to Britain, but it punished electoral pressure exercised by government officials more lightly. The *pression gouvernamentale* was a pervasive electoral irregularity both during the Second Empire and the Third Republic. In Germany, by contrast, the electoral law imposed relatively strong punishments for vote-buying (which was punished by the penal law). By contrast, electoral intimidation by private actors was one type of electoral offense that was unpunished.

Secondly, the autonomy of the vote was imperfectly protected even after the adoption of the secret ballot due to imperfections in voting technology. The two most prominent imperfections of voting technology concerned the design of the ballot and of the urn. Prior to the adoption of a uniform standardized ballots – also known as the Australian ballot – politicians manipulated the shape, color, and size of ballots to keep track on voters' electoral choices. Ballots with visible external differences were widely encountered in French and German elections. In France, the so-called "bulletins a clef" allowed electoral officials that were responsible for vote counting to identify voters' choices. In Germany, candidates competed using ballots of different shapes in an effort to observe the choices of voters. Imperfections in the design of urns also created opportunities for the violation of voting secrecy. The use of small urns or of urns with irregular shapes permitted the stacking of ballots. If persons located in the polling station maintained lists that recorded the order in which different voters cast their ballots, it was relatively straightforward to identify the electoral choice made by every single voter.

A second set of factors that preventing political autonomy of voters after the adoption of electoral secrecy were economic inequalities. As a German politician summarized these political

realities in a debate in the German *Reichstag*, "the absence of economic freedom leads to the absence of political freedom" (Stenographische Berichte des Deutschen Reichstages, May 15 1895). Electoral autonomy and the freedom of voters to cast their vote for their preferred candidate was a very distant political goal in elections where powerful rural and urban employers regimented their employees, marched them to the voting area and closely monitored the choices they made. Economic intimidation of voters by powerful economic actors was a pervasive phenomenon in many European countries during the nineteenth century. Both rural and urban employers used their privileged labor market position to engage in such electoral intimidation. In Britain, large manufacturing firms in industrial constituencies used their economic position to influence the decisions of voters (Hanham 68-90). In France, electoral reports of the Third Republic present ample evidence of electoral intimidation by rural employers. Finally, employer intimidation was also widely documented in German national elections.

Many nineteenth century political reformers warned that the adoption of universal suffrage was only an illusion in environments characterized by pervasive levels of economic inequality (Gagel 1958: 9, Anderson 2000: 153). Consider the worries voiced at the time of the adoption of universal suffrage in Germany in 1871. At the time, politicians argued that "the person who has a significant social position, a great landowner or a great employer in the business world will exercise such an influence in every kind of election" (Meyer 1901: 240). In Britain, reformers also acknowledged the existence of electoral intimidation by private actors. Here, we find greater ambiguity about the normative implications of this private intimidation and an effort to distinguish between good and bad influence. For James Mill, for instance, legitimate influence obtained where wealth was used benevolently and it was a consequence of the "affection and reverence" of members of a community for their benefactor. The evil influence which had to be stopped obtained where "wealth was used to control the will" (James Mill – Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform in Essays in Culture and Politics, pages 325- 326, quoted in Moore 1969: 29).

The book presents an explanation for the adoption of electoral reforms that protected the autonomy of voters during elections. These reforms constitute a second stage of the process of democratization that has hitherto received insufficient attention. In European countries, these reforms were adopted in two distinct stages. In a first stage, open voting was replaced by the secret ballot. In most countries, the adoption of the secret ballot did not completely protect voters against intimidation. In a second stage, many countries adopted further changes in electoral technology that attempted to reduce the observability of the vote. This legislation mandated changes in ballot design or changes in the design of the urn. A significant temporal lag existed between the adoption of the secret ballot and the introduction of these additional reforms that attempted to protect voters against intimidation. In France – where the secret ballot was adopted in 1795 – provisions mandating the introduction of a standardized urn were adopted only in 1914. Similarly, in Germany, legislation mandating ballot envelopes was adopted in 1903, nearly four decades after the adoption of universal suffrage. Provisions of a standardized urn were introduced only in 1914.

The book presents a theoretical account of the economic and political factors that affect the willingness of politicians to embrace electoral reforms that sought to provide a better protection of the electoral autonomy of voters. The central argument advanced in the book is that demand for these electoral reforms originated with politicians who encountered high costs of

electoral intimidation and thus could not take advantage of the opportunities for electoral intimidation that were present under a certain set of institutional rules. Thus, I argue that the magnitude of the costs of electoral intimidation is the main source of political cleavage over the reform of the electoral system. I also argue that changes in economic and political conditions tht increased the costs of electoral repression facilitated the creation of encompassing political coalitions that brought about changes in electoral institutions. Politicians facing relatively higher costs of electoral repression in their districts were, thus, more likely to support changes in electoral institutions. By contrast, politicians who faced relatively low electoral costs of intimidation opposed the adoption of electoral reforms and supported maintaining the political status quo. I further show how changes in economic and political conditions that increased the costs of electoral repression contributed to the creation of encompassing electoral coalitions that brought about changes in electoral institutions.

Recent formal models of political regime change also attribute a central role to the 'costs of political repression' in explaining political calculations of elites (Acemoglu and Robinson 2000, 2007). In the prominent theoretical contribution by Acemoglu and Robinson, the costs of political repression experienced by incumbent elites plays a critical role in accounting for the decisions of the latter to accept or oppose the extension of suffrage. While the costs of electoral repression is a crucial parameter that affects the most significant comparative statics results of these models, the latter remains underspecified both theoretically and empirically. The analysis developed in this book seeks to disaggregate the political and economic factors that affect the variation in the costs of electoral repression experienced by politicians across different districts and examine the impact of these costs on the probability of politicians will to support or oppose electoral reforms.

Scholars of democratization have not yet sufficiently examined electoral reforms that reduce opportunities for the electoral intimidation of voters and protect the political freedom of the latter. One possible explanation for this omission is that the substance of these reforms – which involve minute and technical details that concern the organization of the voting process – rarely makes the stuff of dramatic narratives. More dramatic changes in electoral institutions that expand the scope of the suffrage and grant lower-income citizens the right to vote have overshadowed these subsequent reforms. Seymour and Frey's *How the World Votes*, a classic account of electoral reforms adopted during the nineteenth century has been published nearly a century ago and has not been followed by other accounts of electoral reforms that involve changes in the technology of voting. The omission of these reforms by the literature on democratization has stark consequences. While we know a lot about the factors that affect political decisions to expand the right to vote, we know remarkably little about the factors that have contributed to the further democratization of electoral practices that followed the adoption of nominally free election. One consequence of this dearth of theoretical and empirical knowledge is that political science provides remarkably few insights relevant for many recent democracies that have adopted nominally free elections, but still experience significant irregularities in their electoral practices. By examining the historical experience of European countries and identifying the factors that account for the adoption of reforms that protect voter autonomy and more generally the integrity of the electoral process, this book opens a new avenue of theoretical and empirical understanding with implications for recent democracies.

Empirically, this book analyzes electoral politics in Imperial Germany during the period from 1870 to 1914. In 1871, Germany took a significant democratic leap, by adopting universal manhood suffrage for the elections to the national parliament. The electoral law adopted at the time also introduced the principle of electoral secrecy for national elections. By contrast, open voting was still maintained in subnational elections in Prussia, the largest German state and in several other principalities. Despite the adoption of the principle of electoral secrecy for national elections, imperfections in electoral technology contributed to frequent violations of electoral secrecy. Other imperfections in the design of the electoral code left private actors go unpunished for perpetuating electoral intimidation.

Germany's political experience confirmed the worries of nineteenth century reformers. Imperfect electoral institutions and high levels of economic inequality led to the systematic and persistent violation of voters' autonomy. Electoral intimidation was, as Lavinia Anderson has argued, a pervasive taken-for-granted feature of electoral politics (Anderson 2000: 29). As Lavinia Anderson argues, "the very influence that some Germans deemed corrupt was what others thought was the nature of the drama they were enacting. "Election freedom consists in influencing elections", the venerable Conservative Ludwig von Gehrlach proclaimed. Paul Laband, a leading constitutional scholar considered influencing elections an inalienable human right. The whole signature of this election law, insisted Friedrich von Behr, a Free Conservative deputy for Greifswald, "is exert yourself [strenge dich an], exercise your influence as well as you can so that the voters will elect the Reichstag of your choice" (Anderson 2000: 29)

This chapter previews both the theoretical argument advanced in this book and the empirical evidence that will be used to sustain it. Mirroring the structure of the book, the remaining part of the book will consist of three parts. The first part examines the political economy of voting in conditions of imperfect protection of the secrecy of the vote. Both the decisions of candidates on the political right whether to use electoral intimidation and decisions about the intensity of the latter and the decision of voters to comply with this economic and political pressure or to defy the latter and support opposition candidates were affected by economic conditions in a district. As such voting at the time was a decision that had powerful economic determinants. The first three chapters of the book develop a number of propositions about the political and economic variables that explain the demand of politicians for electoral intimidation and the willingness of private actors and employees of the state to supply it. Chapters 2 and 3 test these propositions that predict variation in the incidence of intimidation perpetuated by employees of the state and intimidation perpetuated by private actors using qualitative evidence from the reports of electoral irregularities submitted to the *Reichstag*. Chapter 4 provides a quantitative test of these propositions using evidence of electoral irregularities in all German elections during the period between 1870 and 1912.

The second part of the book turns to the analysis of adoption of electoral reforms that protect the autonomy of voters. As discussed above, the central hypothesis of my analysis is that demand for electoral reforms originated with politicians that faced relatively higher costs of electoral repression and thus could not take advantage of the opportunities for electoral reforms that existed in their districts. Building on the analysis developed in the previous chapter, I identify the political and economic factors that lowered the costs of electoral repression and increased demand for electoral reform. The book presents two empirical tests of the argument. Chapter 5 examines the economic and political factors that affect the decisions of politicians to

co-sponsor legislation that attempted to provide better protection for electoral secrecy in national elections. In Chapter 6, I explore the economic and political determinants of support for Prussian electoral reforms that sought to introduce the secret ballot.

The third part of the book examines the political consequences of the legislation adopted in 1903 that adopted ballot envelopes and isolating spaces. Unsurprisingly, the latter lowered voters' fear of economic reprisals for their electoral choices and lowered their economic risks of the latter to support opposition candidates. The immediate consequence of the adoption of ballot envelopes and isolating spaces was a dramatic increase in the level of political support for the main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party. I examine the effect of economic conditions on a district that affect variation in the political support for Social Democratic candidates. Chapter 8 explores the effects of changes in electoral secrecy on the electoral fate of parties on the right. We find that the effect on parties on the right was contingent upon the geographic distribution of electoral support for various parties. The 1903 reforms had the most deleterious effects for the National Liberal party. For ratio translating votes into seats deteriorated dramatically for this party. Due to the worsening of the translation of votes to seats, a number of parties on the right shifted their position on questions of electoral reform, supporting the adoption of proportional representation. Thus, I argue that the 1903 reform contributed to a coalitional realignment among German parties and that it facilitated the formation of an electoral coalition supporting the adoption of proportional representation. The book concludes with an analysis of the decisive vote in the German parliament that led to the adoption of proportional representation.

VOTING UNDER IMPERFECT ELECTORAL RULES

The elections to the lower house of Parliament in Imperial Germany were governed by the electoral law (*Reichswahlrecht*) that was adopted in 1869 (Hatschek 1920). The electoral law granted universal suffrage to all male voters over 18 or 21 years of age and maintained very few restrictions on the scope of suffrage for male voters. In contrast to many other European countries, the German electoral law did not include restrictions on the right to vote based on property qualifications or on the previous payment of taxes. The 1869 electoral law established 381 electoral districts electing representatives to the *Reichstag*. In 1874, 16 additional districts of Alsace and Lorraine were added. Each district elected one representative to the *Reichstag*. If one candidate failed to reach a majority of votes in the first electoral round, the winner was determined during runoffs.

A highly contested issue at the time of the adoption of the 1869 electoral law was the secrecy of the vote (Pollmann, 1985: 322). Opponents of the secret ballot included prominent liberal politicians and representatives of the Conservative Party. Restating arguments that went back to the Frankfurt Constitutional convention of 1848, politicians that opposed electoral secrecy argued that the secret ballot created opportunities for "intrigues und abuses of all kinds. In darkness, bribery and intimidation can assert themselves boldly" (Hatschek, 1920: 180). Open voting, these politicians argued, was preferable to electoral secrecy. "All acts of political importance have to be subjected to public opinion. (...). The conflict and struggle among political parties will achieve its purest expression only in public and open voting" (Hatschek, 1920: 180).

Despite these objections, supporters of the secret ballot triumphed during these deliberations. Law-makers reached an agreement to choose the winner of an election no longer through an open and public vote, but though the casting of a ballot. Article 10 of the electoral law stated that "the right to vote will be exercised in person, through covered and unsigned ballots that have to be placed in an urn" (Hatschek, 1920: 179). However, the adoption of electoral secrecy did not ensure the protection voters from electoral influence. The persistence of electoral intimidation after the adoption of the secret ballot can be explained by two features of Germany's electoral system. First, Germany's electoral law introduced an uneven punishment structure for various electoral irregularities. This created incentives for politicians to substitute towards strategies that were punished with lower levels of stringency. Secondly, imperfections of the voting technology opened up opportunities for a variety of actors that were present at the polling place to observe the electoral choices made by voters.

The German electoral punished different electoral irregularities with different levels of intensity. On the one hand, German law-makers singled out 'vote buying' and the 'falsification of elections' as particularly severe electoral irregularities. These two forms of misconduct were offenses that fell under the jurisdiction of the penal code (Arsenscheck 2003: 245). By contrast, electoral intimidation was punished with much lower cost than vote-buying. The German electoral law imposed also relatively higher punishment on employees of the state as compared to private actors for engaging in the intimidation of voters. By contrast, acts of electoral intimidation perpetuated by private actors were left entirely unpunished.

Imperfections of voting technology opened up opportunities for candidates to pierce the veil of electoral secrecy. First, an imperfect regulation of the design of the ballot allowed for the violation of electoral secrecy in day-to-day electoral practices. Articles 10 and 11 of the electoral law of the *Reich* specified that ballots had to be "fabricated of white paper and couldn't be marked with exterior signs distinguishing them" (Hatschek 1920). However, the electoral code contained no additional regulations of the size or shape of ballots. As a result, candidates used ballots in the forms of "straws, pyramids and even bows" to keep track on the electoral behavior of their voters (Anderson 2000). In one district, ballots differed in size by the magnitude of 100, with the smaller ballot being the size of a penny (Klein 2003: 223). Candidates used different, clearly distinguishable shades of white or, more frequently, ballots printed on transparent paper to keep track of the electoral choices of voters.

An additional imperfection in voting technology that allowed for significant violations of voter secrecy was the design of the urn. As a study of the period noted, all kinds of containers were used for ballot boxes, including "cigar boxes, drawers, suitcases, hat boxes, cooking pots, earthen bowls, beer mugs, plates and washtubs. […] Ballots would fall in such a way that they lay flat directly on top of each other in the exact order in which they were dropped in. This would allow a vengeful official to compare the stack with a list of the order in which people had voted and arrange for a punishment for those that had voted the wrong way" (Fairbairn 1990: 818; Siegfried 1903). Despite the presence of complaints about the violation of voter secrecy, a unified standardized electoral urn was only adopted in June 1913, one year after the last general election of the *Reich*.

Thus, electoral rules, broadly defined opened up political opportunities for candidates to exert undue influence on the electoral choices of voters and to violate the secrecy of the vote.

Both the incentives and the capacity of politicians to take advantage of these political opportunities and engage in the electoral intimidation of voters varied, however, across districts and over time. The first part of the book formulates a number of propositions about the political and economic factors that affect the variation in the demand of politicians for various electoral irregularities and variation in the willingness of a variety of actors supporting candidates in a district to support the latter. German politicians enlisted help from two types of political agents. The first were employees of the state, such as policemen, mayors or tax-collectors. The second type of actors that were engaged in the production of electoral intimidation were private actors. I develop a number of hypotheses about the factors that affected the *demand* of politicians for electoral support at times of elections that resulted in the production of electoral irregularities. Next, I turn to the supply side and analyze the factors affecting the considerations of employees of the state and private actors to produce electoral intimidation.

Let us consider first the factors affecting the demand of candidates for electoral support from employees of the state and private actors. The intensity of this demand was affected by the level political competition. Given Germany's electoral system that was characterized by runoffs, electoral competition exercised two distinct effects on the political demand for electoral intimidation. On the one hand, candidates competing in tighter races were more likely to turn to possible electoral agents – such as employees of the state or private actors. This proposition builds on a large literature in political science that has argued that electoral competition fuels corruption. Referring to patronage (another dominant form of electoral irregularity) and not intimidation, James Scott argued that "when the race is close, the marginal utility of the additional dollar of patronage politics is all the greater" (Scott 1972). As Lehoucq summarizes this hypothesis "political competition fuels ballot rigging" (Lehouq 2003: 56, see also Molina and Lehoucq 2002).

Other dimensions of electoral competition are likely to constrain the demand for electoral intimidation by political candidates. The fragmentation on the political right is likely to have this constraining effect. Runoffs required electoral coordination among the candidates that competed against each other during the first electoral round. I hypothesize that this anticipation of a need for future electoral coordination constrained the incentives of candidates to engage in the electoral intimidation of voters. The heavy-handed use of the state apparatus by one of candidates on the political right during the first electoral round is likely to become a source of liability during runoffs and weaken the ability of the latter to form electoral coalitions. These considerations imply that the political demand of candidates for electoral intimidation is lower in districts where right wing parties are fragmented electorally. By contrast, such political constraints are muted in districts with low levels of with low levels of political fragmentation on the right. Thus, electoral fragmentation among right wing parties lowers demand for electoral intimidation.

Let us now consider turn now to actors that supplied electoral intimidation and consider the factors affecting the calculations of the latter. Consider first the employees of the state. The tightness of a race may have more ambiguous effects on their willingness to supply electoral intimidation. On the one hand, while the tightness may create incentives for employees of the state to display their political loyalty for the candidates on the right that control their political appointment, tighter races also create political uncertainty about possible reprisals if they supported the 'wrong' political candidate. As a result, the level of electoral tightness of a race

has much more ambiguous effects on the willingness of employees of the state to supply electoral intimidation. By contrast, the second salient political variable, the level of electoral fragmentation among parties on the right is likely to constrain the willingness of employees of the state to engage in electoral intimidation. In districts where the right is fragmented electorally, employees of the state face weaker incentives to engage in the production of electoral irregularities. Higher uncertainty about the identity of the winner in these races is likely to constrain the willingness of employees of the state to engage in the production of electoral irregularities.

In addition to employees of the state, private actors also supplied electoral support to candidates at times of elections. Both the capacity of firms to engage in these strategies of electoral intimidation and the costs of electoral intimidation varied systematically across districts and were likely to be affected by economic conditions in the latter. I disaggregate the 'costs of electoral intimidation' encountered by private actors and develop a number of hypotheses about the variables that are likely to affect the variation in the incidence of the latter. The most significant determinant of the costs of electoral intimidation encountered by private actors are the economic concentration in a district and the skill profile of the labor force.

The central hypothesis of the study is that the *economic heterogeneity* of a district was a crucial variable affecting the costs of electoral intimidation faced by private actors. I define a locality of having a concentrated structure if economic output is concentrated in the hands of a very few producers that employ workers only in a very narrow number of occupations. By contrast, in a district with high levels of occupational heterogeneity, the level of employment is fragmented across a large number of firms and occupations. All things equal, I hypothesize that the costs of electoral intimidation are lowest in districts characterized by a high level of economic concentration. The first reason is an effect of scale. Due to their size, large dominant firms faced lower costs in carrying out political activities that involve the mobilization of a large part of the labor force. Secondly, the concentration of employment in the hands of a small number of actors reduced the coordination problems faced by employers in punishing workers with 'dangerous' political views, by denying employment opportunities to the latter. Thirdly, in concentrated districts workers have fewer employment opportunities outside the firm, as there are no competing firms to rehire them. This factor in turn lowers the costs of electoral intimidation of employers, by reducing the risk that a competing firm will rehire a worker that was laid off for his political choices but that may be valuable economically. By contrast, increases in the economic heterogeneity of a district – that are the consequence of increases in the number of firms and increases in the number of occupations in a district – are likely to increase the costs of electoral intimidation.

The second economic variable that is likely to affect the costs of electoral intimidation encountered by private actors is the skill profile of the labor force. Even during this early period of economic take-off, the investment in skills in the German economy was financed in part by employers. This suggests that firms that have made higher investments in the skills of their workforce may face higher costs of electoral intimidation than firms that did not make these investments. This second hypothesis incorporates and extends an insight of the Varieties of Capitalism perspective that has emphasized the economic and political centrality of institutions of skill formation (Thelen)

The costs of electoral intimidation of private actors are, thus, affected by proximate labor market conditions in a district. One third factor that is likely to affect the costs of electoral intimidation is the relatively labor scarcity in a district. Labor scarcity increases the bargaining power of employees, while reducing the bargaining power of workers. In conditions of labor scarcity, employers are less likely to exert political pressure on workers for fear that the strong pressure might drive workers to look for additional employment.

The above discussion has formulated a number of hypotheses that account for the incidence of electoral irregularities at the time of German elections. Our hypothesis concerning the overall effect of the tightness of a race on the incidence of electoral irregularities is ambiguous. While the latter is likely to increase the demand of politicians for electoral irregularities, it is also likely to constrain the willingness of employees of the state to supply electoral intimidation. The decisions of private actors to participate at times of elections are unlikely to be affected by the tightness of a race. Both the political demand for electoral intimidation and the incentives of private actors to supply the latter are higher in districts with lower levels of fragmentation among right wing parties but increase as the fragmentation among parties on the right increases. Finally, I have identified a range of economic variables that affect the costs of electoral intimidation of private actors. These include the occupational heterogeneity of a district, the skill profile of the labor force and the relative labor scarcity.

I use two distinct empirical strategies to test these propositions. In chapters 2 and 3, I draw on the historical evidence from the reports of the commission of investigating electoral irregularities in national elections to map out the variation in the incidence of electoral irregularities perpetuated by employees of the state and private actors. This qualitative analysis allows me to document both the specific strategies of electoral intimidation used by public officials and private actors and the variation in the political vulnerability of voters to electoral intimidation at different stages of the electoral process.

In chapter 2, I examine regional and temporal variation in the incidence of electoral intimidation perpetuated by employees of the state in Prussian elections. The reliance on policemen, tax collectors, mayors and employees of the state as agents of electoral intimidation varied significantly across regions. Consistent with the political hypotheses outline above, electoral intimidation by employees of the state was higher in Prussia and Saxony, two regions characterized by low levels of fragmentation among right wing parties and lower in Wurttemberg and Baden, two regions where the electoral fragmentation among right wing parties was high. I also explore the temporal variation in the incidence of electoral intimidation by employees of the state in Prussia using archival sources of the records of the Prussian Ministry of Interior. I find that the considerations of bureaucrats of the Prussian Ministry of Interior about the optimal level of electoral intimidation deployed at times of elections varied significantly over time and were affected by changing levels of electoral competition. More specifically, increases in the political fragmentation among candidates of the right dampened the incentives of bureaucratic officials in the Prussian Ministry of Interior to deploy employees of the state during elections. As the electoral fragmentation on the right increased, high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Interior instructed representatives in the districts to intervene in elections in a "noiseless" and subdued fashion.

Chapter 3 turns to an analysis of the variation in the strategies of electoral intimidation of private actors. As the reports of electoral irregularities include both irregularities of employees of

the state and those perpetuated by private actors, I use a sub-sample of the reports to identify precise instances of private electoral intimidation. This subsample includes 15 percent of reports for 13 elections of the period. The analysis of the empirical variation in the occurrence of private electoral intimidation finds that the epicenter of private intimidation is located in the Ruhr and Saar region. The largest German firms at the time – such as XX – are located in these regions. Silesia displays the highest levels of private electoral intimidation among agricultural regions. Private economic actors established a complex political infrastructure to control the electoral choices made by their employees. Employers ensured that workers of their enterprises came to their place equipped with the correct electoral ballot and positioned their loyal representatives in close proximity of the urns, to ensure that voters did not support opposition candidates. In the aftermath of elections, employers engaged in a systematic punishment of those workers that supported opposition candidates. The examples of economic punishments that are reported in the various complaints of electoral irregularities included wage cuts, the withdrawal of discretionary benefits (such as housing) and layoffs.

In chapter 4, I present a quantitative test of the model of electoral intimidation. The dependent variable of the analysis is a dataset that measures the incidence of electoral fraud during the 397 electoral districts of Germany during the 13 elections to the Reichstag that spanned the period between 1870 and 1912. The complete dataset of German contested elections can be found in two sources. A study by Klein (2003) has collected this data based on historical records assembled by the electoral commission of the German parliament (Klein 2003: 501-511). In recent years, Robert Arsenscheck and Dan Ziblatt have created a new dataset on electoral irregularities that differs only in minor ways from the dataset published in Klein (2003). To ensure comparability with existing results in political science, I use the latter dataset in the analysis.

The results of this empirical analysis provide mixed support to the economic and political hypotheses. First, the incidence of electoral fraud is higher in tighter races. I also find that some support for the political hypotheses that seek to explain the incidence of fraud: the heterogeneity among parties on the right is correlated with lower levels of electoral fraud. Nevertheless, the effect of the latter variable disappears, once we control for other economic conditions in different districts. A remarkable empirical result is that the economic concentration of a district has a strong and robust effect on the incidence of electoral fraud. The incidence of higher levels of skills in a district does not limit the incidence of electoral intimidation. In contrast to the finding reported by Dan Ziblatt, we find no relationship between the rural inequality of a district and the incidence of electoral fraud, once we control for the skill composition of the labor force and the occupational heterogeneity of a district.

PROTECTING VOTERS AGAINST INTIMIDATION: THE DETERMINANTS OF ELECTORAL REFORMS

The second part of the book examines the change in electoral institutions and the adoption of reforms that provide a greater protection of voters against political pressure. Proposals to reform the electoral system and protect voters against electoral intimidation were on the agenda of the parliament in nearly every legislature of the period. The first bill

recommending an amendment of the electoral law to provide a better protection of electoral secrecy was submitted in 1875. Nevertheless, it took nearly additional thirty years until the German parliament adopted legislation that improved the secrecy of the voting in 1903. The reforms adopted at the time introduced two changes in voting technology – voting envelopes and the 'isolation space' (*Isolierzelle*). These institutional changes attempted to protect the autonomy of the voters at the time the latter were about to cast their ballot.

Who were the politicians that supported reforms of electoral practices and the protection of voters against electoral intimidation? What were the most important factors that affected their decision to support changes in electoral rules ? The second part of the book seeks to characterize the economic and political factors that account for legislators' demand for electoral institutions that improve electoral secrecy. The starting point of my analysis is that the advantages of the imperfect protection of electoral secrecy were distributed unequally across districts. Some politicians could easily benefit from the imperfections in electoral design and faced very low costs of electoral intimidation. By contrast, other politicians encountered much higher costs of electoral intimidation due to the economic and political conditions in their districts.

 I hypothesize that demand for changes in the design of electoral institutions and the adoption of reforms that protected greater electoral secrecy originated with politicians that encountered relatively high costs of electoral intimidation. These were politicians whose economic and political environment made the intimidation too costly. The variables predicting support for electoral reform are, in fact, inversely correlated with the variables that predict opportunities for electoral intimidation. Thus, with respect to economic variables, I hypothesize that politicians from districts characterized by higher levels of occupational heterogeneity are more likely to support the adoption of electoral reforms that protect voters against intimidation. With respect to political variables, I hypothesize that politicians from districts characterized by high levels of fragmentation among right wing parties are likely to support electoral reforms that reduce opportunities for intimidation.

I test these propositions using a quantitative analysis of the co-sponsorship of all legislative bills supporting a higher protection of electoral secrecy that have been submitted to the *Reichstag* during the period between 1870 and 1912. These questions of electoral reforms were on the agenda of the *Reichstag* in seven (out of the thirteen) parliaments of the period. In examining the determinants of electoral reform, I also control for a range of variables that have been considered salient in existing theoretical approaches to democratization, rural inequality, economic development and human capital development (specific skills). The empirical results confirm both the economic and political hypotheses about the determinants of electoral reforms. Politicians from districts characterized by higher levels of occupational heterogeneity are more likely to support electoral reforms. Similarly, I find that the political fragmentation among right wing parties is a powerful predictor of support for electoral reforms.

The quantitative analysis presented in Chapter 4, which analyzes the determinants of electoral irregularities found no relationship between the inequality in the distribution of landholding and the incidence of electoral fraud. The results in Chapter 5 are consistent with this finding. We find no relationship between the inequality in the distribution of farms and political support for electoral reforms that seek to provide a better protection of voters against electoral intimidation. These surprising results run counter to a large tradition of research in political science, which has attributed a central importance to rural inequality. The latter studies include

classic studies of Germany's belated development, such as Gerschenkron's *Bread and Democracy in Germany* and Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.

What explains this surprising finding? Why are inequalities in the distribution of land such a poor predictor of electoral outcomes and predictors of electoral reforms in the German political context? I seek to unravel this puzzle in Chapter 6, by turning to an examination of the political and economic factors that account for demand for electoral reform in Prussia. Existing research on the political consequences of landholding inequality presuppose that larger farms were reservoirs of rural workers that can be mobilized at times of elections. Hence, a higher share of larger farms in a district is hypothesized to reduce the costs of electoral repression of rural employers and increase the incidence of electoral intimidation. The assumption that inequalities in landholding are correlated with inequalities in the distribution of employment across large farms fails to characterize economic conditions in the Prussian countryside during the late 19th century. The typical German farm is not the Mexican or Chilean *hacienda* discussed in the work of James Robison or John Coatsworth. I build on recent 'revisionistic' approaches of to the study of German economic development in the ninenteenth century that have presented a very different image of German agriculture which contradicts the interpretation of German agriculture that goes back to the work of Gerschenkron and Moore. As Oliver Grant, one of the most prominent economic historians of the period summarizes this view, "the image of East Elbian agriculture dominated by large estates, on the English pattern, is to a large degree a false one. The rural sector was, by the standards of contemporary European countries a relatively egalitarian one" (Grant 2005: 53)

Scholars examining the political consequences of rural inequality often conflate inequalities in the distribution of land and inequalities in the distribution of agricultural employment. The two phenomena are not necessarily correlated. While Prussian districts displayed high levels of inequality in the distribution of land, large farms (defined as farms over 200 hectares) were only sparsely populated. As a result, a measure of inequality in the distribution of land stands only in a very weak relationship with a measure of inequality in the distribution of employment across farms. Due to this weak correlation between landholding inequality and inequality of employment is that the former measure of inequality did not confer particular electoral advantages to landholding elites at the times of elections. This distinction explains both why rural inequality fails to predict the incidence of electoral fraud (Chapter 4), the demand for electoral reforms in national elections (Chapter 5) and demand for electoral reforms of the Prussian electoral system (Chapter 6).

While inequalities in the distribution of land fail to predict political support or opposition to electoral reforms, labor market conditions in a district that affect the costs of electoral repression for rural actors may account for the preferences for electoral reforms. Chapter 6 allows me to test the prediction about the effects of labor scarcity on the preferences for electoral reforms of Prussian politicians. Using a new panel dataset on rural agricultural wages across all Prussian localities, I construct a panel dataset of the relative shortage of agricultural workers across all Prussian districts during the period between 1870 and 1912. I test the proposition that politicians in labor scarce districts face higher costs of electoral intimidation and are, thus, more likely to support electoral reforms that reduce opportunities for intimidation than politicians in districts with lower levels of labor scarcity. I find support for this hypothesis: the relative labor market scarcity in a district is a powerful predictor of political cleavages over the adoption of the

secret ballot in Prussia. In this analysis of the votes in the secret ballot reform in the Prussian parliament, I also find that inequalities in the distribution of land have no effect on the support or opposition for electoral reform. This evidence reinforces the previous empirical results which suggest that the highest demand for electoral reforms comes from politicians facing relatively high costs of electoral intimidation. The relative costs of electoral intimidation are predicted by labor market conditions in a district rather than by inequalities in the distribution of fixed assets.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ELECTORAL REFORMS

The final part of the book examines the political consequences of the legislation that adopted in 1903, which was also known as the "Rickert bill". This legislation introduced two improvements in voting technology: the ballot envelope and the urn. The implementations of these reforms proceeded relatively smoothly and uneventfully. HERE MORE DATA ON IMPLEMENTATION.

In chapter 7, I examine the consequences of this legislation on the willingness of voters to take electoral risks and support opposition candidates. Chapters 3 and 4 have established that the explicit goal of the electoral intimidation consisted in preventing Social Democratic ballot conveyors from reaching voters and handing over ballots to the latter. Similarly, the electoral control exercised by private actors attempted to prevent voters from entering the precinct with opposition ballots. Practices such as alternative lists (*Gegenlisten*) allowed employers to monitor the electoral choices of voters closely and punish voters that supported opposition candidates. A wide variation in the types of electoral punishments available to employers existed. From the perspective of voters, the most costly punishment was economic layoff for their electoral choice. The existence of this systematic and highly institutionalized repressive apparatus makes the rise in the electoral support for the Social Democratic Party striking. Election after election, the number of voters casting ballots for social democratic candidates increased. By 1912, the Social Democratic Party had become the largest political party in the Reichstag. Despite the unfavorable translation of votes into seats, in the last Reichstag elected before the onset of the war, the SPD elected 110 out of the 397 deputies to the Reichstag.

Who were the voters who took electoral risks in the face of this sophisticated repressive apparatus? While we lack individual level data on the vote choice at the time, we can explore district level variation in the political strength of Social Democracy. The hypotheses about the political support for Social Democracy prior to the adoption of the Rickert law are natural implications of the analysis developed in the first part of the book. The central hypothesis is that voters were willing to take electoral risks and support opposition candidates in districts where candidates on the right faced higher costs of electoral intimidation. With respect to political variables, this suggests that the costs of electoral repression are higher in districts characterized by high occupational heterogeneity among right wing parties. As discussed above, three economic variables are likely to increase the costs of electoral repression. They include the occupational heterogeneity of a district, the skill profile of the labor force and the level of labor scarcity. An additional observable implication of the existing theory is that prior to the adoption of electoral reforms that provided a better protection of electoral secrecy, voters in districts characterized by high levels of occupational heterogeneity were more likely to support Social

Democratic candidates. Moreover, one also expects that higher skilled workers were more likely to take electoral risks and vote for Social Democratic candidates prior to 1903. Finally, labor scarcity was also raised the costs of electoral repression of firms and reduced their ability to engage in electoral intimidation. This implies that labor scarcity should be associated with higher levels of electoral strength of SPD candidates. I test the final proposition that hypothesizes that electoral support for Social Democracy is higher in districts with labor scarcity using the available measure of labor scarcity of agricultural workers in Prussian rural. We find confirmation of this hypothesis suggesting that the electoral strength of social democracy is higher in districts with high levels of labor scarcity.

The magnitude of electoral intimidation directed against workers affects also not just the strength of Social Democratic support in a district. It also affected the type of Social Democratic politician that is likely to be elected. Despite the strong organizational unity of the Social Democratic party, scholars of German Social Democracy have noted the existence of significant variation in the willingness of Social Democratic candidates to engage in political cooperation with candidates on the right. The analysis in this book provides a number of novel propositions about the factors that are likely to contribute to the election of different types of Social Democratic candidates. I hypothesize that the Social Democratic politicians elected in districts characterized by high levels of economic concentration are likely to be more radical and exhibit less willingness to engage in cooperation with candidates on the rights. By contrast, candidates elected in districts where voters are subjected to lower levels of electoral intimidation directed are more likely to cooperate with candidates on the right. Thus, the history of electoral intimidation in a district, which is itself conditioned by the economic heterogeneity of a district is a predictor of the type of social democratic candidate. I test these propositions using both primary sources found in the archives of the Social Democratic Party that document significant policy disagreements between the accomodationist and non-accomodationist candidates. A second empirical test of my argument is a dataset that codes the existence of electoral alliances during runoffs between a Social Democratic candidate and candidates on the right. In a prominent study of electoral alliances, Luebbert hypothesized that Lib-Lab alliances were absent in Germany. Luebbert provided a correct characterization of political and electoral outcomes for a large majority of German districts. I show, however, that exceptions existed at the time. Lib-lab alliances were formed in districts characterized by high economic heterogeneity and a low political history of electoral intimidation.

The legislation protecting autonomy at the time of voting that was adopted in 1903 increased the costs of electoral repression of private actors. As such, it reduced the fear of economic reprisals of voters in districts with high levels of economic concentration and increased the willingness of the latter to support opposition candidates. Consistent with this argument, I document a large increase in electoral support for the SPD following the adoption of 1903 legislation. During the 1903 election, the number of votes cast for Social Democratic Candidates increased by 900,000 as compared to the previous election of 1898. Moreover, that effect of the 1903 legislation varies across districts and is higher in districts with high level of occupational heterogeneity. Moreover, we find a higher willingness of lower skilled workers to support Social Democratic candidates after 1903. Thus, a large part of the political story of the Social Democratic expansion during the last elections of the Reich is a story of the expansion of its political support among low skilled workers.

The final part of the book examines the consequences of the adoption of legislation that protected electoral secrecy on the electoral fate of parties on the right. While the 1903 law increased the costs of electoral intimidation, its effect on the ability of candidates on the right to win a district depended on the distribution of electoral support for the particular candidate in the district. As a result, the 1903 law had different effects for parties on the right. Conservative parties that enjoyed relatively stable majorities in their districts were only weakly affected by the legislation. By contrast, the National Liberal party had a lower number of safe districts. Beginning with the 1903 election, the ability of the National liberal party to convert its votes into seats deteriorated. Beginning with the 1903 election, the capacity of the National Liberal Party to convert its votes into seats declines. While National Liberals had experienced a positive ratio of translation of votes to seats prior to 1903, beginning with this election the National Liberal Party experiences a negative share of seats to votes.

These calculations about the translation of votes into seats made by politicians from different parties turned out to be particularly consequential for the final piece of electoral reform adopted by politicians of the *Reichstag* prior to the disintegration of the Empire, namely the adoption of proportional representation. In the aftermath of the 1903 election, National Liberal politicians that experienced a worsening of the ratio translating votes to seats shifted their position over the reform of the electoral system and joined the electoral of parties that supported the adoption of proportional representation, Free Liberals and Social Democrats. By contrast, the two other largest parties on the political right, the Zentrum and Conservatives benefitted from the translation of votes into seats and continued to support the political status quo. The final section of the chapter reconstructs parliamentary and extra-parliamentary deliberations on the final question of electoral reform that confronted members of the German *Reichstag* during the period prior to World War I and during the wartime period. This shift in the position of National Liberal party facilitated the creation of an electoral coalition that supported a reform of electoral institutions and the adoption of proportional representation. I conclude by examining the political determinants of the vote that led to the adoption of proportional representation in 1914. The analysis presented in this chapter analysis tests a variety of different explanations for the adoption of proportional representation that have been proposed in other studies.

THE EMPIRICAL STRATEGY

In recent years, comparative research on democratization has relied on a cross-national analysis as its preferred empirical strategy for testing hypotheses about regime transitions. The path-breaking contribution by Adam Przeworski and his collaborators illustrates both the strength and also the most significant methodological limitations of approach (Przeworski et. al. XX). Similarly, Boix (2005) advances a simple and parsimonious model of regime choice that stresses the opposition of landholding elites in countries with high levels of inequality in landholding to the extension of franchise and regime transitions. Similarly, XX , XX and XX examine XX. This empirical strategy allows researchers to identify broad empirical regularities that exist in cross-national data.

Cross-national analysis has also significant limitations as an empirical strategy. The first important shortcoming of these approaches comes from their inability to identify the specific

mechanisms that link the explanatory variables to the outcomes that are of theoretical interest. The clearest example of an absence of such difficulty to specify mechanism is the ongoing debate about the effects of modernization on regime transitions. 'Modernization' is a highly aggregated concept that can affect regime transitions through a multitude of different mechanisms. Empirical studies regressing aggregate measures of economic development (such as the percentage of the non-agricultural workforce or GDP per capita) with various indicators of political regimes are fail to distinguish among the mechanisms linking economic development to these political outcomes are related.

A related shortcoming of the recent cross-national research is the imprecise theoretical conceptualization of the central explanatory variables of interest. To illustrate this statement and to link this overarching critique to the empirical strategy pursued in this study, consider the notion of rural inequality, a central explanatory variable in existing research on regime transitions. As discussed above, rural inequality is a multidimensional concept that involves inequalities in the distribution of land, labor or wages, respectively. Each of these separate dimensions of rural inequality affects the preferences of key actors and the resulting distributional conflicts over political regimes through different political mechanisms. COPY HERE FROM PAPER WITH MARTIN.

A third limitation of cross-national studies of regime transitions is the poor specification of the electoral coalitions that bring about changes in electoral rules. The most recent studies of democratic transitions invoke stylized distributional conflicts between the 'rich' and the 'poor' over the scope of suffrage. Both the 'rich' and the 'poor' are highly heterogeneous groups that encompass a variety of actors. Even if we take the existence of this political cleavage for granted, it still is incumbent upon the researcher to examine how it maps partisan cleavages in particular countries. While economic conditions (such as the levels of inequality) may affect politicians' decisions to modify electoral rules, partisan calculations are likely to be equally important determinants of the decisions of the latter to expand suffrage. Existing studies of regime transitions that rely on cross-national analysis of panel data do not address these political considerations, neither in their theoretical, nor empirical analysis.

So far, I have focused on the theoretical limitations of studies of regime transition and electoral change for which the core empirical evidence comes from a cross-national analysis of panel. These studies suffer from significant empirical limitations. A first limitation is the poor measurement of the key explanatory variables. Such imprecisions in measurement severely limit the inferences one can make from these studies. Secondly, the potential for omission of central explanatory is severe, which introduces important biases in the estimates. Recent empirical controversies about the inclusion of fixed effects in the models of regime transitions illustrate that many of the results of this literature are, in fact, remarkably unstable.

In contrast to cross-national analysis, the empirical strategy of this book is premised on a within-country research design. This empirical strategy allows me to circumvent the above-mentioned theoretical and empirical shortcomings that are common to analyses of democratic transitions that rely on a cross-national analysis only. An empirical design premised on the analysis of within country variation allows me to include both economic and political variables in the analysis and examine the relative influence of these distinct types of factors on the calculations of politicians about electoral reform. Secondly, this research design allows me to rely on precise measures of the central explanatory variables. A higher precision in empirical

measurement allows me, at the same time, to test for the mechanisms by which explanatory variables (such as rural inequality or economic development) affect political outcomes.

Imperial Germany provides us with an ideal opportunity to test both classic and recent explanations of democratic transitions due to the wide internal heterogeneity of economic and political conditions. Germany's territory reached from Memel and Konigsberg – regions that are in today's Lithuania and Russia, respectively – through Silesia and Pomerania – in Western Poland -- to Schleswig Holstein, and Elsass and Lothringen, regions that are part of today's France. In this vast territory, the range of variation of the economic variables mirrors the range of variation in cross-national datasets. The inequality in the distribution of landholding, a central theoretical variable in the literature on regime transitions varies dramatically across these regions. We also find also large and significant variation across Germany in the distribution of occupational skills imparted by the vocational training system. Like typical countries undergoing fast economic development, German labor markets also exhibit significant heterogeneity in labor market conditions, with coexistence of labor scarcity and labor shortage. Finally, the occupational heterogeneity also varies significantly across German regions.

The partisan landscape also varies significantly across different regions, making Germany into a hybrid case of the party configurations identified by Rokkan across European countries (Rokkan 1966, Caramani XX). We find significant regional heterogeneity in the patterns of partisan competition even prior to the entry of the Social Democratic Party. Some districts of Prussia are contested only by two parties on the political right, representing industrial and rural elites, respectively. The variation in the political strength of the Catholic party also varies significantly across German regions. Some regions in Southern Bavaria characterized by large shares of the Catholic population are uncontested bastions of the *Zentrum*, while in others, the *Zentrum* remains one of the many parties on the right. We find significant variation in the relative strength of parties representing ethnic and linguistic minorities, such as Poles, Danes or Guelphs. Moreover, the fragmentation among Liberal parties also shows significant variation across different regions of Germany, which further increases the heterogeneity among parties on the right.

To test the above explanations, this book makes use for the first time of the economic information collected by German statistical authorities. The study of the occupational landscape at the time of the industrial take-off occupied a central place in the data collection efforts carried out by the German Statistical Office. The Census of Occupation and Statistics (*Berufszählung*) was the centerpiece of Wilhelmine statistics and the crown-jewel of European historical stastistics. The latter, a hugely expensive enterprise, "was conceived as an integrated system for registering the nation's social and economic structure" (Tooze 2001: 52). As described by Tooze,

> "they were enormous projects, involving millions of households and firms, armies of census-takers, hundreds of temporary staff hired by the statistical bureau to mark up and count the millions of returns and the entire resources of the statistical profession. They were hugely expensive. Even the German system of using 'volunteer' civil servants as census takers could not keep the costs below many millions of marks. They were accomplished through a collective effort involving the *Reich* in collaboration with the statistical bureaux of all the member states in the federation. […] They were divorced from all other branches of state administration. Above all, they were carefully preserved from any entanglement with the fiscal authorities. Respondents were assured that the

census returns would be used exclusively for 'statistical purposes'. The censuses were under the sole control of professional statisticians and they reveal most clearly the profession's understand of German economic and social life" (Tooze 2001: 51).

The German occupational census includes disaggregated information on employment in 220 occupations across over 1000 localities (communes) of the German Empire. The German Statistical Agency collected this detailed information at two points in time, in 1895 and 1903, respectively. A great deal of empirical heavy-lifting was necessary to make this information available and to use it in the quantitative analysis for this book. I digitized both waves of the occupational census, an effort that totaled nearly one million lines of information. I then aggregated all of the information to the level of the German electoral districts, using the mapping of localities to districts provided by Reibel (2007). This detailed occupational information allows me to compute a variety of indicators that measure both variation in the occupational heterogeneity across German regions at a very disaggregated level of analysis and variation in the skill profiles of the labor force.

Economic concentration is a concept that has occupied a central role in existing research on Germany's economic development during the 19th century. Considerable disagreement exists about the relationship between economic concentration and economic development in nineteenth century Germany. Gerschenkron's classic study *Bread and Democracy in Germany* hypothesized that the engine of Germany's economic development was located in regions characterized by high levels of economic concentration, such as the Ruhr-region. During the early 1980's, scholars such as Charles Sabel, Jonathan Zeitlin and Gary Herrigel challenged this Gerschenkronian perspective of economic take-off and development. Sabel, Zeitlin and Herrigel argued that both economically concentrated and economically heterogeneous regions experienced a take-off in nineteenth century Germany that was comparable to the economic take-off experienced by concentrated areas. Herrigel argued that the organization of production differed across 'concentrated' and 'diversified' regions of Germany and that these differences in the organization of production persisted well into the twentieth century.

This study extends these two contributions in two respects. The first extension is empirical. Both Herrigel and Kocka work with aggregated measures of occupational heterogeneity across German regions. This study uses for the first time the wealth of economic information that is available in the German census to measure systematic differences in Germany's occupational landscape. Secondly, while existing studies have explored the economic consequences of differences in heterogeneity, I provide an empirical examination of its political consequences. As hypothesized, the occupational heterogeneity of a district affects the costs of electoral intimidation. The book documents a strong effect of the occupational heterogeneity on the incidence of electoral intimidation, the preferences of politicians for electoral reforms and also the willingness of voters to support opposition candidates, hence the variation in the vote share of Social Democratic candidates.

Numerous accounts of European political development suggest that differences in human capital endowment play a critical role in predicting political and economic reforms undertaken by many European countries during the nineteenth century. A discussed above, human capital is a variable of central theoretical importance in the 'Varieties of Capitalism' perspective. In recent years, a number of scholars associated with this perspective have argued that the distribution of human capital affects variation in political reforms undertaken by European countries. Despite

the theoretical importance of this variable, very few studies have developed good measures of differences in human capital at this critical turning point of European political development. This book seeks to fill this theoretical gap by developing highly disaggregated measures of skills for German regions.

As part of the occupational census, German statistical authorities collected information on the ratio between skilled and unskilled workers for 180 occupations. This information is presented in Appendix 2. Unsurprisingly, the skill mix differs significantly across occupations. XX. XX. Examples of skills. I use this information in conjunction with the occupational census to compute very precise measures of the skill profile of every German locality. I then aggregate the latter at the level of the district to compute measures of the distribution of skills that can be used in conjunction with other explanatory variables.

As discussed above, one of the objectives of my research design is to disaggregate some of the variables that play a prominent role in recent theoretical accounts of regime transitions and, using more precise measures, to examine empirically the mechanisms by which the latter affect political outcomes. Despite the importance of rural inequality for theories of regime transition, efforts to examine the political consequences of rural inequality for regime transitions are still hampered by the poor quality of measures that are available for a large number of countries. Dan Ziblatt has computed a measure of inequalities in the distribution of farms for Germany that is based on information collected as part of the 1905 agricultural census. However, as argued above, rural inequality is a multidimensional concept that involves inequalities in the distribution of land and employment, respectively. The two dimensions of rural inequality might not be correlated empirically and are likely to affect political outcomes through different mechanism. Inequality in the distribution of land might affect control over political resources but not necessarily control over employment.

To compute measures of inequality of agricultural employment, one needs information about the distribution of workers across farms of different size. I was able to locate this information at the most disaggregated level of analysis (the commune) only for Prussia (but not for the entire German Empire). As discussed above, I show thatlabor-based and land-based measures of rural inequality are very poorly correlated in the Prussia, which explains why inequalities in the distribution of land have a poor explanatory power in accounting for political outcomes. In Chapter 6, I take advantage of a variety of these disaggregated measures of rural inequality to test for the mechanisms by which inequality affects political support for or opposition to electoral reforms.

A final empirical contribution of this study is my effort to examine the consequences of labor scarcity for political outcomes in Imperial Germany. The theoretical hypotheses about the importance of labor scarcity discussed above built on the Lewis-Rannis model of economic development that hypothesizes that in rapid periods of economic take-off are characterized by the emergence of labor scarcity that coexists with labor abundance. Using a panel of rural wages across Prussian localities, I construct a set of measures of relative labor scarcity across Prussian localities during the period between 1870 and 1912. Using this data, I test a variety of propositions about the consequences of labor scarcity for the costs of electoral repression, support for political reforms and willingness of voters to support opposition parties.

The final advantage of a research design that exploits within country variation is that it allows me to examine the relative importance of economic and political factors in accounting for political support or opposition to electoral reforms. As discussed above, recent studies of democratization rarely incorporate political factors in their analysis. Preferences for and coalitions over electoral reforms, I show, are affected by a combination of economic and political considerations.

LOOKING AHEAD

The following three chapters will present an account of electoral irregularities in German national elections. In Chapter 2, I will analyze the electoral intervention of employees of the states at times of elections, the strategies pursued by the latter and the sources of regional variation in the intervention of employees of the state at the times of elections. Chapter 3 discusses electoral intimidation perpetuated by private actors. Chapter 4 presents a quantitative test of these propositions in explaining electoral irregularities perpetuated in German elections during the period between 1870 and 1912.

The second part of the book will analyze demand for reforms of the electoral system that reduced opportunities for intimidation. In Chapter 5, I examine support for electoral reforms that introduced higher protection of electoral secrecy for national elections. I show that the demand for reforms that culminated with the adoption of ballot envelopes and secret urns originated with politicians that faced a higher cost of electoral intimidation. Chapter 6 examines the determinants of proposals to adopt electoral secrecy for subnational elections in Prussia. In the latter, I examine the consequences of labor scarcity for the proposals to enact electoral reforms.

Chapters 7 and 8 examine the political consequences of reforms protecting the secrecy of the vote. Chapter 7 explores the effects of these electoral reforms for the willingness of voters to support the Social Democratic Party. I demonstrate a dramatic increase in support for Social Democratic Party in the aftermath of the 1903 reform. Chapter 8 examines longer-term consequences of these electoral reforms for the fate of political parties on the right. I show how increased electoral vulnerability experienced by the National Liberal Party contributed to a shift in the position of the latter party over questions of electoral reform and facilitated the formation of an electoral coalition in support of the adoption of proportional representation.

The final chapter will discuss the theoretical implications of the findings presented in the book. Theoretically, the book makes three contributions to the literature on democratization. On the one hand, it provides a first systematic analysis of the political coalitions over the electoral reforms that attempted to remove opportunities for electoral intimidation and protect the secrecy of the vote. The latter types of reforms have been relatively understudied in the literature on democratization. Secondly, the book demonstrates that the relative cost of electoral intimidation is a central predictor of support for electoral reforms. Politicians facing relatively higher costs of electoral intimidation were more likely to support electoral reforms that improved the secrecy of the ballot. As such, the analysis presented in the book disaggregates a parameter that plays an important role in the literature on democratization, by showing that the latter is affected both by political and economic variables. Chapter 9 discusses the implications of the analysis for the

literature on linking rural inequality and democratization and for the Varieties of Capitalism studies of European political development.